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MISCELLANEOUS
WORKS
OF
EDWARD GIBBON, Esquire.
WITH
MEMOIRS OF HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS,
COMPOSED BY HIMSELF:
ILLUSTRATED FROM HIS LETTERS.
WITH OCCASIONAL NOTES AND NARRATIVE
By JOHN LORD SHEFFIELD.

VOL. II.

BASIL:
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APPENDIX.

A P P E N D I X.

VOL. II.

B

THE Letters of Mr. Gibbon, from the time of his return to Switzerland in 1788, are annexed to his Memoirs, as the best continuation of them. Among his Letters of an earlier date, I find several which he has alluded to, and others which will illustrate the account he has given of himself. These, I flatter myself, will please the generality of readers; since, when he touches on matters of private business, even subjects of the driest nature become interesting, from his mode of treating them. Many Letters from distinguished persons to him will be introduced, and some that he received at a very early period of life. Although we have not all his own Letters to which these were answers, yet we have enough to testify his ambition, even in youth, to be distinguished as a scholar.

It has been sometimes thought necessary to offer to the Public an apology for the publication of private Letters. I have no scruple to say, that I publish these, because I think they place my friend in an advantageous point of view. He might not, perhaps, have expected that all his Letters should be printed; but I have no reason to believe that he would have been averse to the publication of any. If I had, they never would have been made public, however highly I might have conceived of their excellence.

THE HISTORY OF THE ORIGIN, AND THE
PROGRESS OF THE ART OF PRINTING
IN EUROPE, FROM THE FIRST
INVENTION OF THE ART, TO THE
PRESENT TIME. BY J. K. L. S.
IN TWO VOLUMES. THE FIRST
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L E T T E R S

TO AND FROM

EDWARD GIBBON Esquire.

N^o I.

M. CREVIER à M. GIBBON.

MONSIEUR,

PARIS, 7 Août, 1756.

Je ne puis qu'être très-sensible aux témoignages d'estime dont vous voulez bien me combler, quoique je sois fort éloigné de les prendre à la lettre, & de me regarder comme un oracle. Mais je suis homme vrai, & par là même aime à profiter des lumières que l'on a la bonté de me communiquer. Ainsi, Monsieur, je reçois avec toute la satisfaction possible l'ingénieuse conjecture que vous proposez, pour l'éclaircissement d'un passage de Tite Live sur lequel je n'avois su qu'être embarrassé. J'adopte toutes vos observations, tous vos raisonnemens. Par le changement d'une seule lettre, vous substituez à un sens louche & obscur, une pensée claire, convenable au caractère de celui qui parle, & bien liée avec toute le reste du discours. Je ne manquerai pas d'en faire une note, & de me servir de cette judicieuse correction, si l'occasion

s'en présente, en prenant soin d'en faire honneur à celui à qui je la dois.

J'ajouterai seulement une remarque de peu de conséquence, mais qui me paroît nécessaire pour donner toute sa perfection à la phrase, sur laquelle vous avez travaillé si heureusement. Voici la phrase avec le changement que vous proposez. *Nec esse in vos otio vestro consultum ab Romanis credatis.* Or *in vos* ne me paroît point s'accorder avec *otio vestro*. L'expression *in vos* semble marquer quelque chose qui doit être contraire au bien des Carthaginois, & qui par conséquence s'allie mal avec l'idée de leur repos. Ainsi au lieu de ces mots *in vos* j'aimerois mieux lire *in his*. Alors la phrase sera complètement bonne. *Nec esse in his otio vestro consultum ab Romanis credatis.* "Ne
" pensez pas que dans ces mesures que prennent les
" Romains, pour vous ôter toutes vos forces, &
" en vous interdisant la guerre avec l'étranger, ils
" aient eu pour objet votre tranquillité & votre
" repos."

Il ne me reste plus, Monsieur, qu'à vous remercier de la bonté que vous avez eu de me faire part d'une idée aussi heureuse. Ce seroit une grande joie pour moi si je recevois souvent de pareils secours sur tout ce que j'ai donné au public.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, avec bien de la reconnaissance & de respect, &c.

CREVIER,

N^o II.

M. ALLAMAND à Mr. GIBBON.

MONSIEUR,

BEX, Sept. 14, 1756.

A PRÉSENT que me voilà échappé de l'orage des fonctions publiques dont cette église est chargée en tems de fête, je saisis avec joie quelques momens de repos pour m'entretenir, Monsieur, avec vous: ce fera, s'il vous plaît, sans faire de trop grands efforts sur l'article des idées innées que vous me proposez. Outre que je risquerois de dire comme je ne fais quelle des interlocutrices de Terence, *Magno conatu magnas nugas*; il y a fort long tems que je n'ai relu M. Locke, l'oracle moderne sur cette matière, & il faudroit trop de tems & de papier pour tout éplucher. Ayez donc la bonté de vous contenter des premières réflexions qui se présenteront sur quelques endroits de son premier livre.

Je commence par le chap. i. § 5. où cet habile homme entreprend de prouver que ces deux principes, *Ce qui est, est; il est impossible qu'une même chose soit, & en même tems ne soit pas*, ne sont point innées, puisqu'ils n'étoient point dans l'esprit pendant l'enfance; & la preuve qu'ils n'y étoient pas, c'est que l'enfant n'y pensoit point, & que bien des gens meurent, sans les avoir jamais apperçus; "or," dit M. Locke, "une idée ne sauroit être dans l'esprit, sans que l'esprit ne s'en apperçoive," &c.

Il est clair, Monsieur, que toute la force de ce

raisonnement, est dans cette dernière assertion ; mais cette assertion ; n'est elle pas évidemment détruite par l'expérience ? Appercevez vous actuellement toutes les idées que vous avez dans l'esprit ? N'y en a-t'il point auxquelles vous ne prendrez peut-être garde de plusieurs années ? Et dans les efforts que l'on fait souvent pour rappeler ce qu'on a confié à sa mémoire ; ne sent on pas qu'il peut y avoir des connoissances si cachées dans ses replis , que loin de les appercevoir sans cesse , il faut bien de la peine pour les rattraper ? Je fais que M. Locke, qui a senti la difficulté, tâche de la résoudre. Ch. iii. § 20. Mais en vérité, la longueur & l'embarras de cet article montrent assez que M. L. n'étoit pas à son aise en l'écrivant ; & comment y auroit il été ? Voici, autant que j'en puis juger, à quoi il se réduit. Il avoue, "Que nous avons dans l'esprit des idées que nous n'appercevons point actuellement ; mais, dit-il, c'est dans la *mémoire* qu'elles sont : & cela est si vrai, qu'on ne se les rappelle point sans se souvenir, en même tems, qu'on les a déjà apperçues. Or, tel n'est point le cas des *idées* qu'on prétend *innées*. Quand on les apperçoit pour la première fois, ce n'est point avec réminiscence, comme on devroit, si ces idées là avoient été dans l'esprit avant cette première apperception," &c.

De grace, Monsieur, croyez vous que M. Locke s'entendit bien lui-même, quand il distinguoit *être dans l'esprit* & *être dans la mémoire* ? Et qu'importe à la question, qu'on se souviennne d'avoir déjà su ce que l'on se rappelle, s'il n'en est pas moins vrai qu'on l'a eu long-temps dans l'esprit sans s'en appercevoir ;

ce qui est le point dont il s'agit ? Au reste, M. Locke auroit pu sentir que si l'on ne se *rappelle* point les idées innées par *réminiscence*, c'est qu'elles ne sont point entrées dans l'esprit d'une manière qui ait exigé, ou attiré son attention. Et c'est aussi le cas de plusieurs idées acquises ; car, quoiqu'en dise M. Locke, chacun se trouve au besoin, nombre d'idées qui ne peuvent s'être insinuées dans son esprit, qu'à la présence de certains objets, auxquels il n'a point pris garde, ou, en général, par des moyens inconnus, qui l'ont enrichi sans qu'il sache comment, & sans qu'il crut les avoir jusques au moment qu'elles se sont présentées.

Sur le fond même de la question, il me semble que M. Locke confond perpétuellement deux choses très-différentes. *L'idée elle même*, qui est une connoissance dans l'esprit & un principe de raisonnement ; & *l'énoncé de cette idée* en forme de proposition, ou de définition. Il se peut, & il est même très-probable, que bien des gens n'ont jamais formé ou envisagé en eux mêmes cet énoncé, *il est impossible qu'une chose soit, & ne soit pas en même tems*. Voyez Liv. 1. ch. i. § 12. Mais suit-il delà, qu'ils ne connoissent pas la vérité qu'il exprime, & qu'ils n'en ont pas l'idée ? — Nullement. Tout homme qui assure, qui nie, tout homme qui parle, un enfant quand il demande, quand il refuse, quand il se plaint, &c. ne suppose-t'il pas, que dès qu'une chose est, il est impossible qu'en même tems elle ne soit pas ? Ne trouvez vous pas, Monsieur, qu'on pourroit soutenir la réalité des idées innées, précisément sur ce que M. Locke allégué contre elles, que beaucoup de gens n'ont jamais pensé aux propo-

sitions évidentes dont il parle ; car , puisque sans y avoir pensé , ils s'en servent , ils bâtissent là-dessus , ils jugent de la vérité , ou de l'absurdité d'un discours par ses rapports avec ces principes-là , &c. D'où leur vient cette familiarité avec des principes qu'ils n'ont jamais aperçus distinctement , si ce n'est de ce qu'ils en ont une connoissance , ou si l'on veut , un sentiment naturel ?

Aux § 17 & 18 , M. Locke nie que le consentement que l'on donne à certaines propositions , dès qu'on les entend prononcer , soit une preuve que l'idée qu'elles expriment soit innée ; & il se fonde , sur ce qu'il y a bien des propositions que l'on reçoit ainsi d'abord , qui certainement ne sont point innées ; & il en donne divers exemples , viz. *deux & deux sont quatre* , &c. Mais ne vous paroîtra-t'il pas qu'il confond ici des simples définitions des mots avec des vérités évidentes par elles mêmes ? Au moins , est-il certain que tous ses exemples sont des simples définitions des mots , *deux & deux sont quatre*. L'idée qu'on exprime par *deux & deux* , est la même que celle qu'on exprime par *quatre* , &c. Or personne ne dit que la connoissance d'une définition de mots soit innée , puisqu'elle suppose celle du langage. Mais cette proposition , *le tout est plus grand que chacune de ses parties* , n'est point dans ce cas ; & il est certain que le plus petit enfant suppose la vérité de cette proposition toutes les fois que non content d'une moitié de pomme , il veut la pomme toute entière.

Prenez la peine , Monsieur , d'examiner le § 23 ; où M. Locke veut convaincre de fausseté cette supposition , qu'il y a des principes tellement innés , que

ceux qui en entendent pour la première fois, & qui en comprennent l'énoncé, n'apprennent rien de nouveau. "Premièrement, dit-il, il est clair qu'ils ont appris les *termes* de l'énoncé & la *signification* de ces termes." Mais qui ne voit que M. Locke sort de la question? Personne n'a jamais dit que des termes, qui ne sont que des signes arbitraires de nos idées, fussent innés. Il ajoute, "Que les idées renfermées dans de pareils énoncés ne naissent pas plus avec nous, que leurs expressions, & qu'on acquiert ces idées dans la suite après en avoir appris les noms." Mais, 1. N'est ce pas donner pour preuve de ce qu'on affirme, cette affirmation même? Il n'y a point d'idées innées, car il n'y en a que d'acquises! M. Locke riroit bien d'un pareil raisonnement, s'il le trouvoit dans ses adversaires. 2. S'il est vrai qu'on apprend les mots avant que d'avoir les idées qu'ils expriment, au moins s'il est vrai que cela soit toujours ainsi, comme M. Locke l'entend, je voudrois bien savoir comment la première langue a pu être formée? Et même comment il est possible qu'on fasse comprendre à quelqu'un le sens d'un mot nouveau pour lui? Tout homme qui n'a nulle idée de *l'ordre*, par exemple, doit aussi peu être capable d'entendre ce mot *ordre*, qu'un aveugle né celui de *couleur*.

Au § 27, M. Locke nie les idées innées, parce qu'elles ne paroissent ni dans les enfans, ni dans les imbécilles, où elles devroient paroître le plus. Mais, 1. Ceux qui admettent les idées innées, ne les croient pas plus naturelles à l'ame, que ses facultés; puis donc que l'état & la constitution du corps nuit à celles-ci dans les imbécilles, elle sera aussi cause qu'on ne leur

remarque point les autres. 2. Le fait même n'est pas entièrement vrai ; les enfans & les imbécilles ont l'idée de leur existence, de leur individualité, de leur identité, &c.

Dans le reste de ce §, M. Locke se divertit au dépens de ceux qui croient que les énoncés des maximes abstraites sont innées : mais les plus déterminés scholastiques n'ont jamais rien dit de semblable, & il rit d'une chimère qu'il s'est faite lui même.

Je ne fais, Monsieur, comment il est arrivé qu'au lieu de trois ou quatre courtes réflexions que j'aurois dû vous donner sur tout ceci, je me suis engagé dans une critique longue & ennuyeuse, de quelques endroits d'un seul chapitre : c'est apparemment un reste de lassitude : j'ai trouvé plus de facilité à suivre & à chicaner M. Locke qu'à penser tout seul. Prenez patience & pardonnez. J'entrevois bien des choses à dire sur le second chapitre, où il s'agit des principes innés de pratique ; mais je ne vous en fatiguerai qu'après en avoir reçu l'aveu de vous même.

On écrit ici, que le Roi de Prusse vient de battre les Autrichiens & de leur tuer 20 mille hommes, en ayant perdu 15 mille des siens. Voilà donc où il alloit en passant par Leipzig. Si cette nouvelle est vraie, la guerre ne sauroit manquer de devenir générale, & de l'air qu'elle commence, elle sera terrible : mais je crains bien que sa M. P. n'ait le fort de Charles XII. Qui le soutiendra contre la France, l'Autriche, & peut être la Russie réunies ?

J'ai l'honneur d'être, avec une parfaite considération, Monsieur, &c.

ALLAMAND.

N° III.

M. ALLAMAND à M. GIBBON.

MONSIEUR,

BEX, le 12 Octobre, 1756.

Je suis charmé de l'exactitude & de la pénétration qui se disputent le terrain dans la dernière lettre que vous avez pris la peine de m'écrire : & comme vous, Monsieur, je crois que la question touche à sa décision.

Vous avez sans doute raison de dire que les propositions évidentes dont il s'agit, ne sont pas de simples idées, mais des jugemens. Mais ayez aussi la complaisance de reconnoître que M. Locke les alléguant en exemple d'idées qui passent pour innées & qui ne le sont pas selon lui, s'il y a ici de la méprise, c'est lui qu'il faut relever là-dessus, & non pas moi, qui n'avois autre chose à faire qu'à refuter sa manière de raisonner contre l'innéité de ces idées. D'ailleurs, Monsieur, vous remarquerez, s'il vous plait, que dans cette dispute il s'agit en effet, de savoir si certaines vérités évidentes & communes, & non pas seulement certaines idées simples, sont innées ou non. Ceux qui affirment, ne donnent guère pour exemple d'idées simples qui le soient, que celles de Dieu, de l'unité, & de l'existence : les autres exemples sont pris de propositions complètes, que vous appelez jugemens.

Mais, dites vous, y aura-t-il donc des jugemens innés ? Le jugement est-il autre chose qu'un acte de

nos facultés intellectuelles dans la comparaison des idées ? Le jugement sur les vérités évidentes, n'est-il pas une simple vue de ces vérités-là, un simple coup d'œil que l'esprit jete sur elles ? J'accorde tout cela. Et de grace, qu'est-ce qu'*idée* ? N'est-ce pas *vue*, ou coup d'œil, si vous voulez ? Ceux qui définissent l'idée autrement, ne s'éloignent ils pas visiblement du sens & de l'intention du mot ? Dire que les idées sont les espèces des choses imprimées dans l'esprit, comme l'image de l'objet sensible tracée dans l'œil, n'est ce pas jargonner plutôt que définir ? Or c'est la faute, qu'ont fait tous les métaphysiciens, & quoique M. Locke l'ait bien sentie, il a mieux aimé se fâcher contre eux, & tirer contre les girouettes de la place, que s'appliquer à démêler ce galimatias. Que n'a-t-il dit : non seulement il n'y a point d'idées innées dans le sens de ces Messieurs ; mais il n'y a point d'idées du tout dans ce sens-là : toute idée est un acte, une vue, un coup d'œil de l'esprit. Dès lors demander s'il y a des idées innées, c'est demander s'il y a certaines vérités si évidentes & si communes que tout esprit non stupide puisse naturellement, sans culture & sans maître, sans discussion, sans raisonnement, les reconnoître d'un coup d'œil, & souvent même sans s'apercevoir qu'on jete ce coup d'œil. L'affirmative me paroît incontestable, & selon moi, la question est vidée par-là.

Maintenant prenez garde, Monsieur, que cette manière d'entendre l'affaire, va au but des partisans des idées innées, tout comme la leur ; & par la même, contredit M. Locke dans le sien. Car pourquoi voudroit on qu'il y eut des idées innées ? C'est pour en

opposer la certitude & l'évidence au doute universel des sceptiques, qui est ruiné d'un seul coup, s'il y a des vérités dont la vue soit nécessaire & naturelle à l'homme. Or vous sentez, Monsieur, que je puis leur dire cela dans ma façon d'expliquer la chose, tout aussi bien que les partisans ordinaires des idées innées dans la leur. Et voilà ce qui semble incommoder un peu M. Locke, qui, sans se déclarer pyrrhonien, laisse appercevoir un peu trop de foible pour le pyrrhonisme, & a beaucoup contribué à le nourrir dans ce siècle. A force de vouloir marquer les bornes de nos connoissances, ce qui étoit fort nécessaire, il a quelquefois tout mis en bornes.

Après ces remarques générales sur le fond de la question, il est peu nécessaire de s'arrêter à quelques particulières, où vous ne me croyez pas fondé. Cependant vous me permettrez de vous faire observer sur celles que vous relevez : 1. Que dans ce § 5. du ch. 1. il est bien vrai que M. Locke mêle ces deux choses, être actuellement dans l'esprit, *sans que l'esprit s'en apperçoive* — &, y être, *sans qu'il s'en soit jamais apperçu*. — Mais il est certain aussi, qu'à la conclusion de ce §, il s'en tient au premier incognito, & donne lieu à ma critique en s'exprimant en ces termes. Je suis la traduction Françoisse n'ayant pas l'original. "De sorte, dit-il, que soutenir qu'une chose soit dans l'entendement, & qu'elle n'est pas conçue par l'entendement, qu'elle est dans l'esprit, sans que l'esprit l'apperçoive, c'est autant que si l'on disoit, qu'une chose est, & n'est pas dans l'esprit ou dans l'entendement." N'est-il pas clair, Monsieur, que ce grand philosophe, écrivant cela, étoit dans l'erreur,

ou la méprise de fait que je prends la liberté de lui reprocher; c'est que l'esprit ne peut avoir aucune connoissance qu'il ne l'apperçoive actuellement? Je crois bien que si on l'avoit d'abord relevé là-dessus il auroit senti sa méprise, mais il n'en est pas moins vrai, & qu'il y est tombé, & qu'il s'en fait un principe contre ses adversaires.

2. Vous voulez qu'on lui passe sa distinction entre les idées qui *sont dans l'esprit* & celles qui *sont dans la mémoire*: à moi ne tienne, pourvu que vous preniez le mot d'idée comme moi; car, en ce sens, une idée est dans l'esprit, lorsque l'esprit envisage actuellement la proposition qui est l'objet de son idée, ou de son coup d'œil; & elle n'est que dans la mémoire, lorsque l'esprit ayant auparavant jeté ce coup d'œil sur elle, en a plus de facilité à la réitérer, & en la réitérant, sent que ce n'est pas la première fois qu'il envisage cette proposition-là. — Mais si par idées, vous entendez ces *espèces* chimériques, supposées par les métaphysiciens, & autant qu'il m'en souvient, pas assez nettement congédiées par M. Locke, j'en reviens, s'il vous plait, à ma prétension, qu'on ne s'entend pas soi même quand on distingue la mémoire de l'esprit.

Un violent mal de tête que j'ai apporté de notre vénérable classe, ne me permet pas d'étendre d'avantage cette lettre, & m'empêche de la faire moins courte & plus nette. Je vous prie, Monsieur, de l'excuser telle qu'elle est. Peut être, pénétrant comme vous l'êtes, ne laisserez vous pas d'y entrevoir de quoi prévenir toute difficulté sur les principes innés de pratique: M. Locke me paroît plus fort ici que sur
les

les autres, mais il n'a pas laissé de s'y embarrasser un peu par-ci par là.

Je me faisois une fête de vous voir un moment à Vevay, & j'ai été capot d'être *disappointed*: si j'entends ce mot de votre langue, la nôtre n'en a point qui peut dire si bien la même chose. Je n'ai même vu M. Pavilliard que dans l'assemblée.

Si la marche de 120 mille Russes n'est pas une fable, que va devenir S. M. Prussienne? Ne croyez vous pas, Monsieur, que nous touchons à de grandes révolutions? Il y a long temps que je soupçonne un plan formé, de réduire le système général à trois grands empires; celui des François, à l'occident du Rhin, celui d'Autriche à l'orient, & celui des Russes au nord. Il n'y en a pourtant rien dans l'Apocalypse. Qu'on partage la terre comme on voudra, pourvu qu'il y soit toujours permis de croire, que ce qui est, est; & que les contradictoires ne peuvent pas être vraies en même tems. Au reste ces trois empires auroient beau être grands, mesurés à nos toises, ils paroïtroient toujours bien petits, vus seulement depuis la lune, & à quelle hauteur ne s'élèvent pas par delà des yeux philosophes.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, avec bien de la considération, Monsieur, &c.

ALLAMAND.

M. de N*** m'écrit que *tout va mieux que jamais*, à présent que Madame D. sa nièce est bien malade, & que voilà 200 mille hommes prêts à s'égorger pour 5 sols par jour. Il est de mauvaise humeur contre ce *tout est bien*.

VOL. II.

C

N° IV.

M. le Professeur BREITINGER à M. GIBBON à Lausanne;

October 22, 1756.

EQUIDEM Davus sum, non Œdipus; dicam tamen quid de dubiis e Justino propositis locis mihi videatur.

1. JUSTINUS, libr. ii. c. 3. *His igitur Asia per mille quingentos annos veltigalis fuit. Pendendi tributi finem Ninus rex Assyriorum imposuit.* Adeo manifestus est calculi error, ut mirum videri possit, hanc lectionem unquam fuisse a quoquam in textum receptam; ita enim Ninus Sefostre mille quingentis annis inferior esset ætate. Orosius, qui Justinum per compendium summa cum fide expressit, hæc in hunc modum commemorat. Lib. i. c. 14. *Universam quoque Ægyptum (Scythæ) populassent; nisi, paludibus impediti, repulsi fuissent. Inde continuo reversi, perdomitam infinitis cædibus Asiam veltigalem fecere: ubi per 15. annos sine pace immorati, tandem uxorum flagitatione revocantur, denunciantium, ni redeant, sobolem se a finitimis quaesiuras.* Dubium ergo nullum est, quin pro MD. substituendum sit XV. Tu inquiris in causam erroris fatis argutè. Sed non potest habere locum illa tua emendatio, *per mille in permissa*, si quidem notis arithmeticis, quod admodum probabile est, in antiquis libris numeri fuerunt expressi.

2. JUSTIN. libr. xii. c. 8. *Itaque cæsis hostibus, cum gratulatione in eadem (castra) reverterunt.* Frustra mihi sollicitare videris lectionem receptam: gratis enim a

te assumitur, quod Cuphites ne quidem aggredi fuerint ausi. Alia te docebit fides *Justini* interpres *Orosius*, lib. iii. cap. 19. *Cumque ad Chosides ventum esset, ibi contra CC. millia equitum hostium pugnam CONSERUERUNT; & cum tam etate detriti, animo egri, viribus lassæ, difficile VICISSENT, castra ob memoriam plus solito magnifica condiderunt.* Itaque non priusquam manus conseruissent, nonnisi post hostes devictos ac cæsos, in castra reverterunt. Quid quod ipse *Justinus* idem haud obscurè innuit, quum ait: *Motus his tam iustis precibus, velut in finem VICTORIÆ, castra fieri jussit quorum molitionibus & hostis TERRERETUR.* Quod si vero statuas, *Macedonum* exercitum infinitis *Cuphitarum* copiis territum a prælio abstinuisset, atque hoc timore perculsum reditum maturandum esse censuisse, næ ego non intelligo, quo sensu *Justinus* dixerit: *Castra posuisse velut in finem VICTORIÆ: posuisse eadem solito magnificentiora ut hostis TERRERETUR: & cum GRATULATIONE in ea revertisse.* Ubi & hoc contra *Sebistii* emendationem notari velim, formulam illam loquendi *CUM GRATULATIONE* alterum illud, *εὐχαριστήρια δόντων, cæsis hostiis*, jam comprehendere. Adeoque illa tua emendatio *omissis hostibus* & ab historiæ fide & a *Justini* sententia multum abludit.

3. *JUSTIN.* lib. xxiii. c. 8. *Terre motu portio montis abrupta Gallorum stravit exercitum, & confertissimi cunei, non sine vulneribus hostium, dissipati ruebant.* Ne te offendat durior, quæ tibi videtur, trajectio vocis *hostium* quam cum *confertissimi cunei*, conjugendam censes, atque intelligis de cuneis hostium, sive *Gallorum*, militaribus. Atque tu, re rite expensa, cognosces, nullam hic trajectionem locum habere,

sed omnia naturali ordine fluere: tantum *cuneos* exponas, non per cohortes hostium militares, sed per *moles conglobatas* a monte ac rupe avulsas, quæ non *confertim*, sed postquam præcipiti cursu in *cuneos* dissilissent, *dissipate ruebant non sine vulneribus hostium*, h. e. Gallorum. Ita perspecta erit ac manifesta ratio, cur illud *hostium cum confertissimi cunei* nec possit, nec debeat conjungi: ne scilicet perperam ad cuneos militares traheretur, adeoque ad vitandam omnem sermonis ambiguitatem.

4. JUSTIN. lib. xxviii. c. 2. *Adversus Gallos urbem eos suam tueri non potuisse: captamque non ferro defendisse, sed auro redemisse*. Si quidem iste locus medicam manum postularet aut admitteret, non est altera qua uterer libentius quam tua, qua pro *captamque* restituis *capitoliumque*. Et frustra Schefferus hic scrupulos movet, quasi ineptum fuerit dicere, *captam urbem ferro defendi* potuisse: id enim, quamvis ignave factum fuisse memorant historici Romani uno quasi convitio: in illis *Orosius*, lib. ii. c. 19. *Patentem Galli urbem penetrant: en captam urbem Romam! Universam reliquam juventutem in arce Capitolini Montis lasitantem OBSIDIONE concludunt: ubique infelices reliquias, fame, peste, desperatione, formidine tenent, subigunt, &c.* Vides urbe jam capta, defensionitamen locum superuisse; neque profecto redimi urbem opus fuisset, nisi jam in hostium potestate, h. e. capta fuisset. Non videris de eo emendationis tuæ incommodo cogitasse, quod capitolium solum auro fuisse redemptum affirmaret, contra historiæ fidem

5. JUSTIN. lib. xxxi. c. 1. *Legati primum a senatu* *

Romano missi, ut Antiocho Syriæ regi persuaderent, ne bello invadat eas cæle-Syriæ civitates. quas Ægyptiï priore bello occuparant, quæ proinde Ægyptiï juris fuerunt, hoc usi sunt argumento, quod hæ civitates ad regem pupillum pertinerent, fidei suæ traditum. Atque etiam supra Justinus, lib. xxx. c. 3. memorat: Mit- titur & M. Lepidus in Ægyptum, qui tutorio nomine regnum pupilli administret. Altera deinde legatio, quæ supervenit, postquam Antiochus has civitates in potestatem suam jam redegerat, postulans, ut illæ in integrum restituantur, omissa pupilli persona, nunc alio prætextu utitur, nimirum quod istæ civi- tates jure belli factæ sint populi Romani. Quid jus belli sit, quatenus ab ipso bello, sive eo quod bello par- tum est, distinguitur, declarabo duobus locis Livii; altero ex Quinti Flaminii ad Nabidem oratione, lib. xxxiv. c. 22. Quibus igitur amicitia violatur? nempe his duabus rebus maxime: si socios meos pro hostibus habeas: si cum hostibus te conjungas. Utrum non a te factum est? nam & Misenen uno atque eodem jure fæderis, quo & Lacedæmonem in amicitiam nostram acceptam, socius ipse sociam nobis urbem vi atque armis cepisti: & cum Philippo hoste nostro societatem... pepi- gisti. Altero Flori, lib. iii. c. v. Quippe rex non jam quasi alienam, sed quia amiserat, quasi raptam, jure belli repetebat. Ut taceam illud jure belli ad utrumque, potiore tamen sensu ad jubeat restitui in integrum referri posse; statim enim subjicit: abnuenti bellum denunciatum.

6. JUSTIN. libr. xxxi. c. 1. *Igitur Senatus scripsit Flaminio, si ei videatur, sicuti Macedoniam a Philippo, ita Græciam a Nabide liberet. Quid de gloria Flaminii*

ducis belli Macedonici statuendum sit, docet formula S. C. apud Livium, lib. xxxiii. c. 32. S. P. Q. R. & L. Quintius Imp. Philippo rege, Macedonibusque DEVICTIS, liberos, immunes suis legibus esse jubet Corinthios, &c. Et Florus, lib. ii. c. xii. Successerat Philippo filius Perses, qui SEMEL IN PERPETUUM VICTAM esse Macedoniam non putabat ex gentis dignitate. Quæritur jam an Quintius, qui Macedoniam vicit, ullo sensu dici possit Macedoniam a Philippo liberasse, quamvis deinde ipsa Macedonia Philippo non fuerit adempta: & si Nabidem pari modo vinceret, an non hoc ipso Græciam liberasse censendus sit? At vero omnem rem explicasse videtur ipse Justinus, qui, libr. xxx. cap. ult. hæc habet: *Sed Macedonas Romana fortuna vicit: fractus itaque bello Philippus, pace a Flaminio Cof. petita, nomen quidem regium retinuit, sed omnibus Græciæ urbibus, velut REGNI (MACEDONICI) MEMBRIS, extra terminos antiquæ possessionis, amissis, SOLAM Macedoniam retinuit.* In literis, ergo, Senatus Rom. ad Cof. Flaminium per *Macedoniam* significatur, non tantum Macedonia stricte sic dicta, & antiquis terminis comprehensa, quæ sola Philippo non fuit adempta; sed in primis ea Græciæ pars (istæ urbes), quæ *extra terminos antiquæ possessionis*, veluti *regni Macedonici membra* accesserant, quæque sub Philippo ad Macedonicum regnum pertinebant; quibus, in senatus literis, opponitur Græcia reliqua, a Nabide tentata, quæ hæcenus imperio Macedonico nunquam fuerat subjecta. Hinc Senatus Rom. sententia isthæc fuerit: sicuti Macedoniam a Philippo, ita reliquam Græciam a Nabide liberet. Vel, sicuti partem Græciæ, quæ ad Macedoniam pertinebat a

Philippo, ita nunc universam pene Græciam a Nabide liberet.

Quis dixerit ?

— *Non est sententia : verum est :*

Credite me vobis solum recitare Sibyllæ !

November 17, 1756.

SINT critica disciplinæ studiosi in sollicitandis veterum auctorum locis cautiore, & in legendis ipsis auctoribus diligentiores, atque ita intelligant, quantæ diligentia sit hæc critica ars, & quam temere faciant, qui, ut aliquid concoquere non possunt, aut non satis vel analogiæ respondens vel dialecticis præceptiunculis suis conveniens putant, ita mutare sument; quæ temeritas est, cum a multis, tum a Cel. Burmanno imprimis in præfatione aurea Phædro præmissa, reprehensa; cujus ego præfationis uti tanquam normam mihi semper propositam habui, ad quam quicquid est hujus facultatis dirigerem, ita lectionem omnibus his vehementer commendatam esse cupio, qui in hoc genere elaborare volunt. His, quæ præfiscine dicta velim, præmissis, accedo nunc ad eam disputationem, quæ circa dubia quædam Justiniani loca docte versatur.

1. Emendatio loci libr. ii. cap. 3. § 18. manifeste corrupti (cujusmodi corruptio in numeris admodum proclivis, & propterea etiam frequens est) quæ sciscit vulnus sanari, mutando MD. vel CIOIO. in XV. non potest non omnibus cordatis se probare; quam ipsam pudendi erroris ratio in obscuro lateat: & ut verum fatear, curiosa mihi, ne quid gravius

dicam, semper visa est ea cura ac diligentia, quæ in investigando ac definiendo eo ponitur, quod mille diversis modis accidere ac oriri potuit. Corrupta lectio ita se habet: *his igitur Asia per mille quingentos annos vectigalis fuit.* Convenit inter nos de sincera lectione ita restituenda: *his igitur Asia per quindecim annos vectigalis fuit.* Tu vero, pro tuo acumine, in ipsa corrupta lectione videris tibi cernere haud obscura quædam pristinae lectionis vestigia; atque illud *per mille* ex *permissa* natum esse tibi persuades; ut vera hujus loci lectio hujusmodi sit: *his igitur Asia permissa quindecim annos vectigalis fuit.* Contra hoc lectionis supplementum, cujus ego necessitatem nullam video, monui, codices antiquos, qui numeros literarum notis descriptos præferunt, huic tuæ conjecturæ nullo modo favere. Et quamvis non negaverim dari codices antiquos qui numeros integris vocibus expositos efferant; mihi tamen persuasum est, plurimos dari antiquos libros, in primis historicos, in quibus frequentiores calculi occurrunt, qui numeros literarum notis descriptos repræsentent: huic vero persuasioni fidem faciunt & exempla & testimonia luculentissima; unicum e multis afferam Galeni de Antidot, I. — Τὰ δὲ δὴ βιβλία, τὰ καὶ τὰς βιβλιοθήκας ἀποκειμένα, τὰ τῶν ἀριθμῶν ἔχοντα σημεῖα βάλως διασπεί-
 σθαι· τὸ μὲν πρὸς ποιήτων ἐνία, καθάπερ καὶ τὸ Ο. τὸ δὲ Ι. Γ. προστίθαι μίᾳς γραμμῆς ὥσπερ γὰρ καὶ ἀδικεῖται μίᾳς ἑτέρας. κ. τ. λ.
 Atque oppido miror, quin etiam doleo, hoc criticæ disciplinæ caput, de notis numeralibus, in antiquis codicibus varie descriptis, nondum certis observationibus & regulis ita esse adstrictum, & in artis formam redactum, ut frivola quorundam in numeris &

calculis pro libidine fingendis ac refingendis intemperies coerceri, certæ contra notæ characteristicæ de ætate & fide codicum constitui, possint. Fac vero huic tuæ conjecturæ qua *per mille* in *permissa* mutandum censes, a parte scripturæ codicum MSS. nihil ob stare; eam tamen prorsus respuit, quem ipse notas, Justinus error, qui Sesostrum ab Scythis *in fugam actum exercitum cum omni apparatu belli relicto*, perhibet: quumque Justinus supra, § 15. disertè commemorat *Scythas* a persequendo rege reverbos, *Asiam PERDOMITAM* veltigalem fecisse; qui mox § 18. idem *Asiam* non perdomitam, sed a Sesostrè *PERMISSAM* narraret. Non agitur de fide narrationis, sed de Justinus sententia, sive vera sive falsa. Neque fingendum est Justinum aperte sibi contrariari.

2. Arrianum si hic consulamus, ille simpliciter memorat, *Alexandrum ad Hyphasin amnem processisse*, *Indos qui trans flumen habitarent, subacturum: tum vero Macedonas, quum belli finem nullum cernerent, ulterius progredi noluisse, tandemque Cæno deprecante impetrasse ab Alexandro, ut se ad reditum pararet, quoniam omnia illum ab ulteriore prosecutione revocarent.* Ibi tum *Alexandrum XII. aras ingentes*, *μνηστῆρα τῶν αὐτοῦ πατρῶν*, constituisse. Nihil ille de Cuphitis; nihil de CC. millibus equitum qui terrorem incuterent Macedonibus; nihil de castris, &c. Curtius, lib. ix. c. 2. pari modo memorat, *Alexandrum, quum ad Fluvium Hyphasin pervenisset, cognovisse, ulteriorem ripam colere gentes Gangaridas & Pharrasios, eorumque regem, XX. millibus equitum, CC. peditum, obsidentem vias: ad hæc quadrigarum MM. trahere, & præcipuum terrorem elephantos quos MMM. numerus explect.* Tum vero

*Macedonas regem sequi ulterius detrectasse; Cænoque deprecante impetrasse, ut reditum in patriam pararent; subjungit vero: Tercio die processit, erigique XII. aras ex quadrato Saxo, monumentum expeditionis suæ; munimenta quoque castrorum jussit extendi, cubiliaque amplioris formæ quam pro corporum habitu relinqui, ut speciem omnium augeret, posteritati fallax miraculum præparans. Gemina fere habet Plutarchus in Alex. Quisquis hæc cum Justino comparat, facile intelliget, Justinum quamvis eandem historiam commemoret, nihilominus in præcipuis quibusdam facti circumstantiis, & Alexandri consiliis, ab his scriptoribus discrepare: maxime autem in eo, quod duplex castrorum tam insolita magnificentia construendorum consilium fuisse dicit, alterum quod *hostes*, alterum quod *posteris*, spectaret. § 16. *Motus his tam justis precibus, velut in finem victoriæ, castra solito magnificentiora fieri jussit, quorum molitionibus & HOSTIS terreretur, ET POSTERIS admiratio sui relinqueretur.* De priore consilio, nim. *ut hostis terreretur*, altum apud reliquos silentium. Ex quo clarum esse arbitror, ipsum Justinum receptam lectionem & omnibus codicibus probatam tueri, tuam vero emendationem respuere: quandoquidem enim *castra solito magnificentiora, velut in finem victoriæ fieri jussit*, hoc nonnisi de ultima ac recente aliqua victoria accipi potest. Quod si enim ad superiores victorias respexisset Justinus, dicendum fuisset (uti ipse agnoscis) *in finem victoriarum*, perinde atque supra § 10. habet: *Non minus victoriarum numero quam laboribus fessus.* Jam vero altera illa consilii ratio, quam reliqui omnes silentio premunt, nimirum *ut hostis terreretur*, non*

potuit locum habere, si, intactis hostibus, castra movere ac discedere fuerat constitutum. Unde enim terror Cuphitis esset injectus, si castra tantum *εις ὑψηλὴν τῶν ἀλλήλων περιουμένων* fuissent constructa & relicta? Etenim *omissis hostibus*, quæ victoria? quis terror? quæ deinde gratulatio? Gratulationis vocem autem de solemnibus victimis ob latum eventum, seu de χαριστικοῖς, qualia Arrianus memorat, passim usurpari, nemini qui in lectione veterum tritas aures habet, potest esse obscurum. Ut taceam illud *omissis*, tanquam quod inceptum aliquod, immo etiam neglectum, involvit, mihi non recte arridere, atque etiam a stilo Justiniani alienum videri. Cæterum quæ de Orosii ætate, scopo, fide prolixè disputas, parum ad rem facere videntur. Constat inter omnes Orosium in plerisque Justinum ita presse, ne dicam superstitiose, esse secutum, ut ejus fere verbis ac sententiis passim loqui videatur: & infinitis prope in locis Justiniani lectionem & sententiam, quam quidem ii libri, quibus Orosius usus est, præferebant, ex Orosio probabili ratione intelligi, confirmari, ac restitui posse, dudum ostenderunt viri docti. Immo & h. l. qui non videat, Orosium Justiniani narrationem ante oculos habuisse, eum ego nihil omnino cernere prope dixerim: unde enim Orosius *Chosridum* seu *Cuphitum* nomen omnibus aliis indictum, nisi ex Justino hauserit? Quod vero si ita est, quis non intelligit, Orosium apud Justinum non *omissis* aut *intactis hostibus*, sed *cæsis hostibus*, in suis legisse libris, atque ita Justinum interpretari?

4. Verum equidem est urbem captam obsidione cingi non posse: sed an ea non possit DEFENDI a præsidiiis arci impositis? hoc quæritur; arce enim

ab obsidione liberata, & urbs, quamvis jam capta, ab omni periculo defensa liberatur. Et quoties non, qui ingeniose dicere volunt, ac ludunt in antithesis, rem supra fidem augent, ut tanto major esse videatur?

5 Quæ de Syriæ oppidis *jure belli* factis P. R. novissime commentus es, nodum omnino solverent, nisi parachronismo essent superstructa: fœdus enim illud cum Antiocho per legatos pacem petente initum, cujus priora verba ex Livio, lib. xxxviii. c. 37. excitas, hanc Antiochi in Ægyptum expeditionem, quam Justinus, lib. xxxi. c. i. memorat, non præcessit, sed demum aliquo temporis intervallo subsequutum est. Vide an non huc pertineat, quæ memoriæ prodita habet Livius, lib. xxxiii. c. 34. *Secundum ista jam Quintius, & decem legati, legationes regum, gentium, civitatumque audivere. Primi omnium regis Antiochi vocati legati sunt: his eadem, quæ fere Romæ erant, verba sine fide rerum jactata: nihil jam perplexe, ut ante, quum dubiæ res incolumi Philippo erant, sed aperte pronunciatum, ut excederet Asiæ urbibus, quæ aut PHILIPPI aut PTOLOMÆI regum fuissent, &c.* Conf. & ejusd. libri, cap. 39 & 40. Hoc esto nunc Catone contentus. Vale, & rem tuam ex voto gere.

ZURICI HELVETIORUM, ad d. 3. Martini Episcopi.

Nº V.

M. BREITINGER à M. GIBBON.

PRÆCLARISSIME AC NOBILISSIME VIR,

QUANQUAM ex longo jam tempore severioribus
 musis me totum dare, hisque sacris operari institui,
 immo etiam in iis acquiescere per reliquum vitæ spa-
 tium constitutum habeo; non injucundum tamen fuit
 subinde invitantibus amicis in amœniora hæc litera-
 rum vireta oblectandi animi gratia exspatiari; & quo-
 tiescunque intellexi esse aliquem qui ad hæc literarum
 studia excolenda animum adjiciat, non defici admo-
 vere stimulos, ac fungi vice cotis, acutum reddere
 quæ ferrum valeat, exfors ipsa secandi. Quapropter
 nihil mihi obtingere potuisset aut jucundius aut magis
 exoptandum, quam a te *divinus* primum, nunc etiam
 aperto Marte ac fronte, ad hæc literarum studia,
 pristinas meas delicias, deduci: & laudo hoc tuum
 ingenium, tuamque sagacitatem, quæ non stimulo,
 sed fræno potius opus habere videtur; atque magno-
 pere velim alium pro me tibi obtigisse, cui majus
 subactum ingenium, majorque doctrinæ copia esset,
 quicum hunc callem terere posses.

Multus es in defendenda emendatione loci Justin.
 lib. xii. c. 8. § 17. ubi tu pro *cæsis hostibus* contra
 omnium codicum fidem ex ingenio, substituendum
 censeres *omissis hostibus*; quam ego emendationem, in
 superioribus meis, variis inductis rationibus, oppug-
 naveram. Equidem non est animus denuo in hanc
 disputationem descendere, aut singulatim ea quæ ad
 diluendas meas rationes in medium abs te adlata sunt,
 sub incudem revocare. Strictim tantum exponam;

cur ego nec receptam lectionem sollicitandam, nec propositam abs te emendationem admittendam esse censeam. Nemo est qui non fateri cogatur receptam ac codicum fide & consensu probatam lectionem, in se spectatam, bonum & apertum sensum fundere, nec a stilo Justinī, nec a Latini sermonis ratione abluere. Quod vero recepta isthæc lectio, commissum cum Cuphitis prælium memorat, de quo apud reliquos scriptores qui res Alexandri memoriæ prodiderunt, altum quidem silentium est; (quamquam nemo sit illorum qui hoc prælium commissum esse negaverit;) an hoc, inquam, nos ad sollicitandam constantem codicum lectionem inducere debeat, ut pro *commisso* prælio illud *omissum esse*, Justinum diserte cogamus pronuntiare? Ego quidem necessitatem nullam video. Quod si hæc licentia daretur arti criticæ, ut si quæ in aliquo scriptore facta legimus commemorata, quæ ab aliis silentio involvantur, illa statim expungenda, aut per contortam emendationem in contrarium plane sensum forent convertenda, nihil fere certum aut constans in historicorum scriptorum commentariis reperiretur. Quo minus autem tuam, vir nobilissime, emendationem admittere possim, duæ potissimum obstant rationes: altera est, quod admissa tua emendatione, reliquæ Justinī orationi sua non amplius ratio constet: sed integrum illud comma foret expungendum: quid enim sibi vellet *omissis hostibus in castra REVERTERUNT*, quæ cur unquam relinquerent, admissa tua emendatione, nulla ratio aut necessitas fuit? Altera vero ratio, quæ istam tuam emendationem respuere videtur, hæc est, quod phrasis *omittere hostes, omissis hostibus*,

Justino admodum trita, nusquam eodem sensu, quo tu adhibes, quantum quidem memini, apud Justinum occurrit: nusquam enim MILITES dicuntur *omittere hostes*, sed belli duces, penes quos summum imperium est, non illi quorum est imperata facere, & qui hoc ipso loco deprecati sunt, ne juberentur amplius cum hoste congredi: accedit quod phrasis illa *omissis hostibus* aliis in locis non FINEM belli sed MUTATIONEM involvit: inspicie locum a temet excitatum, lib. xxvii. c. 3. § 6. *Sed omisso externo hoste in mutuum exitum BELLUM reparant.* Addo ego locum alterum, lib. xxix. c. 2. § 7. *Hujuscemodi oratione impulit Philippum ut omissis Ætolis BELLUM Romanis inferret, &c.* Cæterum sufficit Orosium suo tempore apud Justinum legisse *cæsis hostibus*, quo recepta lectio mirifice confirmatur, perinde ut illa magnopere vacillaret, si in ejus ætatis Justinii codicibus *omissis hostibus* fuisse lectum constat.

De Syriæ civitatibus *jure belli factis* P. R. quod, iis quæ hactenus in hanc rem disputata sunt, addam, non habeo.

Moves denique, vir nobilissime, ne eadem semper chorda oberremus, neve amicæ disputationi materia desit, novam quæstionem circa I. Jul. Cæsaris consultatum, quem adiit Kal. Jan. A. V. C. DCXCV. anno ætatis XLI., quom per annales leges nemini licuerit, hunc magistratum petere ante annum ætatis XLIII. At vero hanc Villi, ut cæteras annales leges, non fuisse perpetuæ observationis. & fasti & historiarum monumenta docent: apud Liv. lib. viii. c. 4. relatum legimus, C. Mario Rutilo & Q. Servilio Ahala coll. plebiscito cautum, ne quis eundem magistratum

intra X. annos capefferet: non tamen videtur aut lex ista perlata aut postea quicquam valuisse. Occurrit enim II. post istos coff. anno apud Fastorum conditores ipsumque T. Livium, T. Manlius Torquatus, qui IV. ante annos; postea M. Valerius Corvus, qui VIII.; L. Papirius Crassus, qui VI. coff. fuerant. Immo unus L. Papirius Curfor intra VIII. annos quaternos consulatus gessit: quod fieri, lata hac lege, vel certe salva, non poterat. Huc etiam pertinent, quæ Dio Cass. lib. xl. § 56. de alia lege annali memorat: *Pompeius, inquit, restituit legem de Comitibus, quæ jubet, ut magistratum aliquem ambientes ad ipsa omnino Comitibus præsto sint*, (ὥστε μηδὲν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀρχόντων) *neglectam omnino renovavit; & S. C. paulo prius factum, ut qui in urbe magistratus gessissent, externas provincias, ante V. anni exitum, ne sortirentur, confirmavit. Nec vero puduit Pompeium, qui tum eas promulgaverat, ipsum Hispaniæ imperium in aliud quinquennium paulo post accipere: & Cæsari (cujus amici indignissime has leges ferebant) absenti quoque consulatus petendi potestatem eodem decreto concedere, &c.* Quod vero jam ad Villianam illam annalem legem attinet, nec eam constanter ita fuisse observatam, ut nunquam migraretur, vel ex ipso Ciceronis loco, Orat. contra Rullum, colligi potest, ubi gloriatur quod ex novis hominibus primus, & quidem prima petitione, anno suo, hoc honore fuerit auctus; cum qui ante ipsum ex hoc hominum genere, anno suo petierint, sine repulsa, non sint facti consules. Ex hoc enim loco quæ Villianæ legis vis fuerit, quum patricius aut consularis ex antiquo genere consulatum peteret, intelligi non potest. Certe Dolabella, cæso Cæsare, anno non suo

suo, quippe XXV annos natus, teste Appiano consulum invasit, qua de re Dio Cass. lib. xlv. § 22.

Ὁ Διογενὴς ἑλληνιστὴς τὴν ὑπάρχον ἀρχὴν, καὶ περὶ μηδέπω οἱ προσήκουσαν ἐσθλότητα.

Et Suetonius, c. 18. tantum non diserte memorat Julio contra leges aliquid fuisse concessum: *sed cum edictis jam Comitibus, ratio ejus haberi non posset, nisi privatus introisset urbem, & ambienti ut legibus solveretur, multi contradicerent, coactus est triumphum, ne consulatu excluderetur, dimittere.* Quam in rem etiam apud Dionem Cass. libr. xlv. Antonius in oratione funebri diserte hæc memorat: *Τοιγάροι καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ νίκῃ αὐτῷ διὰ τοῦτ' (scil ob expeditionem Hispanicam) ἐνεδίκαστο καὶ τὴν ἀρχὴν τὴν ὑπάρχον ΕΥΘΥΣ ἰδοὺ καί.* — *Triumpho omisso, cum res urgeret, actisque vobis pro eo honore, quem sibi ad gloriam satis esse ducebat, gratius, consulatum accepit.* Ita quum vix annus deesset, quo minus consulatum petere liceret Julio, aliquid fuisse ei concessum, ut triumphum dimitteret, manifestum est: quod si etiam ex lege annali consulatu excludere eum voluissent, non intelligo, qua ratione ipsi, quod ad triumphihonorem attinet, repulsam dare potuissent.

Oblatas animadversiones in Salchlini libellum Museo Helv. inferendas, quanquam Gallico idiomate conscriptas, cupide exciperem; nisi Musei illius cursus ad tempus foret inhibitus; nec dum constat utrum, & quando. typographo licuerit aut placuerit, isthoc opus novo aliquo tomo augere.

Vale, Vir Nobilissime, rem tuam ex animi sententia age, meque ama hominem ad omnia humanitatis officia paratissimum.

BREITINGERUM.

ZURICI HELVETIORUM, Kal. Mart.

CICIDCCCLVII.

VOL. II.

D

N° VI.

M. GIBBON à M. GESNER.

MONSIEUR,

CHEZ les Romains, ce peuple généreux, qui nous a laissé tant de choses à admirer & à imiter, les vieux jurisconsultes, que leurs longs travaux avoient rendus les oracles du barreau, ne se croyoient pas inutiles à la république, lorsqu'ils cherchoient à développer, à former des talens naissans, & à se donner de dignes successeurs. Je voudrois la rétablir cette coutume excellente, & la transporter même dans les autres sciences. Quiconque connoit tant soit peu vos ouvrages & votre réputation, ne vous refusera pas, je pense, le titre d'un des premiers littérateurs du siècle, & je ne crois pas qu'une folle présomption m'égare, lorsqu'je m'attribue quelques dispositions à réussir dans les Belles Lettres. Votre commerce pourroit m'être d'une grande utilité. Voilà mon seul titre pour vous le demander. Dans l'espérance qu'il pourra vous engager à me l'accorder, je vais vous demander des éclaircissemens sur quelques difficultés, & des décisions sur quelques conjectures qui se sont offertes à mon esprit.

1. Qui étoit ce Pison le Père, à qui Horace adresse son art poétique? M. Dacier croit que c'étoit ce L. Pison le pontife qui triompha pour ses exploits en Thrace, & qui mourut préfet de la Ville A. U. C. 785¹. Mais il est évident que ce ne fut point lui. Horace écrivit son art poétique avant l'an 734, puisqu'il y

parle de Virgile, qui mourut dans cette année, d'une façon à faire bien comprendre qu'il étoit encore vivant². Or dans un autre endroit du même art poétique³, il s'adresse à l'aîné des fils de ce Pison comme à un jeune homme qui avoit l'esprit déjà formé.

*O major juvenum, quamvis & voce paternâ
Fingeris ad rectum & per te sapïs.*

Ce qui ne peut guères convenir qu'à un jeune homme de dix huit, à vingt ans. Mais ce L. Pison ne pouvoit point avoir dans ce tems là un fils aussi agé. Il mourut en 785, agé de quatre-vingt ans⁴. Il naquit donc en 705, & il n'avoit que trente ans tout au plus, quand cette épître fut écrite. Je vois assez clairement, que ce ne pouvoit pas être là le Pison que nous cherchons; mais, parmi un assez grand nombre de personnages du siècle d'Auguste qui portoient ce nom, je voudrois qu'on m'aidât à trouver celui sur qui les soupçons peuvent tomber avec quelque vraisemblance.

2. Vous savez combien les critiques se sont donné de peine, pour rechercher le vrai but qu'avoit Horace dans la troisième ode du troisième livre. La grandeur des idées, & la noblesse des expressions y font sentir partout la main de maître: mais on est à la fois fâché & surpris d'y voir que le commencement ne se lie point avec la suite, que la harangue de Junon paroît ne tenir à rien, & n'aboutir à rien; & après avoir admiré cette ode par parties, on ne peut guères s'empêcher d'en condamner l'ensemble. Taneguy le Fevre l'avoit expliquée par un système que M. Dacier trouve mériter autant d'éloges que

l'ode elle même, & qui en effet me paroît des plus Jolis. Vous savez qu'il le fonde sur la crainte qu'il prête au peuple Romain de voir transférer à Ilium le siège de l'empire; & qu'il suppose qu'Horace composa cette ode dans la vue de détourner Auguste de ce dessein, en lui rappelant toute la part que les Dieux avoient eu à la destruction de cette ville, & combien le mortel qui oseroit la rebâtir s'exposeroit à tout le courroux de ces mêmes Dieux. Le peuple pouvoit d'autant plus facilement supposer ce dessein à ce prince, que son père adoptif en avoit été soupçonné¹. Mais je doute que ce système puisse se soutenir. Et on ne sauroit jamais prouver ces craintes prétendues du peuple Romain, qui sont même sans vraisemblance; Auguste se distingua toujours par les soins particuliers qu'il donna à la ville de Rome, qui devoient rassurer le peuple contre toutes les craintes d'une pareille espèce. On peut en voir le détail dans la vie d'Auguste par Suetone, c. 28, 29, 30. Je n'en marquerai que deux: il engagea la plupart des grands à orner la ville, par des bâtimens superbes², & il bâtit un Temple à Mars le Vengeur, où il ordonna que le sénat s'assembleroit toutes les fois qu'il feroit question de guerres ou de triomphes³. Sont-ce là les actions d'un homme qui songe à se faire une nouvelle capitale? L'exemple de son oncle ne pouvoit conclure; ce fut vers la fin de sa vie qu'il dut concevoir ce projet, dans un tems où la prospérité l'avoit aveuglé & engagé dans mille démarches folles & mal entendues, qu'Auguste se piqua toujours d'éviter avec soin. La sage opiniâtreté avec laquelle il refusa toujours la dictature, peut servir de preuve à ce que je dis⁴.

Voilà les raisons qui m'empêchent d'acquiescer au système de Taneguy le Fevre. J'en suis fâché, & je ne ferai tout à fait content que lorsque vous m'aurez fourni une autre explication de cette ode, plus solide sans doute, & qui en applanira également les difficultés.

3. Antiochus, roi de Syrie, avoit pris plusieurs villes de la Cœle-Syrie & de la Palestine au jeune Ptolémée, alors sous la tutelle des Romains. Ceux-ci prennent la défense de leur élève, & ordonnent au roi de Syrie de les rendre. Il méprise ces ordres, & les retient. Sur quoi on lui envoie une seconde ambassade, laquelle laissant de côté les prétensions du jeune prince, lui ordonna de rendre des villes, que le peuple Romain avoit acquises par le droit de la guerre, *civitates jure belli factas populi Romani*. Ce sont-là les termes de Justin¹, qui nous jettent dans une difficulté embarrassante. On ne conçoit pas comment les Romains pouvoient avoir acquis des villes dans la Syrie, & dans l'Egypte, puisque, bien loin d'y avoir fait des conquêtes, ils ne portèrent leurs armes en Asie que plusieurs années après cette époque. On connoit bien un traité qu'ils avoient fait avec les Rois d'Egypte avant ce temps², mais c'étoit un pur traité d'alliance & d'amitié qui ne fut précédé ni suivi d'aucune guerre. J'ai cru que l'examen des autres historiens, qui ont raconté ces mêmes événemens, pouvoit jeter quelques lumières sur un passage de Justin aussi obscur que celui-là. Mais Tite Live, qui parle plusieurs fois³ des négociations par lesquelles les Romains tachèrent de faire rendre à Ptolémée les villes d'Asie, qu'on lui avoit

prises, ne parle nulle part de ce droit de la guerre en vertu duquel les Romains les demandoient. Le favant M. Breitinger, professeur en langue Grecque à Zurich, à qui j'ai communiqué cette difficulté, après avoir tenté en vain de la résoudre, a été obligé enfin de la laisser sans explication. — Mais,

Nil desperandum, Teucro duce; & auspice Teucro.

4. Un différent que Scaliger & Isaac Vossius ont eu ensemble, sur la véritable époque de la mort du poëte Catulle, a fait beaucoup de bruit dans la république des lettres. Je n'ai point eu en main les pièces du procès, sçavoir les éditions de Catulle de ces deux hommes célèbres; mais Bayle ¹¹ nous a donné un extrait fort détaillé de leur dispute, y ajoutant ses propres réflexions. Je suis fâché de ne pouvoir pas remonter aux sources; mais dans la nécessité de me servir de rapporteur, je n'en connois point de meilleur que Bayle.

Quoique des habiles littérateurs se soient exercés sur cette question, je suis bien loin de la regarder comme parfaitement éclaircie. Vossius me paroît avoir trop avancé la mort du poëte, Scaliger l'a certainement trop reculée. Catulle ne mourut pas bien sûrement A. U. C. 696; mais il ne vecut pas non plus jusqu'aux jeux séculaires d'Auguste A. U. C. 736. Prouvons ce que nous avons avancé, & cherchons l'époque en question, qui doit se trouver entre ces deux années.

Catulle parle de la Grande Bretagne & de ses habitants ¹², or César fut le premier qui fit connoître cette île aux Romains ¹³, & César y fit sa première expé-

dition en 698 ¹¹. Aussi bien Catulle parle-t-il du second consulat de Pompée, qui tombe sur la même année ¹². Il vivoit même encore en 706, puisqu'il parle aussi du consulat de Vatinius ¹³. Je ne veux pas me servir des argumens de Scaliger pour prouver qu'il fut spectateur des triomphes de César, parceque je ne les crois pas de bon alloi. Je me dispenserai d'examiner en détail si les paroles *paterna prima lancinata sunt bona*, &c. ¹⁴ conviennent mieux aux premières victoires de César qu'aux dernières, parceque je crois qu'il n'y est question ni des unes ni des autres. Il n'y a qu'à lire cette épigramme avec quelque attention pour voir que Catulle s'adresse toujours à César dans la seconde personne :

*Cinæde Romule, hæc videbis & feres ?
Es impudicus, & vorax, & helluo.*

Pendant que Mamurra y paroît toujours dans la troisième personne, ce qui est le cas dans les lignes :

*Parum expatratvit ? an parvum helluatus est ?
Paterna prima lancinata sunt bona.*

Il n'y est donc nullement question des dissipations de César, mais de celle de Mamurra ; & toutes les conséquences qu'on en peut tirer par rapport aux triomphes de celui-là, sont illégitimes ¹⁵.

D'un autre côté, Catulle ne vecut pas jusqu'aux jeux séculaires d'Auguste, puisqu'il mourut avant Tibulle. Ovide, dans l'élégie qu'il fit exprès sur la mort de ce dernier, met Catulle parmi les poètes, que son ami devoit rencontrer à sa descente dans les Champs Elysées :

*Si tamen a nobis aliquid nisi nomen & umbra
 Restat: in Elysia Valle Tibullus erit.
 Obvius huic venias hederà juvenilia cinctus
 Tempora, cum Calvo, docte Catulle tuo*."

Mais dans quel temps Tibulle mourut-il ? Une petite épigramme de Domitius Marius nous l'apprend : le même jour, ou du moins la même année, que Virgile :

*Te quoque Virgilio comitem non æqua, Tibulle,
 Mors juvenem Campos misit ad Elysios*."

Or personne n'ignore que Virgile mourut le 22 Septembre 734". Il est donc clair que Catulle, déjà mort dans ce temps-là, ne vit point les jeux séculaires qui ne se célébrèrent qu'en 736.

Avançons plus loin, & disons, que Catulle étoit déjà mort avant 721. Je me fonde sur le témoignage d'un historien contemporain, ami de Cicéron" & de Catulle lui-même"; en un mot de Cornélius Nepos. Il faut le développer ce témoignage. Dans la vie d'Atticus, que cet écrivain nous a laissée, parlant d'un certain L. Julius Calidius, à qui Atticus rendit de grands services, il ajoute pour le faire mieux connoître, *quem post Lucretii Catullique mortem, multo elegantissimum poetam, nostram tulisse etatem vere videor posse contendere*". Catulle étoit donc mort lorsque Nepos écrivit ce passage. Mais ne pourroit on pas fixer le temps de sa composition ? très-facilement : de vingt deux chapitres qui composent cette vie d'Atticus dix huit furent publiés de son vivant. *Haclenus Attico vivo hæc a nobis edita sunt*". Le

passage, où il est parlé de la mort de Catulle, se trouve dans le douzième chapitre; d'où il s'ensuit que Catulle mourut avant Atticus. Mais celui-ci finit sa vie sous le consulat de Cn. Domitius & de C. Sosius²⁷. Si l'on vouloit pousser l'exacritude encore plus loin, & qu'on eût envie de déterminer l'année précise de la mort de notre poëte, on ne se tromperoit pas de beaucoup en prenant l'année moyenne entre A. U. C. 706 & 721; ce qui nous donnera 714, époque qui cadre fort bien avec tout ce que nous en favons d'ailleurs.

Le seul argument de Scaliger, qui pourroit embarrasser, est celui qu'il tire du poëme séculaire que Catulle doit avoir composé. La conjecture de Vossius qu'on célébra des jeux au commencement du VII. siècle de Rome n'est pas soutenable. Je doute que celle de Bayle vaille mieux. Le commencement de ce siècle étoit marqué par tant de désordres, on négligeoit tellement les anciennes cérémonies²⁸, qu'il n'y pas d'apparence qu'on ait conçu le dessein de célébrer de pareils jeux, ni que le peuple s'y attendit. Mais quel besoin de supposer que ce poëme avoit été composé pour les séculaires. N'est-il pas bien plus naturel de le croire destiné pour la fête de Diane qui se célébroit tous les ans au mois d'Août; Bentley avoit déjà fait cette conjecture²⁹. On peut la confirmer par la comparaison du poëme séculaire d'Horace avec ce morceau de Catulle. Dans celui-ci les garçons & les filles ne font qu'un chœur pour s'adresser en commun à Diane;

*Dianæ sumus in fide
Puellæ & pueri integri*³⁰.

Au lieu que dans Horace les garçons s'adressent à Apollon, les filles à Diane :

*Supplices audi pueros Apollo ,
Siderum Regina bicornis audi ,
Luna puellas¹⁹.*

Cette distinction leur avoit été même ordonnée par l'oracle qui leur enjoignit la célébration de ces jeux²⁰.

Je m'arrête : en voilà bien assez pour une fois. Je dois sentir que vos momens sont précieux , & il faut au moins vous disposer à ne pas trouver mauvaise la liberté que j'ai prise , en n'en abusant pas.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, avec beaucoup de considération ,

Monsieur, &c.

EDWARD GIBBON.

N° VII.

M. GESNER à M. GIBBON.

I. **Q**UÆRITUR de Pisonibus quibus honorem in Arte Poetica habuit Horatius. Dacerius & Sanadonius forte fidem apud te , Gibbone , Vir Doctissime , inventuri erant facilius , si auctorem sententiæ suæ laudassent , sine quo ea levis , & hariolationi similis , videri potest , & quæ argumento etiam non nimis valido everti queat. Jam vero est illa Porphyrio antiqui hominis , qui eam forte debet antiquiori , qui de nominibus Horatianis scripsit. Hic ergo Porphyrio , ut est ex optimis libris editus , *Hunc librum* ,

inquit, qui inscribitur de Arte Poetica ad L. Pisonem; qui postea urbis custos fuit, misit. Nam & ipse Piso poeta fuit, & studiorum liberalium antistes. At ætas non convenit! Immo pulchre. Mortuus est ille Piso, Tacito teste, (An. l. vi. c. 10.) octogenarius A. U. 785. Gessit præfecturam urbis annis XX.; suscepit ergo A. U. 765. Antequam illud munus susciperet, debet scripta esse epistola de Arte Poetica (quam ego suspicor fuisse aliquando secundi libri tertiam): quia Porphyrio dicit, qui postea urbis custos fuit. Ponamus natum esse Pisoni majorem filiorum anno ætatis XXX. eumque filium annos XVI. habuisse, cum ad illum ista scriberet Horatius (366.): *O major juvenum*, &c. Scripta erit Ars Poetica anno ætatis Horatii LII. quod pulchre convenit cum Benteianis rationibus, quas ego, cum ante hos fere annos Horatium ederem, comperi hætenus certe justas esse, ut diligenter licet attendenti; nihil occurrerit, quod illis repugnet. Si putemus in adolescentem XVI. annorum, non convenire laudem, quam illi tribuit Horatius (quod mihi quidem contra videtur) prius natum possumus V. vel X. adeo annis dicere. At Virgilius vivebat adhuc cum Artem Poeticam scriberet Horatius, qui mortuus est A. U. 734. cum vir XXX. annorum esset Piso, nec filium habere posset X. vel XII. ad summum annis majorem. Primo nec ipsum hoc forte absurdum putarint quidam, *juvenem* hic vocari præcoci ingenii & doctrinæ puerum decennem. Hac quidem ætate poetas fuisse Hugonem Grotium aliosque novimus: & liberalius, credo, utebantur aulici homines *juvenis* appellatione, postquam nequiter adeo Ciceroni exprobraverat *puerum* quod vocasset Octavium.

Sed quod pace tua dixerim, Vir Humanissime, nihil causæ video cur in vivis adhuc fuisse, statuendum sit Virgilium, scribente Artem Horatio. Neque enim simpliciter eo loco vivi poetæ mortuis opponuntur, sed antiqui novis: non sola Libitina sacrare poetam potest; sed annos jam plures mortuus sit, secundum istos iudices, oportet:

“*Est vetus atque probus, centum qui perficit annos.*”

Vide, quæso, epistolam libri secundi primam.

2. De Horatii ode libri tertii tertia, sententiam dixi in meis ad illum observationibus, quas tibi visas non puto, quare hic repetam & explicabo. Lufit Augustus cœnas Deorum nonnunquam. Notum est ex Suetonio (l. ii. c. 70.), male audisse aliquando cœnam illius *δωδεκα θεῶν*, h. e. duodecim illorum Deorum, quibus pulvinaria, seu lecti sternebantur in Capitolio (e. g. Liv. xxii. 10.) Quid si Horatius iussus vel in iussus scripsit versus tali dramati aptos? Quid si, cum male audirent id genus ludi, voluit, hoc velut specimine proposito, persuadere hominibus, esse illos innocentes, civiles, Romani populi studiis conformes? Voluit eadem ode blandiri genti Julæ, quæ origines Trojanos ab Ænea, & Iulo dudum adoptaverat. Aditum sibi parat ad eam rem pulcherrimum poeta. Fortitudo cum iustitia homines ad Deos perducit. Inter hos jam est nostra admiratione & prædicatione, Augustus, & (ut eodem circiter tempore cecinit, Od. iii. c. 5. § 2.) *præsens divus habetur*. Nempe non minus meritorum ac juris habet Augustus quam habuit olim cum Baccho Romulus: qui tamen non sine difficultate receptus est, *donec gratum elocuta est Juno Diis consiliantibus*. Hujus

oratio ejusdem plane argumenti est, cujus illa Virgiliana, (*Æn.* l. xii. v. 791. & *seq.*) Et potuit Horatius illud argumentum eligere, si vel nunquam serio cogitavit de transferenda imperii sede Augustus. Potuit ea re gratum facere principi, si crederet ipse populus damnari in aula consilium illud antiquum Julii Cæsaris, calamitosum Romæ ac detestabile. Quod hic longior est, & *παρρησιαστος*, quam ab illo exordio aliquis exspectaret; næ ignarus fuerit nature carminis lyrici, quatenus illa exemplis veterum cognoscitur, qui longum adeo excursum si, vel excursus fit, reprehendat.

3. Durus satis nodus esse debet, qui non modo eruditum atque ingeniosum juvenem sed veteranum etiam in his literis virum, Bretingerum, cujus nomen semper cum honore usurpo, potuit tenere. Qui enim postulare potuit legatio populi Romani, "civitates jure belli suas factas restitui in integrum ab Antiocho," quas paulo ante Senatus Ptolemæi pupilli sui esse dixerat? Qui potuere Romani juri belli asserere sibi urbes Asiæ, in quam aliquot demum annis post primus "omnium Romanorum ducum Scipio cum exercitu trajecit?" (*Epit. Liv.* l. xxxvii.) Verum solvi tamen potest hic nodus, etiam non adhibito Alexandri gladio, modo seriem illarum rerum apud ipsum Justinum atque Livium inspiciamus. Hic (l. xxxi. c. 14.), *Philippo*, inquit, *animos faciebat—sedes istum cum Antiocho Syriæ rege, divisæque jam cum eo Ægypti opes, cui, morte audita Ptolemæi regis, ambo imminuebant.* Justinus (lib. xxx. c. 2.), *Legatos Alexandrini ad Romanos misere, orantes ut tutelam pupilli sui susciperent, tuerenturque regnum Ægypti, quod jam Philippum*

& Antiochum, facta inter se pactione, divisisse dicebant. Nec vero inter pacta res substitit. Antiochus enim, dum occupatus in Romano bello est Philippus, (teste Livio, lib. 33. c. 19.) omnibus quæ in Cæle-Syria sunt civitatibus Ptolomæi in suam potestatem redactis; simul per omnem oram Ciliciæque & Cariæ tentaturus erat urbes quæ in ditione Ptolomæi essent; simulque Philippum exercitu navibusque adjuturus. Interea debellatur vinciturque a Quintio Philippus. Ab eodem Quintio jam (Liv. lib. xxxiii. c. 34. aperte pronuntiatur legatis Antiochi, jure belli & victoriæ nimirum, ut excederet Asiæ urbibus, quæ aut Philippi aut Ptolomæi regum fuissent. Obscurius igitur brevitate, sed verum tamen scripsit Justinus.

Ecquid te pœnitet, GIBBONE Vir Doctissime, literis ita humanis laceßitum ivisse fenem frigidum & inertem, qui per duos menses possit differre responsum ad epistolam ita blandam, ita sibi honorificam? Non conjiciam causam longi silentii in senectutem, quamquam hæc quoque incipit sufflaminare nonnunquam conatus meos, ut sentiam circa septuagesimum, demptis tribus, ætatis annum, non ita me jam imperare posse ingenio, ut annis superioribus. Sed cum alias in otium concedere paullatim detur fenibus, mihi adhuc pene contra evenit, ut subinde novæ mihi curæ imponantur. Adscriptus sum societatibus aliquot, ut Berolinenfi, & nostræ Scientiarum; hanc etiam per vices semestres jussus dirigere: præsidere soleo singulis hebdomadis societati apud nos Germanicæ; submittere autem scriptiunculas quasdam meas Latinæ Jenensi. Bibliothecam Academiæ, quinquaginta ad minimum librorum millibus constantem, curare meum

est; tum scholas majores per Germanicas Regis provincias inspicere, & regere consilio; tum alimentarios circiter viginti juvenes observare; & scribere quid Prorektoris & Senatus Academici nomine in tabulis publicis proponitur; & inter hæc ternas, quaternas, plures etiam interdum, singulis diebus prælectiones habere. Quæ dixi tantum publicis aliquo modo officiis debentur. Quot salutares juvenes sunt accipiendi? quot ex condiscipulis vel discipulis amici absentes colendi literis? nunquam vacare possum a scribendo, commentando talia, quæ luci destinata publicæ plus aliquanto curæ postulant: ut nunc in manibus est Claudianus, hac æstate, si Deusnaverit, proferendus. Hæc cum ita sint, fateor, me cum primum percurrenti tuas, vir præstantissime, literas, negotium etiam operosius videretur, quam tractando deinde expertus sum illas in otium pinguiusculum continuarum aliquot horarum seposuisse. Hoc otiolum heri demum casu mihi oblatum, collocavi ut, vides.

Supereſt, uti hanc lucubrationunculam boni conſulas, & ſi illa minus forte, quam mihi optabile eſt, expectationi tuæ reſpondeat, alia mihi omnia quam gratificandi tibi voluntatem deſuiſſe exiſtumes. Brevitati ſtudi, quod non opus eſſe putarem ea repetere, quæ ad cauſam conſtituendam a te bene dicta ſunt. Latina, lingua, ut aliquanto mihi familiariore, uſus ſum, ne mihi forte accideret, quod tibi Gallice ſcribenti, Gallice licet bene docto, uſu veniſſe video, uti ſcriberes, *Un différent que Scaliger & If. Voſſius ont eu enſemble*; unde aliquis colligeret te putaviſſe liticulam habuiſſe inter ſe homines, quorum alter novem annis poſt alterius mortem natus eſt. Habes, Gibbone, Vir

Humanissime, nudum pectus & deditam tibi voluntatem & parata studia

MATTHIÆ GESNERI.

Scrib. GOTTINGÆ, a. d. XII Feb. Anno LVIII.

4. In quæstione de annis Catulli plane tuus sum; Gibbone Doctissime. Ne putes pigritia quadam me assentiri malle tibi, quam tecum disputare, primo hic reponam ipsa verba quæ juvenis posui in disputatione de annis ludisque secularibus veterum Romanorum Vinarix A. 1717; atque adeo ante hos ipsos quadraginta annos a me habita, (p. 43.) *Cum in ipso carmine nihil sit quod non alio quoque festo in Diane honorem cani potuerit*, &c. Deinde confirmo tibi me expendisse eadem hora, qua ista scribebam, eruditam disputationem tuam, contulisse ipsas H. Vossii ad Catullum observationes (edit. 1684. 4to. p. 8. & seq.), & ea quæ Jos. Scaliger a Vossio hic refutatus disputaverat; inspexisse Ciceronis de Mamurra locum, adhibuisse Middletoni observationem; & post rem bene perceptam & perpensam, plane secundum te, præstantissime Gibbone, pronuncio.

P. S. Recte mihi reddentur literæ tuæ, si in posterum quoque scribere ad me velis, vel solo meo nomine & urbis nostræ literis inscripto; vel sic, "A M. le Professeur Gesner, Conseiller de la Cour. de sa Majesté Britannique, à Gottingen." Sed si vis viderè titulos meos more Germanico deductos, en tibi excerptos ex libro quintum edito Nordhufæ 1752. 8vo. Teutsch und Französisch Titularbuch, p. 164: — "A Monsieur Monsieur
" Gesner,

" Gesner, Conseiller de la Cour de sa Majesté
 " Britannique, Professeur ordinaire de l'Univer-
 " sité de Gottingue, Inspecteur Général des
 " Ecoles de l'Electorat de Hanovre, Biblio-
 " thécaire de l'Université, Directeur du Sémi-
 " naire Philologique, Président de la Société
 " Royale de l'Eloquence Allemande, & Membre
 " de la Société Royale des Sciences de Got-
 " tingue, &c." Nullus horum titulorum est,
 quin aliquid certe temporis mihi auferat : quæ
 sola etiam causa est cur huc descripsi : quod
 mihi te credere sic putabo, si quam brevissima
 inscriptione literarum ad me utaris.

N° VIII.

Mr. GIBBON à M. GESNER.

MONSIEUR,

LA multitude de vos occupations montre à la
 fois votre mérite, la justice qu'on lui rend, ma présomp-
 tion, & votre bonté. Que j'envie le sort de ce petit
 nombre d'esprits supérieurs dont les talens toujours
 les mêmes, & toujours diversifiés, revêtissent avec
 une égale facilité tous les caractères que l'utilité ou
 l'agrément des hommes exigent d'eux. J'applaudis encore
 au discernement de ces princes qui osent écarter les
 nuages dont la frivolité, l'envie, & la calomnie envi-
 ronnent leurs trônes, qui rendent aux grands hom-
 mes de leurs états, une justice que le public impartial
 leur rendoit depuis long tems, & qui savent récom-
 penser leurs talens, en leur fournissant de nouvelles

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occasions de les développer. Voilà une petite partie des réflexions qu'a fait naître votre lettre; si j'en croyois mon inclination, elles n'auroient point de bornes; mais la raison me dit que je dois me contenter de vous assurer de toute la reconnoissance dont vous avez pénétré un homme qui se fera toujours gloire du titre de votre disciple. Je vais dans peu de tems en Angleterre; je pourrois peut-être y trouver l'occasion de vous prouver mes sentimens, ou du moins mon commerce vous deviendra moins ennuyeux. Mon séjour dans une capitale éclairée me donnera une forte de mérite local. Incapable de les imiter, je vous apprendrai de bonne-heure les travaux, & les découvertes de nos savans. Gottingue mérite bien qu'à mon tour je vous demande quelles sont les occupations de vos collègues & de vos disciples. Un nouveau plaisir que j'envisage dans mon retour en Angleterre, c'est la connoissance de tous vos ouvrages. Mon premier soin sera de me les procurer, & de les étudier comme mes meilleurs modèles: pour m'aider dans cette recherche, je prendrai la liberté de vous demander une liste de tous ces morceaux curieux dont vous avez enrichi la république des lettres. Mon ignorance de plusieurs d'entre eux excite à la fois ma joye & ma honte. Ma jeunesse, & le lieu d'où je date mes lettres, sont mon unique excuse.

Si j'ose proposer quelques nouveaux doutes, vous savez mieux que personne qu'il n'y a que la raison, ou du moins son apparence qui soit absolue. Soyez persuadé que mon unique but en discutant vos leçons, c'est de m'en rendre digne:

*Non ita certandi cupidus, quam propter amorem,
Quod te imitari aveo. Quid enim contēdat hirundo
Cycnis? aut quidnam tremulis facere artibus hædi
Consimile in cursu possint, ac fortis equi vis?
Tu pater & rerum inventor* ⁴¹.

Après cette explication, je vous avouerai qu'il me reste encore quelques nuages sur le Pifon de l'Art Poétique. Vous ne croyez pas que les paroles d'Horace touchant Virgile, prouvent que ce poëte fût encore vivant, & que l'opposition est plutôt des anciens aux modernes, que des morts aux vivans. J'ai relu l'endroit, mais cette nouvelle lecture, & les réflexions aux quelles elle a donné lieu, n'ont fait que me confirmer dans ma première opinion. Horace trouvoit la langue Latine pauvre & trop stérile, pour exprimer les idées abstraites que les compagnons de Romulus, les pâtres, & les brigands ne connoissoient point: plusieurs de ses compatriotes lui avoient trouvé le même défaut. Horace souhaite de l'enrichir. Il propose pour cet effet aux Virgile, aux Varius, de travailler dans ce dessein, & d'emprunter du Grec quantité de termes énergiques dont ils avoient besoin. Il leur offre son secours. C'est un projet qu'il forme & non une chose déjà faite qu'il justifie. Par conséquent l'avenir qu'il envisage ne peut regarder que ceux d'entre les écrivains qui vivoient encore. Par conséquent l'Art Poétique fut composé avant l'an 735. Le point de vue sous lequel je considère ce passage, est si bien celui du poëte lui-même, que celui-ci finit cette opposition par cette image (une des plus vives & des plus justes, que je connoisse):

— *licuit, semperque licebit,*

Signatum presenti nota producere nomen ¹³.

Le *licuit*, le passé, regarde les Terence, les Cæcilius, morts depuis long tems; le *licebit*, le futur, les Varius, les Virgile, ceux qui étoient encore en état d'en profiter ¹⁴.

Mais, dites vous, dans ce tems même le jeune Pison pouvoit avoir dix ans; Grotius faisoit bien des vers à cet age. Je le fais: mais les Grotius sont ils bien communs; combien d'enfans trouverez vous de dix ans, qui ayent non-seulement assez de feu pour faire des vers, mais encore assez de réflexion pour en juger sensément? Il n'est pas même vraisemblable qu'à l'âge de vingt ans Pison le père eût déjà des enfans. Vous savez combien rares étoient les mariages sous Auguste; combien l'exemple de Germanicus paroissoit admirable ¹⁵; combien la pauvreté ¹⁶, la débauche, & l'orgueil, arrêtoient la noblesse dans le célibat, surtout pendant les guerres civiles qui désolèrent la terre, pendant la première jeunesse de Pison. Les loix d'Auguste ne font qu'indiquer la grandeur du mal ¹⁷, & les premières de ces loix furent promulguées plus de trente ans après la naissance de Pison ¹⁸. Si l'on compte une génération ordinaire *venit* à trente trois ans ¹⁹, il paroît que sous le commencement de l'empire, on devoit les pousser plutôt jusqu'à quarante ans, que de les réduire à vingt. Je conviens que cene font la que des probabilités, mais dans la science de la critique, il paroît que les probabilités doivent faire disparoître les possibilités, & céder à leur tour aux preuves. Je ne crains rien de ce principe. L'autorité d'un Porphyryon n'a pas assez de force parmi les favans,

pour pouvoir jamais former un raisonnement. Tout ce qu'elle pourroit faire, ce seroit d'en appuyer un déjà prouvé. Les anciens ne donnoient point à Porphyryon la première place parmi les commentateurs d'Horace¹⁹, & les modernes, Monsieur Dacier surtout, lui ont trouvé beaucoup d'erreurs. Je ne fens pas d'ailleurs la force de la première de vos hypothèses. Si Pison avoit eu son fils à l'âge de trente ans, celui-ci pouvoit en avoir seize, lorsque Horace lui écrivit, age, suivant vous, qui répond aux conditions requises. Auriez vous oublié dans ce moment qu'Horace mourut en 745, quand Pison lui même n'avoit que 40 ans?

2. Je ne doute pas un instant qu'Horace n'ait eu en vue, dans la troisième Ode du troisième Livre, de faire voir aux Romains que si leur prince aspirait aux honneurs divins, *Viamque affectat Olympo*, il les méritoit par ses exploits, dont la grandeur égaloit celle des plus fameux héros, d'un Bacchus, d'un Hercule, d'un Romulus, héros, qui méprisant les efforts des humains, & apaisant la haine des Dieux, s'étoient frayé un chemin jusqu'aux palais des immortels. Mais a-t'il voulu faire cesser les clameurs du peuple sur l'infame *Δωδεκάθεος*? j'en doute. 1. Les dates y répugnent. Suetone ne marque pas celle du *Δωδεκάθεος*; mais nous savons toujours que, puisque Marc Antoine la rappela dans les lettres à son rival²⁰, elle arriva avant la dernière brouillerie des triumvirs, ou avant l'an 721. Suivant Bentley²¹ dont vous adoptez les idées, Horace composa le troisième livre des Odes dans la quarante-deuxième, & la quarante-troisième année de son âge, c'est à dire, en 728 & 729. Une justification venue sept ou huit ans après coup, bien loin de faire plaisir à

Auguste n'auroit servi qu'à faire revivre la mémoire de ces excès, que la politique du prince, & la reconnaissance du peuple avoient plongé dans l'oubli. 2. Auguste soupa avec onze hommes, ou femmes, pareillement équipés en divinités. Horace élevoit bien Auguste à la table des dieux, *purpureo bibit ore nectar*; mais y plaçoit-il aussi tous ses compagnons? L'honneur seroit devenu bien banal, & un tel panégyrique n'eût pas été fort éloigné de la satire. Je conviens bien du reste avec vous, que trouver le plan d'un morceau de poésie Lyrique, est un but plus désirable que nécessaire. Les Lyriques ont toujours eu le privilège de prendre un vol que l'imagination admire, & que la timide raison n'ose critiquer. Dans l'ode dont nous parlons, que ce défaut, si c'en est un, est racheté par de grandes beautés! Les deux premières strophes font sentir quel effet, l'union de la philosophie avec la poésie, peut produire: le *justum & tenacem propositi virum* est le sage des stoiciens, leur roi²², leur seul heureux. La justice formoit toutes ses résolutions; une constance inébranlable le rendoit ardent à les suivre²³. Un tel homme au dessus des passions & des préjugés, n'y jetoit quelquefois les yeux que pour s'écrier,

"O! curas hominum! O! quantum in rebus inane!"
S'il est honteux pour l'espèce humaine de n'avoir jamais produit cet homme; il lui est bien honorable d'avoir su en former un tableau. Quelle gradation dans les images! son sage résisteroit aux clameurs d'une multitude forcenée. Mais la colère du peuple s'apaise avec la même facilité qu'elle s'est allumée. Il mépriseroit les menaces d'un tyran furieux; mais les cœurs des tyrans se font quel-

quefois laissé fléchir. Il entendroit sans frémir le bruit des tempêtes sourdes aux cris des malheureux. Mais la fortune a souvent sauvé les victimes à la fureur des flots. Egal à Jupiter, il n'en craindroit pas la foudre. Ici l'imagination s'arrête en tremblant. Elle craint pour le poète une chute foible ou outrée; elle ne sent point d'image supérieure au courroux du maître des Dieux & des hommes. Avec quel étonnement admire-t-elle le génie du "poète, quand elle lit : "il recevra sans fourciller "le choc de l'univers écroulé, où une même destruction devoit envelopper, les hommes, les éléments, & les Dieux eux-mêmes." " Je m'arrête. Peut être ces réflexions vous ennuyent : en ce cas, c'est ma faute. J'aurai cependant rempli mon but qui étoit de faire voir le point de vue sous lequel je considère l'érudition la plus grande. Comme moyen, elle mérite toute notre admiration ; comme fin dernière, tout notre mépris.

3. Vous connoissez, Monsieur, ce fameux passage de Velleius Paterculus, " qui a donné tant de peine aux savans. Le voici : *Ita Drusus, qui a patre in id ipsum plurimo pridem igne emicans incendium militaris tumultus missus erat, prisca antiquaque severitate usus, ancipiti sibi tam re, quam exemplo perniciofa, & his ipsis militum gladiis, quibus obsessus erat, obsidentes coercuit.* Il ne paroît pas qu'on en puisse tirer quelque sens raisonnable. Il faut absolument le supposer, ou inutile, ou corrompu. Aussi tous les critiques, qui ont travaillé sur cet auteur, ont ils essayé de le rétablir. Burerius, Acidalius, Grutar, Boeclerus, Heinsius, Burman, ont tous

fourni des conjectures plus ou moins vraisemblables, mais que je ne me propose pas de discuter. Il vaudra mieux, je crois, vous en offrir une de ma façon, & vous laisser juger de son plus ou moins de probabilité. Au lieu de la leçon reçue, je lirai, *Priscâ antiquâque severitate, FUSUS ancipiti sibi tam re quam exemplo perniciosâ*. Il saute aux yeux combien ce léger changement présente un sens net. Il est aisé de faire voir qu'elle est des plus conformes à l'analogie de la langue, & à la vérité de l'histoire. Les meilleurs grammairiens reconnoissent aujourd'hui, que les Latins, faute d'une forme moyenne à leurs verbes, se font souvent servi des participes d'une terminaison passive dans un sens actif⁶⁶. Qu'ainsi ils ont dit *juratus, punitus*, pour dire *qui juravit, qui punivit*. On trouve même *peregratus* dans ce sens, dans Velleius lui-même⁶⁷. Ainsi *susus*, pour exprimer l'action de Drusus, ne doit pas étonner. L'histoire est également favorable à notre correction. Drusus (suivant Tacite) arrive au camp des rebelles⁶⁸. Ses ordres sont méprisés, ses ordres deviennent suspects. Les soldats le tiennent prisonnier dans le camp, ils outragent ses amis, ils ne cherchent qu'un prétexte pour commencer le carnage; quel danger pour la personne? *Sibi ancipitia tam re*. On connoît la sévérité de la discipline Romaine. Les chefs étoient pour les soldats des dieux; leurs ordres, des oracles. Quel renversement de toutes ces maximes! Quel funeste exemple pour l'avenir, que la sédition des légions Panoniennes! Le fanatisme qui a fait tant de maux, fit cette fois du bien: une éclipse de lune étonna les soldats, & sauva le prince.

J'ai lu avec plaisir, Monsieur, votre explication de la difficulté de Justin. J'admire avec combien d'art vous formez un tissu de la narration des auteurs différens, pour rassembler des rayons épars de lumière dans un même foyer. Si vous n'y avez pas pu porter toute la netteté désirable, je crois qu'on doit s'en prendre uniquement aux ténèbres de l'antiquité & à la brièveté de Justin lui-même.

Rassuré par votre suffrage, je n'ai plus de crainte sur mon idée touchant la mort de Catulle. Auparavant je la trouvois vraisemblable; à présent je commence à la regarder comme certaine.

J'ai l'honneur d'être, avec la plus haute considération & la plus parfaite estime, Monsieur, &c.

EDWARD GIBBON.

N°. IX.

This Letter, in the early hand-writing of Mr. GIBBON, (probably about the time of his first leaving Lausanne,) seems to be under the assumed character of a Swedish traveller, writing to a Swiss friend, delineating the defects he discovered in the government of Berne. In pointing out those defects he seems to have had the intention of suggesting remedies; but, as he is entering on this topic, the manuscript ends abruptly. The excellence of this curious paper will apologize for its great length.

NON, mon cher ami, je ne veux point être cosmopolite. Loin de moi ce titre fastueux, sous lequel nos philosophes cachent une égale indifférence pour tout le genre humain. Je veux aimer ma patrie,

& pour aimer, il me faut des préférences : mais ou je me trompe, ou mon cœur est susceptible de plus d'une. Quand j'aurois tout sacrifié pour la Suede, mon pays natal, je ne me serois point encore acquitté envers elle; je lui dois la vie & la fortune: mais que cette vie seroit triste, que cette fortune me seroit à charge, si, expatrié dès ma tendre jeunesse, votre pays n'eût pas formé mon goût & ma raison à des mœurs moins grossières que les nôtres! Je me montrerois indigne de ces bienfaits, s'ils ne m'avoient pas inspiré la plus vive reconnoissance. Aujourd'hui que la Suede, tranquille à l'abri des loix, n'exige de ses enfans que de sentir leur bonheur, je puis, sans l'offenser, jeter un regard sur le pays de Vaud, mon autre patrie, me réjouir avec vous de ses avantages, & compatir à ses maux.

Votre climat est beau, votre terroir fertile; vous avez pour le commerce intérieur des facilités, dont il ne tient qu'à vous de profiter. Mais je considère plutôt les habitans, que l'habitation. On va chercher les philosophes à Londres. Paris attire dans son sein tous ceux qui n'aiment que la douceur de la société. Votre pays le cède à ces deux capitales, là où elles brillent; mais cependant il réunit tous leurs avantages respectifs; il est le seul, où tout à la fois on ose penser, & on sache vivre. Que vous manque-t-il? la liberté: & privés d'elle, tout vous manque.

Cette vérité vous surprend; elle vous blesse. Pouvoir dire que nous ne sommes pas libres, me répondez-vous, prouve que nous le sommes. Il le

prouveroit peut-être, si j'écrivois à Lausanne, ou plutôt là même il ne prouveroit rien. Vos maîtres connoissent la maxime du Cardinal Mazarin, de vous laisser parler, pourvu que vous les laissiez agir. Ainsi le procès n'est point encore jugé.

Si j'écrivois pour le peuple je m'adresserois à ses passions; je le ferois souvenir de cette maxime de tous les tems, que dans les républiques, ceux qui sont libres, sont plus libres, & ceux qui sont esclaves, plus esclaves que partout ailleurs. Mais avec un ami tel que vous, je ne dois chercher que la vérité, & n'employer que la raison. Quand je compare votre état avec celui de vos voisins, c'est avec plaisir que je le prononce heureux. Traversez votre lac & vos montagnes, vous trouverez partout un peuple digne d'un meilleur sort; sa raison abruti par la superstition, le patrimoine de ses pères, & le fruit de son industrie, en proie au partisan, ou au hussard. Sa vie sacrifiée à tout moment au caprice d'un seul homme, qui, lorsqu'il entend parler de vingt mille de ses semblables, morts dans le service de son ambition, dira froidement, qu'ils ont fait leur devoir.

Vous au contraire professez un Christianisme, ramené à la divine pureté de son institution, enseigné par de dignes pasteurs, à qui on permet de se faire aimer, de se faire respecter, mais non de se faire craindre. Votre union avec le Corps Helvetique vous a assuré depuis deux siècles une paix unique dans l'histoire. Vos impôts sont petits, l'administration douce. On n'entend point parler parmi vous de ces sentences sans procès, sans crime, sans accusateur,

qui arrachent un citoyen du milieu de sa famille. L'on ne voit jamais le souverain, on le sent rarement. Cependant si la liberté consiste à n'être soumis qu'à des loix, dont l'objet est le bien commun de la société, vous n'êtes point libre.

Quand la violence des uns, & la foiblesse des autres, ont rendu nécessaires les sociétés civiles, il a fallu renoncer à cette indépendance si chère, & si pernicieuse. Il a fallu que toutes les volontés particulières se fondissent dans une volonté générale; à laquelle des punitions réglées obligeassent chaque citoyen de conformer ses actions. Qu'il est délicat, ce pouvoir de fixer la volonté générale! En quelles mains doit-on le remettre? Sera-ce à un monarque dès-lors absolu. Je fais que l'intérêt bien entendu du prince ne se peut séparer d'avec celui de son peuple, & qu'en travaillant pour lui, il travaille pour soi même. Tel est le langage de la philosophie. Mais ce langage n'est pas un de ceux que les précepteurs font étudier aux rois; & si un heureux naturel leur en donne quelque idée, leurs passions, ou celles d'un ministre, d'un confesseur, d'une maîtresse, l'effacent bientôt. Le peuple gémit, mais il faut qu'il ait gémi longtemps, avant que son maître s'aperçoive qu'il est de l'intérêt d'un berger de conserver son troupeau. Il faut donc que le pouvoir législatif soit partagé. Un conseil dont les membres s'éclaireront & se contiennent les uns les autres, paroît en être un dépositaire bien choisi. Mais la liberté attache à ce conseil une condition fondamentale. Elle veut que chaque ordre des citoyens, chaque partie de l'état, y ait ses représentans intéressés à s'opposer à toute loi qui seroit nuisible à ses droits, ou contraire à son bonheur, puisqu'eux mêmes en sentiroient

les premiers, les mauvais effets. Une telle assemblée fera rarement des fautes grossières, & si elle paye quelquefois le tribut à l'humanité, elle peut rougir de ses erreurs, & les réparer aussitôt. Ce portrait est-il le vôtre? J'entre dans votre pays, je vois deux nations distinguées par leurs droits, leurs occupations, & leurs mœurs. L'une, composée de trois cens familles, est née pour commander; l'autre, de cent mille, n'est formée que pour obéir. Toutes les prétentions humiliantes des monarques héréditaires se renouvellent à votre égard, & deviennent encore plus humiliantes de la part de vos égaux. La comparaison de vos deux états, vous est trop facile. Rien ne vous aide à l'éloigner.

Un conseil de trois cens personnes décide de tous vos intérêts en dernier ressort, & si ses intérêts & les vôtres ne sont pas d'accord, qui doit l'emporter? Non seulement ce sénat est législateur, mais il exécute ses propres loix. Cette union de deux puissances qu'on ne devoit jamais réunir, les rend chacune plus formidable. Quand elles sont séparées, la puissance législative redoute les résolutions violentes; elles seroient inutiles, si l'on n'armoit pas les mains de la puissance qui les doit exécuter, & cette puissance est toujours sa rivale, & son contrepoids. Mais ce n'est pas assez que cette union aiguise le glaive de l'autorité publique, elle le remet encore dans un plus petit nombre de mains: dans le dernier siècle le grand conseil de Berne se renouvelloit lui même; c'étoit déjà un pas vers l'oligarchie: pourquoi exclure des élections le corps de la Bourgeoisie? Alors même le gouvernement s'appuyoit sur un fondement assez étroit. Bientôt des

inconveniens se firent sentir; la brigue, la vénalité, la débauche, signaloient l'entrée des citoyens dans le conseil souverain, & les riches ambitieux donnoient tout, pour pouvoir tout invahir. Une députation révocable de vingt-fix conseillers, établie dès l'enfance de la république, pour veiller à l'exécution des loix, devint chargée du soin de remplir les places de ce grand conseil dont elle-même tiroit son origine. On y ajoutoit seize sénateurs choisis de la manière la plus favorable aux factieux. Ils possédoient d'abord leur pouvoir collectivement, mais peu à peu l'intérêt particulier leur fit entendre qu'il valoit mieux permettre à chacun de nommer son fils, son gendre, & son parent. Les familles puissantes qui dominoient alors dans le sénat, y dominent encore. Les de Watteviles, & les Steigers, y remplissent une trentaine de places. Le commerce intéressé de bienfaits, où l'on passe dans le petit conseil par les suffrages de ses parens, pour faire entrer de nouveaux parens dans le grand conseil, à déjà réduit le nombre des familles qui siègent dans celui-ci, à environ quatre vingt. Ces maisons souveraines ont un égal mépris pour ceux que le droit naturel auroit du rendre leurs concitoyens, & pour ceux qui le sont par la constitution de l'état. Il manque même aux premiers une ressource que les monarques les plus absolus, n'ont pas osé ôter à leurs sujets; je veux parler de ces tribunaux reconnus du souverain, & révérsés du peuple, pour être l'organe de la patrie, & les dépositaires des loix. Toutes les volontés du prince, qui doivent être obéies, le sont plus facilement, quand les sujets voyent combien elles sont raisonnables, puis qu'elles

ont passé par l'examen de ces magistrats, qu'on ne peut ni tromper, ni séduire, ni intimider. Aussi répondent-ils à cette considération, par une résistance respectueuse, mais déterminée contre l'oppression, où ils étalent tout ce que la raison, la liberté, & l'éloquence peuvent inspirer à des citoyens zélés. C'est principalement dans ces tribunaux paisibles que je trouve ces qualités. Privés d'armes, ils ne doivent leur pouvoir qu'à leur probité, & à leur éloquence. Est-il étonnant que ceux, qui n'ont que cet instrument, s'appliquent le plus à le cultiver? Quelles leçons pour les rois, que les remontrances du Parlement de Paris? Quels modèles pour le peuple que la conduite des Mandarins de la Chine? Frappé par un tribunal de cette espèce, le monarque ne peut méconnoître les gémissemens de la patrie. Les citoyens y apprennent qu'ils ont une patrie; ils s'attachent à l'aimer, à étudier ses loix, à se former à toutes les vertus publiques. Elles mûrissent dans le silence, l'occasion les développe, ou elles se font l'occasion. Les états du Pays de Vaud, respectables sous les Rois de Bourgogne, & sous les Ducs de Savoye, étoient ce tribunal. Composés de la noblesse, du clergé, & des députés des villes principales, ils s'assembloient tous les ans à Moudon. C'étoit le conseil perpétuel du prince. Sans leur consentement, il ne pouvoit, ni faire de nouvelles loix, ni établir de nouveaux impôts. Si j'étois sur les lieux j'établirais ces droits, par vos monuments les plus authentiques. Tout éloigné que j'en suis, je ne crains pas d'appeler à leur témoignage. Il me reste toujours une preuve moins sensible pour le peuple, mais aussi décisive pour les gens de lettres: c'est l'analogie. Les Barbares du cinquième siècle jetèrent

par toute l'Europe, les racines de ce gouvernement que Charlemagne établit dans les Pays Bas, la France l'Italie, la Suisse, & l'Allemagne. Quelques événemens, les degrés, & les temps où les arrière-fiefs se formèrent des fiefs, où le clergé acquit des terres seigneuriales, où les villes achetèrent leurs affranchissemens, y apportèrent de légères différences. Mais le fond de cette constitution est demeuré dans toutes les révolutions, & rien de plus libre que ce fond. Ces états, leurs membres, & leurs droits se conservèrent toujours, & partout ils étoient les mêmes.

Je vous entends, mon ami, qui m'interrompez. Je vous ai écouté, me dites vous, avec patience: mais que voulez vous conclure de ce tableau de notre gouvernement? Bien ou mal construit, nous n'en ressentons que des effets salutaires, & vos conseils, vos états, auroient de la peine à nous dégoûter de nos magistrats anciens, pour nous faire essayer des nouveautés.

Arrêtez, Monsieur; je vous ai parlé en homme libre, & vous me répondez dans le langage de la servitude. Arrêtez. En convenant pour un moment de votre bonheur, de qui le tenez vous? de la constitution? Vous n'osez pas le dire. C'est donc du prince? Les Romains en devoient un plus grand à Titus. Ils étoient cependant de vils esclaves Brutus vous auroit appris que, dans un état despotique, le prince peut quelquefois vouloir le bien: mais que dans les états libres, il ne peut que le vouloir. La félicité actuelle du citoyen & de l'esclave, est souvent égale, mais celle du dernier est précaire, puisqu'elle est fondée sur les passions des hommes, pendant que celle

celle du premier est assurée. Elle est liée avec les loix qui contiennent également ces mêmes passions dans le souverain & dans le payfan.

Mais malheureusement on ne trouve que trop de choses à reprendre dans votre administration politique. Je vais détailler des fautes, des négligences, des oppressions. Vous vous récrierez sur ma malignité, mais en secret votre esprit grossira le catalogue de cent articles que j'aurai ou ignorés ou oubliés. Il est du devoir du souverain de faire jouir son peuple de tout les avantages de la société civile. Des guerres entreprises pour sa défense, l'en détourneront quelquefois, mais dèsque le calme renaît dans ses états, des établissemens utiles, & de sages loix, la religion, les mœurs, les sciences, le commerce, les manufactures, l'agriculture, & la police, méritent toute son attention, & l'en récompenseront avec usure. Sur ces principes jugeons le sénat de Berne. Il a été maître du Pays de Vaud depuis l'an 1536. Quand je considère ce qu'étoient alors la France, l'Angleterre, la Hollande, ou l'Allemagne, j'ai de la peine à me persuader qu'elles étoient les mêmes pays que ceux qui portent aujourd'hui ces noms. De barbares, ils sont devenus civilisés; d'ignorans, éclairés; & de pauvres, riches. Je vois des villes où il y avoit des déserts, & les forêts défrichées se sont converties en champs fertiles. Leurs princes, & leurs ministres, un Henry quatre, un Sully, un Colbert, une Elizabeth, un de Witt, un Frédéric Guillaume, ont opéré ces merveilles. La perspective du Pays de Vaud n'est point aussi riante. Les arts languissent, faute de ces récompenses que le prince seul peut donner; nul commerce, nulles

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manufactures, nuls projets utiles pour le pays; un engourdissement général qui regne partout. Cependant les princes dont je viens de parler n'avoient que des momens pour ces objets, où les Bernois ont eu des siècles. Que n'auroient-ils pas fait, ces grands hommes, rarement tranquilles sur le trône, si pendant deux cents douze ans, ils n'eussent eu que des voisins pacifiques, & des peuples soumis? Je m'en rapporte à vous même. Indiquez-moi quelque établissement vraiment utile que vous deviez au souverain. Mais ne m'indiquez pas l'académie de Lausanne, fondée par des vues de dévotion, dans la chaleur d'une réformation, négligée depuis, & toujours académie, quoique un digne magistrat de cette ville, proposât de l'ériger en université.

Non ce n'est point une politique peu éclairée qui fait agir vos maîtres. Je connois trop leur habileté. Mais un monarque aime également tous ses sujets. Les citoyens d'une ville capitale voyent au contraire d'un œil jaloux l'agrandissement des provinces. Si elles s'élèvent, disent-ils, nous tombons. Nos égales pour les lumières & les richesses, elles voudroient bientôt l'être en pouvoir. Rappelez vous l'an 1685. La mauvaise politique de Louis XIV. expatria la partie la plus industrieuse de ses sujets; une multitude se réfugia dans le pays de Vaud. Il étoit prochain, il étoit François. Ils ne demandoient qu'un asile, & l'auroient payé au poids de l'or par les richesses & les arts plus précieux que les richesses qu'ils vous apportoitent. Mais ici la politique partielle des Bernois s'épouvanta. " Si nous faisons
" participer ces fugitifs à notre droit de bourgeoisie,

“ la fortune nous fera commune ; mais comment élever des mortels au rang des dieux ? Si nous les laissons confondus parmi nos sujets , nos sujets recueilleront le fruit de leur industrie.” Ils conclurent enfin avec l'ambassadeur de Porfenna—

— *Qu'il vaut mieux, qu'un roi sur le trône affermi
Commande à des sujets, malheureux, mais soumis,
Que d'avoir à dompter, au sein de l'abondance,
D'un peuple trop heureux l'indocile arrogance.*

Ces exilés las d'essuyer des refus où ils devoient s'attendre à des prières, passèrent en Hollande, en Prusse & en Angleterre, où les souverains savoient mieux profiter de cette occasion unique. Il en resta une partie dans le pays de Vaud, mais c'étoit la partie la plus pauvre, & la plus fainéante, qui n'avoit ni le moyen, ni la volonté d'aller plus loin.

A peine ces malheureux commençoient-ils à oublier leurs souffrances passées, que l'expérience leur fit sentir, que pour fuir les persécutions, il faut fuir les hommes. La partie souveraine de l'état avoit sucé avec le lait, toute la dureté du système de Calvin, théologien atrabilaire qui aimoit trop la liberté, pour souffrir que les Chrétiens portaient d'autres fers que les siens. D'ailleurs sa conformité avec les idées d'un célèbre philosophe, intéressoit l'honneur du nom Allemand à le soutenir. Comme les sentimens s'étoient adoucis dans le pays de Vaud, en proportion avec les mœurs, il falloit y envoyer des formulaires & des inquisiteurs, destinés à faire autant d'hy-

pocrites qu'ils pourroient, non à la vérité par le fer & le feu, mais par les menaces & les privations d'emploi.

En soutenant les droits de l'humanité, je n'outre point les maximes de la tolérance. Je veux bien que le magistrat ne distribue les récompenses du public, qu'à ceux qui enseignent la religion du public. Je ne lui défends pas même de contenir dans le silence ces novateurs trop hardis qui voudroient éclairer le peuple sur certains objets où l'erreur fait son bonheur. Mais que le souverain se prêtant avec chaleur aux minuties théologiques, décide des questions qu'on ne peut décider, assurément il est absurde. Qu'impofant des confessions de foi, il ne laisse à des pasteurs veillis dans le ministère, & qui ne demandoient qu'à se taire, que le choix du mensonge ou de la mendicité, assurément il est injuste. Mais la persécution cessa. — Qui la fit cesser? Un sentiment de honte? les larmes des sujets? ou bien la crainte qu'inspira l'entreprise d'un Davel, enthousiaste il est vrai, mais enthousiaste pour le bien public? Encore même il regne à Lausanne une inquisition sourde. Les noms d'Arminien & de Socinien remplissent encore ces lettres où de très-honnêtes gens rendent compte à leurs protecteurs des sentimens de leurs concitoyens; & c'est suivant ces indices que les places se distribuent.

Je viens, non pas d'épuiser, mais d'indiquer quelques défauts qui se trouvent dans votre puissance législative. Passons à l'exécutrice. Celle-ci est la force publique, comme l'autre est la volonté publique. Mais un seul corps, un seul homme, peut délibérer & décider pour toute une nation. Il ne peut tout seul agir pour elle. L'administration politique, compo-

tée d'un nombre infini de branches, veut qu'un grand nombre d'officiers, soumis les uns aux autres, s'employent à faire jouer la machine à laquelle le maître ne peut que donner le mouvement général. Les honneurs & les avantages, que les lois attachent à ces emplois, doivent être ouverts à tous les citoyens, que leurs talents & leur éducation ont mis en état de les remplir. Les fardeaux leur sont communs à tous, les récompenses doivent l'être aussi. Un gouvernement monarchique satisfait aisément à ces justes prétentions. A l'exception de quelques courtisans qui approchent la personne du prince d'assez près, pour substituer la flatterie aux services, tous les sujets lui sont égaux. Dès qu'un homme a du mérite, ou, si l'on veut de la faveur, on ne lui demande point s'il est Normand ou Provençal. D'Epernon étoit Gascon; Richelieu, Champenois; Mazarin, Romain. Mais dans les républiques aristocratiques, les souverains composés de toute une ville veulent être législateurs en corps, & partager entre eux en détail tous les emplois considérables. Les talents, les lumières dans votre Pays, sont inutiles pour quiconque n'est pas né Bernois, & dans un autre sens ils sont également inutiles pour qui l'est. Le sujet se voit condamné par sa naissance à ramper dans une honteuse obscurité. Le désespoir le saisit; il néglige ce qui ne le peut mener à rien, & le grand homme ne devient qu'un homme agréable. Si je parlois de faire participer les sujets aux Bailliages, les Bernois crieroient au sacrilège; les Bailliages sont le patrimoine de l'état, & nous sommes l'état. Il est vrai qu'on vous laisse les Lieutenances Baillivales; mais vous savez assez qu'on y mêle certaines stipula-

tions, de façon que, si le nouveau magistrat ne vit pas quelque temps, sa famille perd au marché.

Privés de ressources, que reste-t-il aux gentils-hommes du Pays de Vaud ? le service étranger. Mais on n'a pas manqué de leur rendre cette carrière des plus épineuses, & de leur y fermer l'accès des grades un peu élevés. Je ne dirai rien du brillant service de France. Les dépenses sont inévitables, & la paye si modique que l'enseigne se ruine, le capitaine vit à peine, & même le colonel ne peut amasser. Ainsi vous devez bénir le soin paternel du souverain qui a dressé toutes ses capitulations, de manière à ne vous point introduire en tentation. Ne parlons que du service des Etats Généraux, service plus utile que riant, où l'on s'ennuye & s'enrichit. Par le traité de 1712, le Canton de Berne accorda vingt-quatre compagnies à leurs Hautes Puissances, & promit de permettre qu'on en fit toujours des recrues dans leurs états. Seize compagnies étoient destinées aux Bernois, & les souverains partageoient avec leurs sujets les huit autres compagnies, dont on daignoit laisser l'entrée ouverte à ceux-ci : ainsi à ne supposer le crédit des Bernois qu'égal à celui des sujets, pour parvenir à ces huit dernières compagnies, ce peuple roi en posséderoit toujours vingt, sur vingt-quatre. La proportion est honnête, si l'on fait attention qu'il y a dans le Canton près de cent mille hommes en état de porter les armes, dont il n'y en a pas huit cens, bourgeois de Berne. D'ailleurs les petits bourgeois, à qui ce nom seul inspire de la fierté, aiment mieux croupir dans la misère à Berne, que de se faire par leur travail un état vraiment respectable. Ainsi dans toutes ces trou-

pes, je doute qu'on puisse trouver cinquante Bernois qui ne soient pas officiers.

Ces malheurs, me dites vous, ne sont que pour les gentilshommes; c'est à dire, pour la partie la plus respectable, mais la moins nombreuse des citoyens. Ils s'évanouissent dans ces maximes générales & égales que vous venez d'établir. La tyrannie de vos Baillis s'y évanouit-elle aussi? Le peuple, nom si cher à l'humanité, en sent tout le joug. Je ne vous conteraï point des histoires de leurs oppressions. Vous me chicaneriez sur la vérité des faits, & puis vous me diriez qu'il ne faut jamais conclure du particulier au général, & vous auriez raison. Il vaut mieux faire sentir l'étendue de leur pouvoir, & laisser à votre connoissance du cœur humain, à juger de l'usage qu'ils en font. Chaque Bailli est à la fois chef de la justice, de la milice, des finances & de la religion. Comme juge, il décide sans appel jusqu'à la somme de cent francs, somme très-modique pour vous, mais qui fait la fortune d'un payfan; & il décide seul, car ses assesseurs n'ont pas voix pondérative. Il donne, ou plutôt il vend presque tous les emplois de son bailliage. Si l'on veut appeler de ses sentences, il n'y a plus de Tribunal à Moudon, il faut aller à Berne, & quel payfan veut se ruiner à la poursuite de la justice? S'il cherche encore à faire punir son tyran, il demande l'entrée en conseil. L'Avoyer l'accorde, peut-être avec beaucoup de difficulté, & à force de fatigues & de dépenses il parvient à pouvoir plaider devant un Tribunal lié avec son bailli par le sang, & plus encore par une conformité de forfaits, ou d'intérêts.

Votre pays est épuisé par les impôts, tout modiques

qu'ils font. Développons cette idée. Pendant que les pays le plus riches de l'Europe s'abymant de dépenses & de dettes, & mettent en œuvre des moyens qui feroient trembler le plus hardi dissipateur, le Canton de Berne est le seul qui amasse des trésors. Le secret de l'état est si bien gardé, qu'il est difficile de le deviner. Stanyan, ambassadeur d'Angleterre à Berne, qui avoit un esprit d'observation & de grandes facilités pour se bien informer, estimoit, il y a quarante ans, les sommes qu'il avoit dans les fonds publics de Londres à trois cents milles livres sterling, ou sept millions, & tout ce qui étoit resté dans le trésor de Berne, ou dispersé dans les autres banques de l'Europe, à dix huit cents mille livres sterling, ou quarante-trois millions. On peut croire que ces trésors n'ont pas diminué depuis l'an 1722. Le moyen que le Canton employe pour s'enrichir est très-simple. Il dépense beaucoup moins qu'il ne reçoit. Mais que reçoit-il ? Je l'ignore ; mais je vais tâcher de le deviner. Les douze baillages du Pays de Vaud rendent dans leurs six ans ; à peu près cinq cents mille livres de Suisse, les uns portant les autres. Le revenu de douze, peut donc monter à un million de livres de rente. J'ai toujours entendu dire que les Baillis prennent le dix pour cent sur les revenus du souverain. Le voilà donc ce revenu d'un million par année. En rabattant les cent mille livres des Baillis, je compterais encore cent mille écus pour les charges de l'état, ce qui n'est point une supposition bâtie en l'air. Les autres deux cents mille écus, qui dans un autre pays, fourniroient à l'entretien d'une cour & d'une armée, dont les dépenses feroient retomber sur la terre la rosée qui en

étoit tirée, vont ici s'enfourer dans les coffres du souverain, ou se disperfer dans les banques publiques, & précaires de l'Europe, pour être un jour une proie à l'infidélité d'un commis, ou à l'ambition d'un conquérant. Cette peste continuelle des espèces éteint l'industrie, empêche tout effort, qui ne se peut faire sans argent, & appauvrit insensiblement le pays.

Tels sont vos maux, Monsieur. Eh bien! me répondez vous, n'avez vous fondé nos playes que pour en agrir la douleur? Quel conseil nous donnez vous? Aucun, si vous ne m'avez pas déjà prévenu. Il y a une voie que je puis vous conseiller, c'est celle de la remontrance. Mais il y a des maux tellement enracinés dans la constitution d'un état, que Platon lui-même n'eût pas espéré du succès pour une pareille députation. Ne tiendront-ils pas contre les remontrances, eux qui ont pu tenir contre deux cents ans de fidélité & de services? Il y a un autre remède plus prompt, plus entier, plus glorieux: Guillaume Tell vous l'eût conseillé; mais je ne vous le conseille point. Je fais que l'esprit du citoyen, comme celui de la charité, souffre beaucoup, & espère long-temps. Il a raison. Il connoit les malheurs attachés à la soumission. Il ignore ceux que la résistance pourroit entraîner. Vous, qui me connoissez, Monsieur, vous savez combien je respecte ces principes amis de la paix & des hommes. Tribun séditieux, je ne chercherai jamais à faire secouer au peuple le joug de l'autorité, pour le conduire du murmure, à la sédition; de la sédition, à l'anarchie; & de l'anarchie, peut être, au despotisme.

Cependant avec la franchise, qui a partout conduit

ma plume, je vais détruire quelques monstres de Romains, qui vous peuvent effrayer. Que vous préféreriez le parti de l'entreprise ou celui du repos, je voudrois que ce fut la raison, & non le préjugé, qui vous dictât ce parti.

Les Bernois ont des droits sur votre obéissance; vous craignez de leur faire une injustice en la retirant.

N° X.

Mr. GIBBON to Mrs. PORTEN.

DEAR MADAM,

LAUSANNE, 1756.

FEAR no reproaches for your negligence, however great; for your silence, however long. I love you too well to make you any. Nothing, in my opinion, is so ridiculous as some kind of friends, wives, and lovers, who look on no crime as so heinous as the letting slip a post without writing. The charm of friendship is liberty; and he that would destroy the one, destroys, without designing it, the better half of the other. I compare friendship to charity, and letters to alms; the last signifies nothing without the first, and very often the first is very strong, although it does not show itself by the other. It is not goodwill which is wanting, it is only opportunities or means. However, one month — two months — three months — four months — I began not to be angry, but to be uneasy, for fear some accident had happened to you. I was often on the point of writing,

but was always stopped by the hopes of hearing from you the next post. Besides, not to flatter you, your excuse is a very bad one. *You cannot entertain me by your letters.* I think I ought to know that better than you; and I assure you that one of *your plain sincere letters* entertains me more than the most polished one of Pliny or Cicero. 'Tis your heart speaks, and I look on your heart as much better in its way than either of their heads.

Out of pure politeness I ought to talk of ***** before myself. I was some hours with him in this place, that is to say, almost all the time he was here. I find him always *** ***, always good-natured, always amusing, and always trifling. I asked him some questions about Italy; he told me, he hurried out of it as soon as he could, because there was no French comedy, and he did not love the Italian opera. I let slip some words of the pleasure he should have of seeing his native country again, on account of the services he could render her in parliament. "Yes (says he), I want vastly to be at London; "there are three years since I have seen Garrick." He spoke to me of you, and indeed not only with consideration, but with affection. Were there nothing else valuable in his character, I should love him, because he loves you. He told me he intended to see you as soon as he should be in England; I am glad he has kept his word. I was so taken up with my old friend, that I could not speak a word to *****. He appeared, however; a good, sensible, modest young man. Poor Minorca indeed thus lost! but poor Englishmen who have lost it!

I think the second exclamation still stronger than the first. Poor Lord Torrington! I can't help pitying him. What a shameful uncle he has! I shall lose all my opinion of my countrymen, if the whole nation, Whigs, Tories, Courtiers, Jacobites, &c. &c. &c. &c. are not unanimous in detesting that man. Pray, is there any truth in a story we had here, of a brother of Admiral Byng's having killed himself out of rage and shame? I did not think he had any brothers alive. It is thought here that Byng will be acquitted. I hope not. Though I do not love rash judgments, I cannot help thinking him guilty.

You ask me, when I shall come into England? How should I know it? The 14th of June I wrote to my father, and saying nothing of my return, which I knew would have been to no purpose, I desired him to give me a fixed allowance of 200l. a-year, or, at least, to allow me a servant. No answer. About a fortnight ago I renewed my request; and I cannot yet know what will be my success. I design to make a virtue of necessity, to keep quiet during this winter, and to put in use all my machines next spring, in order to come over¹⁰. I shall write the strongest, and at the same time the most dutiful letter I can imagine to my father. If all that produces no effect, I don't know what I can do.

You talk to me of my cousin Ellison's wedding; but you don't say a word of who she is married to. Is it Elliot? Though you have not seen my father yet, I suppose you have heard of him. How was he in town? His wife, was she with him? Has

marriage produced any change in his way of living? Is he to be always at Beriton, or will he come up to London in winter? Pray have you ever seen my mother-in-law, or heard any thing more of her character? Compliments to every body that makes me compliments: to the Gilberts, to the Comarques, to Lord Newnham, &c. When you see the Comarques again, ask them if they did not know, at Putney, Monsieur la Vabre, and his daughters; perhaps you know them yourself. I saw them lately in this country; one of them very well married.

The Englishman who lodges in our house, is little sociable at least for a reasonable person. My health always good, my studies pretty good. I understand Greek pretty well. I have even some kind of correspondence with several learned men, with Mr. Crevier of Paris, with Mr. Breitingen of Zurich, and with Mr. Allamand, a clergyman of this country, the most reasonable divine I ever knew. Do you never read now? I am a little piqued that you say nothing of Sir Charles Grandison; if you have not read it yet, read it for my sake. Perhaps Clarissa does not encourage you; but, in my opinion, it is much superior to Clarissa. When you have read it, read the letters of Madame de Sevigné to her daughter; I don't doubt of their being translated into English. They are properly what I called in the beginning of my letter, letters of the heart; the natural expressions of a mother's fondness; regret at their being at a great distance from one another, and continual schemes to get together again. All that, won't it please

you? There is scarce any thing else in six whole volumes: and notwithstanding that, few people read them without finding them too short. Adieu: my paper is at an end. I don't dare to tell you to write soon. Do it, however, if you can. Yours affectionately,
E. GIBBON.

N^o XI.

*Rev. Dr. WALDGRAVE " to EDWARD GIBBON
Esq. junior.*

DEAR SIR, WASHINGTON, near STORRINGTON,
December 7th, 1758.

I HAVE read nothing for some time (and I keep reading on still) that has given me so much pleasure as your letter, which I received by the last post. I rejoice at your return to your country, to your father, and to the good principles of truth and reason. Had I in the least suspected your design of leaving us, I should immediately have put you upon reading Mr. Chillingworth's Religion of Protestants; any one page of which is worth a library of Swiss divinity. It will give me great pleasure to see you at Washington; where I am, I thank God, very well and very happy. I desire my respects to Mr. Gibbon; and am, with very great regard, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate humble servant,
THO. WALDGRAVE.

N° XII.

Mr. GIBBON to his FATHER.

DEAR SIR,

1760.

AN address in writing, from a person who has the pleasure of being with you every day, may appear singular. However, I have preferred this method, as upon paper I can speak without a blush, and be heard without interruption. If my letter displeases you, impute it, dear Sir, only to yourself. You have treated me, not like a son, but like a friend. Can you be surpris'd that I should communicate to a friend, all my thoughts, and all my desires? Unless the friend approve them, let the father never know them; or at least, let him know at the same time, that however reasonable, however eligible, my scheme may appear to me, I would rather forget it for ever, than cause him the slightest uneasiness.

When I first returned to England, attentive to my future interest, you were so good as to give me hopes of a seat in parliament. This seat, it was suppos'd would be an expence of fifteen hundred pounds. This design flattered my vanity, as it might enable me to shine in so august an assembly. It flattered a nobler passion; I promised myself that by the means of this seat I might be one day the instrument of some good to my country. But I soon perceived how little a mere virtuous inclination, unassisted by talents, could contribute towards that great end; and a very short examination discovered to me, that those talents had

not fallen to my lot. Do not, dear Sir, impute this declaration to a false modesty, the meanest species of pride. Whatever else I may be ignorant of, I think I know myself, and shall always endeavour to mention my good qualities without vanity, and my defects without repugnance. I shall say nothing of the most intimate acquaintance with his country and language, so absolutely necessary to every senator. Since they may be acquired, to alledge my deficiency in them, would seem only the plea of laziness. But I shall say with great truth, that I never possessed that gift of speech, the first requisite of an orator, which use and labor may improve, but which nature alone can bestow. That my temper, quiet, retired, somewhat reserved, could neither acquire popularity, bear up against opposition, nor mix with ease in the crowds of public life. That even my genius (if you will allow me any) is better qualified for the deliberate compositions of the closet, than for the extemporary discourses of the parliament. An unexpected objection would disconcert me; and as I am incapable of explaining to others, what I do not thoroughly understand myself, I should be meditating, while I ought to be answering. I even want necessary prejudices of party, and of nation. In popular assemblies, it is often necessary to inspire them; and never orator inspired well a passion, which he did not feel himself. Suppose me even mistaken in my own character; to set out with the repugnance such an opinion must produce, offers but an indifferent prospect. But I hear you say, it is not necessary that every man should enter into parliament with such exalted hopes. It is
to

to acquire a title the most glorious of any in a free country, and to employ the weight and consideration it gives, in the service of one's friends. Such motives, though not glorious; yet are not dishonorable; and if we had a borough in our command, if you could bring me in without any great expense, or if our fortune enabled us to despise that expense, then indeed I should think them of the greatest strength. But with our private fortune, is it worth while to purchase at so high a rate, a title, honorable in itself, but which I must share with every fellow that can lay out fifteen hundred pounds? Besides, dear Sir, a merchandise is of little value to the owner, when he is resolved not to sell it.

I should affront your penetration, did I not suppose you now see the drift of this letter. It is to appropriate to another use the sum with which you destined to bring me into parliament; to employ it, not in making me great, but in rendering me happy. I have often heard you say yourself, that the allowance you had been so indulgent as to grant me, though very liberal in regard to your estate, was yet but small, when compared with the almost necessary extravagancies of the age. I have indeed found it so, notwithstanding a good deal of economy, and an exemption from many of the common expenses of youth. This, dear Sir, would be a way of supplying these deficiencies, without any additional expense to you. — But I forbear. — If you think my proposals reasonable, you want no entreaties to engage you to comply with them; if otherwise, all will be without effect.

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G

All that I am afraid of, dear Sir, is, that I should seem not so much asking a favor, as this really is, as exacting a debt. After all I can say, you will still remain the best judge of my good, and your own circumstances. Perhaps, like most landed gentlemen, an addition to my annuity would suit you better, than a sum of money given at once; perhaps the sum itself may be too considerable. Whatever you shall think proper to bestow upon me, or in whatever manner, will be received with equal gratitude.

I intended to stop here; but as I abhor the least appearance of art, I think it will be better to lay open my whole scheme at once. The unhappy war which now desolates Europe, will oblige me to defer seeing France till a peace. But that reason can have no influence upon Italy, a country which every scholar must long to see; should you grant my request, and not disapprove of my manner of employing your bounty, I would leave England this Autumn, and pass the winter at Lausanne, with M. de Voltaire and my old friends. The armies no longer obstruct my passage, and it must be indifferent to you, whether I am at Lausanne or at London during the Winter, since I shall not be at Beriton. In the Spring I would cross the Alps, and after some stay in Italy, as the war must then be terminated, return home through France; to live happily with you and my dear mother. I am now two-and-twenty; a tour must take up a considerable time, and though I believe you have no thoughts of settling me soon, (and I am sure I have not,) yet so many things may intervene, that the man who does not travel early, runs a great risk

of not travelling at all. But this part of my scheme, as well as the whole, I submit entirely to you.

Permit me, dear Sir, to add, that I do not know whether the complete compliance with my wishes could increase my love and gratitude; but that I am very sure, no refusal could diminish those sentiments with which I shall always remain, dear Sir,

Your most dutiful and obedient son and servant,
E. GIBBON junior.

N^o XIII.

Mr. MALLET to Mr. GIBBON.

DEAR SIR,

1761.

I COULD not procure you a ticket for the coronation, without putting you to the expense of ten guineas. But I now send you something much more valuable, which will cost you only a groat. When will your father or you be in town? Desire Becket to send me one of your books, well bound, for myself: all the other copies I gave away, as Duke Desenany drunk out ten dozen of Lord Bolingbroke's Champagne in his absence — to your honor and glory. I need not tell you that I am,

most affectionately,
the Major's and your
very humble servant,

Turn over, read, and be delighted.

Let your father too read.

D. MALLET

J'ai lu avec autant d'avidité que de satisfaction le bon & agréable ouvrage, dont l'auteur m'a fait présent. Je parle comme si M. Gibbon ne m'avoit pas loué, & même un peu trop fort. J'ai lu le livre d'un citoyen du monde, d'un véritable homme de lettres, qui les aime pour elles-mêmes, sans exception ni prévention, & qui joint à beaucoup d'esprit, le bon sens plus rare que l'esprit, ainsi qu'une impartialité qui le rend juste & modeste, malgré l'impression qu'il a du recevoir des auteurs sans nombre qu'il a lus, & très-bien lus. J'ai donc dévoré ce petit ouvrage, auquel je désirerois de bon cœur une plus grande étendue, & que je voudrois faire lire à tout le monde.

Je témoigne aussi à My Lady Hervey, l'obligation que je lui ai, de m'avoir fait connoître un auteur qui prouve à chaque mot, que la littérature n'est ennemie que de l'ignorance & des travers, qui mérite d'avoir des Maîtres pour amis, & qui d'ailleurs honore & fortifie notre langue par l'usage que son esprit en fait faire. Si j'étois plus savant, j'appuyerois sur le mérite des discussions, & sur la justesse des observations.

CAYLUS.

N^o XIV.

GEO. LEWIS SCOTT *Esquire* to EDWARD GIBBON junior.

SUPPOSING you settled in quarters, dear Sir, I obey your commands, and send you my thoughts, relating to the pursuit of your mathematical studies. You told me, you had read Clairaut's Algebra, and

the three first books of l'Hopital's Conic Sections. You did not mention the Elements of Geometry you had perused. Whatever they were, whether Euclid's, or by some other, you will do well, if you have not applied yourself that way for some time past, to go over them again, and render the conclusions familiar to your memory. You may defer, however, a very critical inquiry into the principles and reasoning of geometers, till Dr. Simpson's new edition of Euclid (now in the press) appears. I would have you study that book well; in the mean time recapitulate Clairaut and l'Hopital, so far as you have gone, and then go through the remainder of the marquis's books with care. The fifth book will be an Introduction to the *Analyse des Infiniment petits*; to which I would advise you to proceed, after finishing the Conic Sections. The *Infiniment petits* may want a comment; Croufaz has written one, but it is a wretched performance: he did not understand the first principles of the science he undertook to illustrate; and his geometry shows, that he did not understand the first principles of geometry. There is a posthumous work of M. Varignon's, called *Eclaircissement sur l'Analyse des Infiniment petits*. Paris, 1725, 4to. This will be often of use to you. However, it must be owned, that the notion of the *Infiniment petits*, or *Infinitesimals*, as we call them, is too bold an assumption, and too remote from the principles of the ancients, our masters in geometry; and has given a handle to an ingenious author (Berkeley, late bishop of Cloyne) to attack the logic of modern mathematicians. He has been answered

by many, but by none so clearly as by Mr. Maclaurin, in his Fluxions, (2 vols. in 4to,) where you will meet with a collection of the most valuable discoveries in the mathematical and physico-mathematical sciences. I recommend this author to you; but whether you ought to read him immediately after M. de l'Hopital, may be a question. I think you may be satisfied at first with reading his introduction, and chap. 1. book I. of the grounds of the Method of Fluxions, and then proceed to chap. 12. of the same book, § 495 to § 505 inclusive, where he treats of the Method of Infinitesimals, and of the Limits of Ratios. You may then read chap. 1. book II. § 697 to § 714 inclusive; and this you may do immediately after reading the first section of the *Analyse des Infiniment petits*: or if you please, you may postpone a critical inquiry into the principles of Infinitesimals and Fluxions, till you have seen the use and application of this doctrine in the drawing of Tangents, and in finding the Maxima and Minima of Geometrical Magnitudes. *Annal. des Infin. pet.* § 2 and 3.

When you have read the beginning of l'Hopital's 4th sect. to sect. 65 inclusive, you may read Maclaurin's chap. 2, 3, and 4; where he fully explains the nature of these higher orders of Fluxions, and applies the notion to geometrical figures. Your principles being then firmly established, you may finish M. de l'Hopital.

Your next step must be to the inverse method of Fluxions, called by the French *calcul intégral*. Monsieur de Bougainville has given us a treatise upon this subject, Paris, 1754, 4to. under the title *Traité du cal-*

cul intégral pour servir de suite à l'analyse des Infinitement petits. You should have it; but though he explains the methods hitherto found out for the determination of Fluents from given Fluxions, or in the French style, *pour trouver les intégrales des différences données*; yet as he has not shown the use and application of this doctrine, as de l'Hopital did, with respect to that part which he treats of, M. de Bougainville's book is, for that reason, not so well suited to beginners as could be wished. You may therefore take Carré's book in 4to, printed at Paris, 1790, and entitled, *Méthode pour la Mesure des Surfaces, &c. par l'Application du Calcul intégral.* Only I must caution you against depending upon him in his fourth section, where he treats of the centre of oscillation and percussion; he having made several mistakes there, as M. de Mairan has shown, p. 196. *Mém. de l'Acad. Roy. des Sciences*, edit. Paris, 1735. After Carré, you may read Bougainville.

I have recommended French authors to you, because you are a thorough master of that language, and because, by their studying style and clearness of expression, they seem to me best adapted to beginners. Our authors are often profound and acute, but their laconisms, and neglect of expression, often perplex beginners. I except Mr. Maclaurin who is very clear; but then he has such a vast variety of matter, that a great part of his book is, on that account, too difficult for a beginner. I might recommend other authors to you, as a course of elements; for instance, you might read Mr. Thomas Simpson's Geometry, Algebra, Trigonometry, and Fluxions; all which contain a great variety of good things. In his Geometry

he departs from Euclid without a sufficient reason. However, you may read him after Dr. Robert Simpson's Euclid, or together with it, and take notice of what is new in Thomas Simpson. His Algebra you may join with Clairaut; and the rather that Clairaut has been sparing of particular problems, and has, besides, omitted several useful applications of Algebra. Simpson's Fluxions may go hand in hand with l'Hopital, Maclaurin, Carré, and Bougainville. If you come to have a competent knowledge of these authors, you will be far advanced, and you may proceed to the works of Newton, Cotes, the Bernoulli's Dr. Moivre, &c. as your inclination and time will permit. Sir Isaac Newton's treatise of the Quadrature of Curves has been well commented by Mr. Stewart, and is of itself a good institution of Fluxions. Sir Isaac's Algebra is commented in several places by Clairaut, and in more in Maclaurin's Algebra; and Newton's famous Principia are explained by the *Mnims Jacquirs & le Seur*, Geneva, 4 vols. 4to. Cotes is explained by Don Walmesley, in his *Analyse des Mesures*, &c. Paris, 4to. You see you may find work enough. But my paper bids me subscribe myself, dear Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

LEICESTER-SQUARE,

GEO. LEWIS SCOTT,

May 7, 1762.

P. S. But I recollect, a little late, that the books I have mentioned, excepting Newton's Principia, and the occasional problems in the rest, treat only of the abstract parts of the Mathematics; and you are,

no doubt, willing to look into the concrete parts, or what is called Mixed Mathematics, and the Physico-mathematical Sciences. Of these the principal are, mechanics, optics, and astronomy. As to the principles of mechanics, M. d'Alembert has recommended M. Traubaud's *Principes du Mouvement & de l'Equilibre*, to beginners; and you cannot do better than to study this book. In optics we have Dr. Smith's *Complete System*, 2 vols. 4to. I wish though, we had a good institution, short and clear; the Doctor's book entering into too great details for beginners. However, you may consider his first book, or popular Treatise, as an Institution, and you will from thence acquire a good deal of knowledge. In astronomy I recommend M. le Monnier's *Institutions Astronomiques*, in 4to. Paris, 1746. It is a translation from Keil's *Astronomical Lectures*, but with considerable additions. You should also have Casfini's *Elémens d'Astronomie*, 2 vols. 4to. As to the physical causes of the celestial motions, after having read Maclaurin's account of Sir Isaac Newton's philosophical Discoveries, and Dr. Pemberton's *View of Sir Isaac's Philosophy*, you may read the great author himself, with the comment. But if you read Maclaurin's *Fluxions* throughout, you will find many points of Sir Isaac's philosophy well explained there. The theory of light and colors should be studied in Sir Isaac himself, in the English edition of his *Optics*, 8vo. there is a branch of the optical sciences which I have not mentioned, that is, Perspective. Dr. Brook Taylor's is the best system, but his style and expression is embarrassed and obscure. L'Abbé

de la Caille has also given a good treatise of Perspective, at the end of his *Optique*: these are of use to painters; but the theory of mathematical projection in general is more extensive, and has been well treated of by old writers, Clavius, Aguillonius, Tacquet, and de Chules: and lately M. de la Caille has given a memoir among those of the *Acad. Roy. des Sciences* of Paris, anno 1741, *sur le calcul des projections en général*. This subject is necessary for the understanding of the theory of maps and planispheres. Mathematicians have also applied their art to the theory of sounds and music. Dr. Smith's *Harmonics* is the principal book of the kind.

Thus have I given you some account of the principal elementary authors in the different branches of mathematical knowledge, and it were much to be wished that we had a complete institution, or course, of all these things of a moderate size, which might serve as an introduction to all the good original authors. Wolfius attempted this; his intention was laudable, but his book is so full of errors of the press, besides some of his own, that I cannot recommend him to a beginner. He might be used occasionally for the signification of terms, and for many historical facts relating to mathematics; and, besides, may be considered as a collector of problems, which is useful.

Besides the books I have mentioned, it might be of use to you to have M. Montucla's *Histoire des Mathématiques*, in 4to, 2 vols. You will there find a history of the progress of the mathematical sciences, and some account of the principal authors relating to this subject.

I mentioned, to you in conversation, the superior elegance of the ancient method of demonstration. If you incline to examine this point, after being well versed in Euclid, you may proceed to Dr. Simson's Conic Sections; and to form an idea of the ancient analysis or method of investigating the solution of geometrical problems, read Euclid's *Data*, which Dr. Simson will publish, together with his new edition of Euclid; and then read his *Loci Plani*, in 4to. The elegance of the method of the ancients is confessed; but it seems to require the remembrance of a great multitude of propositions, and in complicated problems it does not seem probable that it can be extended so far as the algebraic method.

N^o. XV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON*, Beriton.

DEAR MADAM,

PARIS, February the 12th 1763.

YOU remember our agreement,—short and frequent letters. The first part of the treaty you have no doubt of my observing. I think I ought not to leave you any of the second. *A propos*, of treaty: our definitive one was signed here yesterday, and this morning the Duke of Bridgewater and Mr. Neville went for London with the news of it. The plenipotentiaries sat up till ten o'clock in the morning at the ambassador of Spain's ball, and then went to sign this treaty, which regulates the fate of Europe.

Paris, in most respects, has fully answered my ex-

pectations. I have a number of very good acquaintance, which increase every day; for nothing is so easy as the making them here. Instead of complaining of the want of them, I begin already to think of making a choice. Next Sunday, for instance, I have only three invitations to dinner. Either in the houses you are already acquainted, you meet with people who ask you to come and see them, or some of your friends offer themselves to introduce you. When I speak of these connexions, I mean chiefly for dinner and the evening. Suppers, as yet, I am pretty much a stranger to, and fancy shall continue so; for Paris is divided into two species, who have but little communication with each other. The one, who is chiefly connected with the men of letters, dine very much at home, are glad to see their friends, and pass the evenings till about nine, in agreeable and rational conversation. The others are the most fashionable, sup in numerous parties, and always play, or rather game, both before and after supper. You may easily guess which sort suits me best. Indeed, Madam, we may say what we please of the frivolity of the French, but, I do assure you, that in a fortnight passed at Paris, I have heard more conversation worth remembering, and seen more men of letters among the people of fashion, than I had done in two or three winters in London.

Amongst my acquaintance I cannot help mentioning M. Helvetius, the author of the famous book *de l'Esprit*. I met him at dinner at Madame Geoffrin's, where he took great notice of me, made me a visit next day, has ever since treated me, not in a polite but

a friendly manner. Besides being a sensible man, an agreeable companion, and the worthiest creature in the world, he has a very pretty wife, a hundred thousand livres a year, and one of the best tables in Paris. The only thing I dislike in him is his great attachment to, and admiration for * * * *, whose character is indeed at Paris beyond any thing you can conceive. To the great civility of this foreigner, who was not obliged to take the least notice of me, I must just contrast the behaviour of * * * * *.

N^o. XVI.

Mr. GIBBON to his FATHER.

DEAR SIR,

PARIS, February 24, 1763.

I RECEIVED your letter about twelve days after its date, owing, as I apprehend, to Mr. Foley's negligence. My direction is à *Monsieur Monsieur Gibbon, Gentilhomme Anglois à l'Hotel de Londres, rue du Colombier, Faubourg St. Germain, à Paris.* You see I am still in that part of the town; and indeed from all the intelligence I could collect, I saw no reason to change, either on account of cheapness or pleasantness. Madame Bontems, Mrs. Mallet's friend, and a Marquis de Mirabeau, (I got acquainted with at her house,) have acted a very friendly part; though all their endeavours have only served to convince me that Paris is unavoidably a very dear place. I am sorry to find my English clothes look very foreign. The French are now excessively long-waisted. At pre-

sent we are in mourning for the Bishop of Liege, the king's uncle; and expect soon another of a singular nature, for the old Pretender, who is very ill. They mourn for him, not as a crowned head, but as a relation of the king's. I am doubtful how the English here will behave; indeed we can have no difficulties, since we need only follow the example of the Duke of Bedford.

I have now passed nearly a month in this place, and I can say with truth, that it has answered my most sanguine expectations. The buildings of every kind, the libraries, the public diversions, take up a great part of my time; and I have already found several houses, where it is both very easy and very agreeable to be acquainted. Lady Harvey's recommendation to Madame Geoffrin was a most excellent one. Her house is a very good one; regular dinners there every Wednesday, and the best company of Paris, in men of letters and people of fashion. It was at her house I connected myself with M. Helvetius, who, from his heart, his head, and his fortune, is a most valuable man.

At his house I was introduced to the Baron d'Olbach, who is a man of parts and fortune, and has two dinners every week. The other houses I am known in, are the Duchesse d'Aiguillon's, Madame la Comtesse de Froulay's, Madame du Bocage, Madame Boyer, M. le Marquis de Mirabeau, and M. de Foncemagne. All these people have their different merit; in some I meet with good dinners; in others, societies for the evening; and in all, good sense, entertainment, and civility; which, as I have no favors to ask, or busi-

ness to transact with them, is sufficient for me. Their men of letters are as affable and communicative as I expected. My letters to them did me no harm, but were very little necessary. My book had been of great service to me, and the compliments I have received upon it would make me insufferably vain, if I laid any stress on them. When I take notice of the civilities I have received, I must take notice too of what I have seen of a contrary behaviour. You know how much I always built upon the Count de Caylus: he has not been of the least use to me. With great difficulty I have seen him, and that is all. I do not, however, attribute his behaviour to pride, or dislike to me, but solely to the man's general character, which seems to be a very odd one. De la Motte, Mrs. Mallet's friend, has behaved very drily to me, though I have dined with him twice. But I can forgive him a great deal, in consideration of his having introduced me to M. d'Augny (Mrs. Mallet's son). Her men are generally angels or devils; but here I really think, without being very prone to admiration, that she has said very little too much of him. As far as I can judge, he has certainly an uncommon degree of understanding and knowledge, and, I believe, a great fund of honor and probity. We are very much together, and I think our intimacy seems to be growing into a friendship. Next Sunday we go to Versailles; the king's guard is done by a detachment from Paris, which is relieved every four days; and as he goes upon this command, it is a very good occasion for me to see the palace. I shall not neglect, at the same time, the opportunity of informing myself of the French discipline.

The great news at present is the arrival of a very extraordinary person from the Isle of France in the East Indies. An obscure Frenchman, who was lately come into the island, being very ill, and given over, said, that before he died he must discharge his conscience of a great burden he had upon it, and declared to several people, he was the accomplice of Damien, and the very person who held the horses. Unluckily for him, the man recovered after this declaration, was immediately sent prisoner to Paris, and is just landed at Port l'Orient, from whence, he is daily expected here, to unravel the whole mystery of that dark affair. This story (which at first was laughed at) has now gained entire credit, and I apprehend must be founded on real fact.

A lady of miss Caryll's acquaintance has desired me to convey the inclosed letter to her. You will be so good as to send it over to Lady-holt. I hope I need say nothing of my sentiments towards our friends at Beriton, nor of my readiness to execute any of their commands here.

I am, dear Sir, most affectionately yours,

E. GIBBON.

Nº XVII.

Mr. GIBBON to Mr. HOLROYD at Lausanne.

DEAR HOLROYD, BOROMEAN ISLANDS, May the 16th, 1764.

HURRY of running about, time taken up with seeing places, &c. are excellent excuses; but I fancy you will guess that my laziness and aversion to writing

ing to my best friend are the real motives, and I am afraid you will have guessed right.

We are at this minute in a most magnificent palace, in the middle of a vast lake; ranging about suits of rooms without a soul to interrupt us, and secluded from the rest of the universe. We shall sit down in a moment to supper, attended by all the Count's household. This is the fine side of the medal: turn to the reverse. We are got here wet to the skin; we have crawled about fine gardens which rain and fogs prevented our seeing; and if to-morrow does not hold up a little better, we shall be in some doubt whether we can say we have seen these famous islands. Guise says yes, and I say no. The Count is not here; we have our supper from a poultry hedge alehouse, (excuse the bull,) and the servants have offered us beds in the palace, pursuant to their master's directions.

I hardly think you will like Turin; the court is old and dull; and in that country every one follows the example of the court. The principal amusement seems to be, driving about in your coach in the evening, and bowing to the people you meet. If you go while the Royal Family is there, you have the additional pleasure of stopping to salute them every time they pass. I had that advantage fifteen times one afternoon. We were presented to a lady who keeps a public assembly, and a very mournful one it is; the few women that go to it are each taken up by their cicisbeo; and a poor Englishman, who can neither talk Piedmontois nor play at Faro, stands by himself without one of their haughty nobi-

lity doing him the honor of speaking to him. You must not attribute this account to our not having staid long enough to form connexions. It is a general complaint of our countrymen, except of Lord ***, who has been engaged for about two years in the service of a lady, whose long nose is her most distinguishing fine feature. The most sociable women I have met with are the king's daughters. I chatted for about a quarter of an hour with them, talked about Lausanne, and grew so very free and easy, that I drew my snuff-box, rapped it, took snuff twice (a crime never known before in the presence chamber), and continued my discourse in my usual attitude of my body bent forwards, and my forefinger stretched out ". As it might however have been difficult to keep up this acquaintance, I chiefly employ my time in seeing places, which fully repaid me in pleasure the trouble of my journey. What entertained me the most, was the museum and the citadel. The first is under the care of a M. Bartoli, who received us, without any introduction, in the politest manner in the world, and was of the greatest service to us, as I dare say he will be to you. The citadel is a stupendous work; and when you have seen the subterraneous part of it, you will scarcely think it possible such a place can ever be taken. As it is however a regular one, it does not pique my curiosity so much as those irregular fortifications hewn out of the Alps, as Exiles, Fenestrelles, and the Brunette would have done, could we have spared the time necessary. Our next stage from Turin has been Milan, where we were mere spectators, as it was

not worth while to endeavour at forming connexions for so very few days. I think you will be surpris'd at the great church, but infinitely more so at the regiment of Baden, which is in the citadel. Such steadiness, such alertness in the men, and such exactness in the officers, as exceeded all my expectations. Next Friday I shall see the regiment reviewed by General Serbelloni. Perhaps I may write a particular letter about it. From Milan we proceed to Genoa, and thence to Florence. You stare — But really we find it so inconvenient to travel like mutes, and to lose a number of curious things for want of being able to assist our eyes with our tongues, that we have resumed our original plan, and leave Venice for next year. I think I should advise you to do the same.

MILAN, May 18th, 1764.

THE next morning was not fair, but however we were able to take a view of the islands, which, by the help of some imagination, we conclude to be a very delightful, though not an enchanted place. I would certainly advise you to go there from Milan, which you may very well perform in a day and half. Upon our return, we found Lord Tilney and some other English in their way to Venice. We heard a melancholy piece of news from them: Byng died at Bologna a few days ago of a fever. I am sure you will be all very sorry to hear it.

We expect a volume of news from you in relation to Lausanne, and in particular to the alliance of the Duchess with the Frog. Is it already concluded? How does the bride look after her great revolution?

H 2

Pray embrace her and the adorable, if you can, in both our names; and assure them, as well as all the *Spring* "s, that we talk of them very often, but particularly of a Sunday; and that we are so disconsolate, that we have neither of us commenced cicisbeos as yet, whatever we may do at Florence. We have drank the Ducheſs's health, not forgetting the little woman on the top of Mount Cenis, in the middle of the Lago Maggiore, &c. &c. I expect ſome account of the ſaid little woman. Who is my ſucceſſor? I think * * * * had began to ſupplant me before I went. I expect your answer at Florence, and your perſon at Rome; which the Lord grant. Amen.

N^o XVIII.

Mr. GIBBON to Mr. HOLROYD at Berlin.

DEAR HOLROYD, BERITON, Octob. 31st, 1765.

WHY did I not leave a letter for you at Marſeilles? For a very plain reaſon: becauſe I did not go to Marſeilles. But, as you have moſt judiciously added, why did not I ſend one? Humph. I own that non-pluſſes me a little. However, hearken to my hiſtory. After revolving a variety of plans, and ſuiting them as well as poſſible to time and finances, Guſe and I at laſt agreed to paſs from Venice to Lyons, ſwim down the Rhone, wheel round the ſouth of France, and embark at Bourdeaux. Alas! At Lyons I received letters which convinced me that I ought no longer to deprive my country of one of her greateſt ornaments.

Unwillingly I obeyed, left Guise to execute alone the remainder of our plan, passed about ten delicious days at Paris, and arrived in England about the end of June. Guise followed me about two months afterwards, as I was informed by an epistle from him, which, to his great astonishment, I immediately answered. You perceive there is still some virtue amongst men. *Exempli gratia*, your letter is dated Vienna, October 12th, 1765; it made its appearance at Beriton, Wednesday evening, October the 29th. I am at this present writing, sitting in my library, on Thursday morning, between the hours of twelve and one. I have ventured to suppose you still at Berlin; if not, I presume you take care that your letters should follow you. This ideal march to Berlin is the only one I can make at present. I am under command; and were I to talk of a third sally as yet, I know some certain people who would think it just as ridiculous as the third sally of the renowned Don Quixote. All I ever hoped for was, to be able to take the field once more, after lying quiet a couple of years. I must own that your executing your tour in so complete a manner gives me a little selfish. If I make a summer's escape to Berlin, I cannot hope for the companion I flattered myself with. I am sorry however I have said so much; but as it is difficult to increase your Honor's proper notions of your own perfections, I will e'en let it stand. Indeed I owed you something for your account of the favorable reception my book has met with. I see there are people of taste at Vienna, and no longer wonder at your liking it. Since the court is so agreeable, a

thorough reformation must have taken place. The stiffness of the Austrian etiquette, and the haughty magnificence of the Hungarian princes, must have given way to more civilized notions. You have (no doubt) informed yourself of the forces and revenues of the empress. I think (however unfashionably) we always esteemed her. Have you lost or improved that opinion. Princes, like pictures to be admired, must be seen in their proper point of view, which is often a pretty distant one. I am afraid you will find it peculiarly so at Berlin.

I need not desire you to pay a most minute attention to the Austrian and Prussian discipline. You have been bit by a mad serjeant as well as myself; and when we meet, we shall run over every particular which we can approve, blame, or imitate. Since my arrival, I have assumed the august character of Major, received returns, issued orders, &c. &c. &c. I do not intend you shall have the honor of reviewing my troops next summer. Three fourths of the men will be recruits; and during my pilgrimage, discipline seems to have been relaxed. But I summon you to fulfil another engagement. Make me a visit next summer. You will find here a bad house, a pleasant country in summer, some books, and very little *strange* company. Such a plan of life for two or three months mult, I should imagine, suit a man who has been for as many years struck from one end of Europe to the other like a tennis-ball. At least I judge of you by myself. I always loved a quiet, studious, indolent life; but never enjoyed the charms of it so truly, as since my return from an agreeable but fatiguing

course of motion and hurry. However I shall hear of your arrival, which can scarcely be so soon as January 1706, and shall probably have the misfortune of meeting you in town soon after. We may then settle any plans for the ensuing campaign.

En attendant, (admire me, this is the only scrap of foreign lingo I have imported into this epistle — if you had seen that of Guise to me!) let me tell you a piece of Lausanne news. Nanette Grand is married to Lieutenant-colonel Prevot. Grand wrote to me; and by the next post I congratulated both father and daughter. There is exactness for you. The Curchod (Madame Necker) I saw at Paris. She was very fond of me, and the husband particularly civil. Could they insult me more cruelly? Ask me every evening to supper; go to bed, and leave me alone with his wife — what an impertinent security! it is making an old lover of mighty little consequence. She is as handsome as ever, and much genteeler; seems pleased with her fortune rather than proud of it. I was (perhaps indiscreetly enough) exalting Nanette d'Illens's good luck and the fortune. What fortune? (said she, with an air of contempt) — not above twenty thousand livres a-year. I smiled, and she caught herself immediately. — "What airs I give myself in despi-
"sing twenty thousand livres a-year, who a year
"ago looked upon eight hundred as the summit of
"my wishes."

I must end this tedious scrawl. Let me hear from you: I think I deserve it. Believe me, Dear Holroyd, I share in all your pleasures, and feel all your misfortunes. Poor Bolton! I saw it in the newspaper. Is

Ridley with you? I suspect not: but if he is, assure him I do not forget him though he does me. Adieu; and believe me, most affectionately yours,

E. GIBBON Junior.

Nº XIX.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esq.* to J. HOLROYD *Esq.*

DEAR HOLROYD, BERITON, April 29, 1767.

I HAPPENED to night to stumble upon a very odd piece of intelligence in the St. James's Chronicle; it related to the marriage of a certain Monsieur Olroy, formerly Captain of Hussars. I do not know how it came into my head that this Captain of Hussars was not unknown to me, and that he might possibly be an acquaintance of yours. If I am not mistaken in my conjecture, pray give my compliments to him, and tell him from me, that I am at least as well pleased that he is married as if I were so myself. Assure him, however, that though as a philosopher I may prefer celibacy, yet as a politician I think it highly proper that the species should be propagated by the usual method; assure him even that I am convinced, that if celibacy is exposed to fewer miseries, marriage can alone promise real happiness, since domestic enjoyments are the source of every other good. May such happiness, which is bestowed on few, be given to him; the transient blessings of beauty, and the more durable ones of fortune, good sense, and an amiable disposition.

I can easily conceive, and as easily excuse you, if you have thought mighty little this winter of your poor rusticated friend. I have been confined ever since Christmas, and confined by a succession of very melancholy occupations. I had scarcely arrived at Beriton, where I proposed staying only about a fortnight, when a brother of Mrs. Gibbon's died unexpectedly, though after a very long and painful illness. We were scarcely recovered from the confusion which such an event must produce in a family, when my father was taken dangerously ill, and with some intervals has continued so ever since. I can assure you, my dear Holroyd, that the same event appears in a very different light when the danger is serious and immediate; or when, in the gaiety of a tavern dinner, we affect an insensibility that would do us no great honor were it real. My father is now much better; but I have since been assailed by a severe stroke — the loss of a friend. You remember, perhaps, an officer of our militia, whom I sometimes used to compare to yourself. Indeed, the comparison would have done honor to any one. His feelings were tender and noble, and he was always guided by them: his principles were just and generous, and he acted up to them. I shall say no more, and you will excuse my having said so much, of a man with whom you were unacquainted; but my mind is just now so very full of him, that I cannot easily talk, or even think, of any thing else. If I know you right, you will not be offended at my *weakness*.

What rather adds to my uneasiness, is the necessity I am under of joining our militia the day after to-

morrow. Though the lively hurry of such a scene might contribute to divert my ideas, yet every circumstance of it, and the place itself, (which was that of his residence,) will give me many a painful moment. I know nothing would better raise my spirits than a visit from you; the request may appear unseasonable, but I think I have heard you speak of an uncle you had near Southampton. At all events, I hope you will snatch a moment to write to me, and give me some account of your present situation and future designs. As you are now fettered, I should expect you will not be such a *hic & ubique*, as you have been since your arrival in England. I stay at Southampton from the first to the twenty eighth of May, and then propose making a short visit to town: if you are any where in the neighbourhood of it, you may depend upon seeing me. I shall then concert measures for seeing a little more of you next winter, than I have lately done, as I hope to take a pretty long spell in town. I suppose Guise has often fallen in your way: he has never once written to me, nor I to him: in the country we want materials, and in London we want time. I ought to recollect, that you even want time to read my unmeaning scrawl. Believe, however, my dear Holroyd, that it is the sincere expression of a heart entirely yours.

N° XX.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esq.* to J. B. HOLROYD *Esq.*

DEAR HOLROYD, BERITON, Octob. 16, 1769.

I RECEIVED your agreeable missive about two days ago; and am glad to find that, after all your *errors*, you are at last a settled man. I do most sincerely regret that it is not in my power to obey your immediate summons. Some very particular business will not at present permit me to be long absent from Beriton. The same business will carry me to town, about the sixth of next month, for some days. On my return, I do really hope and intend to storm your castle before Christmas, as I presume you will hardly remove sooner. I should be glad to meet Cambridge; but the plain dish of friendship will satisfy me, without the seasoning of Attic wit. Do you know any thing of Guise? Have you no inclination to look at the Russians? We have a bed at your service. *Vale.*

Present my sincere respects to those who are dear to you; believe me, they are so to me.

N° XXI.

The Same to the Same

DEAR HOLROYD, PALL-MALL, Dec. 25, 1769.

SOME dæmon, the enemy of friendship, seems to have determined that we shall not meet at Sheffield-Place. I was fully resolved to make amends for my

lazy scruples, and to dine with you to-morrow; when I received a letter this day from my father, which irresistibly draws me to Beriton for about ten days. The above-mentioned dæmon, though he may defer my projects, shall not however disappoint them. Since you intend to pass the winter in retirement, it will be a far greater compliment to quit active, gay, political London, than the drowsy desert London of the holidays. But I retract. What is both pleasing and sincere, is above that prostituted word *compliment*. Believe me
Most sincerely yours.

A propos, I forgot the compliments of the season, &c. &c.

N° XXII.

The Same to the Same.

DEAR HOLROYD,

October, 6, 1771.

I SIT down to answer your epistle, after taking a very pleasant ride — A ride! and upon what? — Upon a horse. — *You lie!* — I don't — I have got a droll little poney, and intend to renew the long forgotten practice of equestration as it was known in the world before the second of June of the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and sixty-three. As I used to reason against riding, so I can now argue for it; and indeed the principal use I know in human reason is, when called upon, to furnish arguments for what we have an inclination to do.

What do you mean by presuming to affirm, that I

am of no use here? Farmer Gibbon of no use? *Last week* I sold all my hops, and I believe well, at nine guineas a hundred, to a very responsible man. Some people think I might have got more at Weyhill Fair, but that would have been an additional expense, and a great uncertainty. Our quantity has disappointed us very much; but I think, that besides hops for the family, there will not be less than 500l;—no contemptible sum off thirteen small acres, and two of them planted last year only. *This week* I let a little farm in Petersfield by auction, and propose raising it from 25l. to 35l. *per annum*: and Farmer Gibbon of no use?

To be serious; I have but one reason for resisting your invitation, and my own wishes; that is, Mrs. Gibbon I left nearly alone all last winter, and shall do the same this. She submits very cheerfully to that state of solitude; but, on sounding her, I am convinced that she would think it unkind were I to leave her at present. I know you so well, that I am sure you will acquiesce in this reason; and let me make my next visit to Sheffield-Place from town, which I think may be a little before Christmas. I should like to hear something of the precise time, duration, and extent of your intended tour into Bucks. Adieu.

N° XXIII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esq.* to J. B. HOLROYD *Esq.*

MOST RESPECTABLE SOUTH SAXON,

BERITON,
Nov. 18, 1771.

IT would ill become me to reproach a dilatory correspondent;

Quis tulerit Gracchos de seditione querentes?
 especially when that correspondent had given me hopes of undertaking a very troublesome expedition for my sole advantage. Yet thus much I may say, that I am obliged very soon to go to town upon other business, which, in that hope, I have hitherto deferred. If by next Sunday I have no answer, or if I hear that your journey to Denham is put off *sine die*, or to a long day, I shall on Monday set off for London, and wait your future will with *faith, hope, and charity*. Adieu.

N° XXIV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esq.* to JOHN BAKER HOLROYD *Esq.*
 Sheffield-Place.

DEAR HOLROYD,

LONDON, 1772

THE sudden change from the sobriety of Sheffield-Place to the irregularities of this town, and to the wicked company of Wilbraham, Clarke, Damer, &c. having deranged me a good deal, I am forced to employ one of my secretaries to acquaint you with a piece of news I know nothing about myself. It is certain, some extraordinary intelligence is arrived this morning from Denmark, and as certain that the levee was suddenly prevented by it. The particulars of that intelligence are variously and obscurely told. It is said, that the king had raised a little physician to the rank of minister and Ganymede; such a mad administration had so disgusted all the nobility, that the fleet and

army had rose, and shut up the king in his palace. *La Reine se trouve mêlée la dedans*; and it is reported that she is confined, but whether in consequence of the insurrection, or some other cause, is not agreed. Such is the rough draft of an affair that nobody yet understands. *Embrassez de ma part Madame, & le reste de la chère famille.* GIBBON.

Et plus bas — WILBRAHAM, Sec.

N^o XXV.

EDWARD GIBBON Esq. to J. B. HOLROYD Esq.

BOODLE'S, 10 o'clock, Monday night, Feb. 3, 1772.

I LOVE, honor, and respect, every member of Sheffield-Place; even my great enemy "Datch, to whom you will please to convey my sincere wishes, that no *simpleton* may wait on him at dinner, that his wife papa may not show him any pictures, and that his much wiser mamma may chain him hand and foot, in direct contradiction to Magna Charta and the bill of rights.

It is difficult to write news, because there is none. Parliament is perfectly quiet; and I think that Barre, who is just now playing at whist in the room, will not have exercise of the lungs, except, perhaps, on a message much talked of, and soon expected, to recommend it to the wisdom of the House of Commons to provide a proper future remedy against the improper marriages of the younger branches of the Royal Family. The noise of * * * * is subsided, but there was

some foundation for it. * * * * 's expenses in his bold enterprize were yet unpaid by government. The hero threatened, assumed the patriot, received a sop, and again sunk into the courtier. As to Denmark, it seems now that the king, who was totally unfit for government, has only passed from the hands of his queen wife, to those of his queen mother-in-law. * * * is said to have indulged a very *vague* taste in her amours. She would not be admitted into the Pantheon, whence the *gentlemen proprietors* exclude all beauty, unless unspotted and immaculate (tautology by the bye). *The gentlemen proprietors*, on the other hand, are friends and patrons of the leopard beauties. Advertising challenges have passed between the two great factions, and a bloody battle is expected Wednesday night. *A propos*, the pantheon, in point of ennui and magnificence, is the wonder of the eighteenth century and of the British empire. Adieu.

N^o XXVI.

The Same to the Same.

BOODLE'S, Saturday night, Feb. 8, 1772.

THOUGH it is very late, and the bell tells me that I have not above ten minutes left, I employ them with pleasure in congratulating you on the late victory of our dear mamma the Church of England. She had last Thursday seventy-one rebellious sons, who pretended to set aside her will on account of insanity: but two hundred and seventeen worthy champions, headed by

by Lord North, Burke, Hans Stanley, Charles Fox, Godfrey Clarke, &c. though they allowed the thirty-nine clauses of her testament were absurd and unreasonable, supported the validity of it with infinite humor. By the bye, * * * * * prepared himself for that holy war, by passing twenty-two hours in the pious exercise of hazard; his devotions cost him only about 500 l. *per* hour—in all 11,000 l. * * * * lost 5000 l. This is from the best authority. I hear too, but will not warrant it, that * * * *, by way of paying his court to * * * *, has lost this winter 12,000 l. How I long to be ruined!

There are two county contests, Sir Thomas Egerton and Colonel Townley in Lancashire, after the county had for some time gone a-begging. In Salop, Sir Watkin, supported by Lord Gower, happened by a punctilio to disoblige Lord Craven, who told us last night, that he had not quite 9000 l. a-year in that county, and who has set up Pigod against him. You may suppose we all wish for God Almighty against that black devil.

I am sorry your journey is deferred. Compliments to Datch. As he is now in durance, great minds forgive their enemies, and I hope he may be released by this time.—Coming, Sir. Adieu.

You see the Princess of W. is gone. Hans Stanley says, it is believed the Empress Queen has taken the same journey.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esq.* to J. B. HOLROYD *Esq.*

DEAR HOLROYD,

LONDON, Feb. 13, 1772.

THE papers and plans arrived save in town last night, and will be in your hands in their intact virgin state in a day or two. Consider them at leisure, if that word is known in the rural life. Unite, divide, but (above all) *raise*. Bring them to London with you: I wait your orders; nor shall I, for fear of tumbling, take a single step till your arrival which, on many accounts, I hope will not be long deferred.

Clouds still hover over the horizon of Denmark. The public circumstances of the revolution are related, and, I understand, very exactly, in the foreign papers. The secret springs of it still remain unknown. The town indeed seems at present quite tired of the subject. The Princess's death, her character, and what she left, engross the conversation. She died without a will; and as her savings were generally disposed of in charity, the small remains of her personal fortune will make a trifling object when divided among her children. Her favorite the Princess of B. very properly insisted on the king's immediately sealing up all the papers, to secure her from the idle reports which would be so readily swallowed by the great English monster. The business of Lord and Lady * * * * * is finally compromised, by the arbitration of the Chancellor and Lord * * * * *. He gives her 1200l. a year eparate maintenance, and 1500l. to set out with: but

as her Ladyship is now a new face, her husband, who has already bestowed on the public seventy young beauties, has conceived a violent but hopeless passion for his chaste moiety. * * * *

* * * *

Lord Chesterfield is dying. County oppositions subside. Adieu.

Entirely yours.

N^o XXVIII.

The Same to the Same.

DEAR HOLROYD,

Feb. 21, 1772.

HOWEVER, notwithstanding my indignation, I will employ five minutes in telling you two or three recent pieces of news.

1. Charles Fox is commenced patriot, and is already attempting to pronounce the words *country, liberty, corruption, &c*; with what success, time will discover. Yesterday he resigned the Admiralty. The story is, that he could not prevail on ministry to join with him in his intended repeal of the marriage act, (a favorite measure of his father, who opposed it from its origin,) and that Charles very judiciously thought Lord Holland's friendship imported him more than Lord North's.

2. Yesterday the marriage message came to both Houses of Parliament. You will see the words of it in the papers: and, thanks to the submissive piety of this session, it is hoped that * * * *

* * * *

3. To day the House of Commons was employed in a very odd way Tommy Townshend moved, that the sermon of Dr. Knowell, who preached before the House on the 30th of January, (*id est*, before the Speaker and four members,) should be burnt by the common hangman, as containing arbitrary, tory, high-flown doctrines. The House was nearly agreeing to the motion, till they recollected that they had already thanked the Preacher for his excellent discourse, and ordered it to be printed. Knowell's bookfeller is much obliged to the Right Honorable Tommy Townshend.

When do you come to town? I want money, and am tired of sticking to the earth by so many roots. *Embrassez de ma part*, &c. Adieu.

Ever yours.

Nº. XXIX.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON*, Beriton.

DEAR MADAM,

LONDON, March 21, 1772.

I HAVE advanced with some care and some success in gaining an idea of the Lenborough estate. The tenants are at will, and, from a comparison of my rents with the neighbouring ones particularly Lord * * * *, there is great probability that my estate is very much under-let. My friend Holroyd, who is a most invaluable counsellor, is strongly of that opinion. Sir * * * * is just come home. I am sorry to see many alterations, and little improvement. From an honest wild English buck,

he is grown a *philosopher*. Lord * * * * displeases every body by the affectation of consequence : the young baronet disgusts no less by the affectation of wisdom. He speaks in short sentences, quotes Montagne, seldom smiles, never laughs, drinks only water, professes to command his passions, and intends to marry in five months. The two lords, his uncle, as well as * * * *, attempt to show him, that such behaviour, even were it reasonable, does not suit this country. He remains incorrigible, and is every day losing ground in the good opinion of the public, which at his first arrival ran strongly in his favor. Deyverdun is probably on his journey towards England, but is not yet come.

I am, dear Madame, &c. &c. &c.

N^o. XXX.

EDWARD GIBBON Esquire to J. B. HOLROYD Esquire.

DEAR HOLROYD, FALL-MALL, May 26 1772.

I WISH you lived nearer, or even that you could pass a week at Beriton. When shall you be at Richmond, or would there be any *use* in my going down to Sheffield for a day or two? In you alone I put my trust, and without you I should be perplexed, discouraged, and frightened; for not a single fish has yet bit at the Lenborough bait.

I dined the other day with Mr. Way at Boodle's. He told me, that he was just going down to Sheffield Place. As he has probably unladen all the politics,

and Mrs. Way all the scandal of the town, I shall for *the present only* satisfy myself with the needful; among which I shall always reckon my sincere compliments to Madame, and my profound respects for Mr. Datch.

I am, dear H.

Truly yours.

It is confidently asserted that the Emperor and King of Prussia are to run for very deep stakes over the Polish course. If the news be true, I back Austria against the aged horse, provided little Laudohn rides the match.

N. B. Crossing and jostling allowed.

N^o. XXXI.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. HOLROYD, Senior*

MADAM,

BERITON, near PETERSFIELD,
HAMPSHIRE, July the 17th, 1772.

THERE is not any event which could have affected me with greater surprise and deeper concern, than the news in last night's paper, of the death of our poor little amiable friend Master Holroyd, whom I loved, not only for his parents' sake, but for his own. Should the news be true, (for even yet I indulge some faint hopes,) what must be the distress of our friends at Sheffield! I so truly sympathize with them, that I know not how to write to Holroyd; but must beg

to be informed of the state of the family by a line from you. I have some company and business here, but would gladly quit them, if I had the least reason to think that my presence at Sheffield would afford comfort or satisfaction to the man in the world whom I love and esteem most. I am, Madam, your most obedient humble Servant, &c.

N^o. XXXII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire* to J. B. HOLROYD *Esquire*.

MY DEAR HOLROYD. BERITON, July the 30th, 1772.

IT was my intention to set out for Sheffield as soon as I received your affecting letter, and I hoped to have been with you as to-day, but walking very carelessly yesterday morning. I fell down, and put, out a small bone in my ancle. I am now under the surgeon's hands, but think, and most earnestly hope, that this little accident will not delay my journey longer than the middle of next week. I share, and wish I could alleviate, your feelings. I beg to be remembered to Mrs. Holroyd. I am, my dear Holroyd, most truly yours.

No. XXXIII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON, Beriton.*

DEAR MADAM, SHEFFIELD-PLACE, August. 7th, 1772.

I SET out at six yesterday morning from Uppark, and got to Brighthelmstone about two; a very thin season, every body gone to Spa. In the evening I reached this place. My friend appears, as he ever will, in a light truly respectable; concealing the most exquisite sufferings under the show of composure, and even cheerfulness, and attempting, though with little success, to confirm the weaker mind of his partner. I find, my friend expresses so much uneasiness at the idea of my leaving him again soon, that I cannot refuse to pass the month here. If Mr. Scott, as I suppose, is at Beriton, he has himself too high a sense of friendship not to excuse my neglecting him. I had some hopes of engaging Mr. and Mrs. Holroyd to make an excursion to Portsmouth, Isle of Wight, Southampton, &c. in which case they would spend a few days at Beriton. A sudden resolution was taken last night in favor of the tour. We set out; Mr. and Mrs. Holroyd, Mr. Fauquier, and myself, next Thursday, and shall dine at Beriton the following day, and stay there, most probably, three or four days. A farm-house, without either cook or house-keeper, will afford but indifferent entertainment; but we must *exert*, and they must *excuse*. Our tour will last about a fortnight; after which my friend presses me to return with him, and in his present situation I shall be at a loss how to refuse him.

I am, dear Madam, &c. &c. &c.

N^o. XXXIV.

Dr. HURD (now *Bishop of Worcester*) to Mr. GIBBON:

SIR,

THURCASTON, August 29th, 1772.

YOUR very elegant letter on the antiquity and authenticity of the book of Daniel, (just now received,) finds me here, if not without leisure, yet without books, and therefore in no condition to enter far into the depths of this controversy; which indeed is the less necessary, as every thing that relates to the subject will come of course to be considered by my learned successors in the new lecture. For as the prophecies of Daniel make an important link in *that chain, which* as you say, *has been let down from heaven to earth*, (but not by the author of the late sermons, who brought into view only what he had not invented,) the grounds on which their authority rests will, without doubt, be carefully examined, and, as I suppose, firmly established.

But in the mean time, and to make at least some small return for the civility of your address to me, I beg leave to trouble you with two or three short remarks, such as occur to me on reading your letter.

Your main difficulties are these two: 1. That the author of the book of Daniel is too clear for a prophet; as appears from his prediction of the Persian and Macedonian affairs: and, 2. too fabulous for a contemporary historian; as is evident, you suppose, from his mistakes, particularly in the sixth chapter.

1. The first of these difficulties is an extraordinary one. For why may not prophecy, if the inspirer think fit, be as clear as history? Scriptural prophecy, whence your idea of its obscurity is taken, is *occasionally* thus clear, I mean after the event; and Daniel's prophecy of the revolutions in the Grecian empire, would have been obscure enough to Porphyry himself before it.

But your opinion, after all, when you come to explain yourself, really is, as one should expect, that, as a prophet, Daniel is not clear enough; for you enforce the old objection of Porphyry, by observing, that where a pretended prophecy is clear to a certain point of time, and afterwards obscure and shadowy, there common sense leads one to conclude that the author of it was an impostor.

This reasoning is plausible, but not conclusive, unless it be taken for granted, that a prophecy must, in all its parts, be equally clear and precise: whereas on the supposition of real inspiration, it may be fit, I mean it may suit with the views of the inspirer, to predict some things with more perspicuity, and in terms more obviously and directly applicable to the events in which they were fulfilled, than others. But further, this reasoning, whatever force it may have, has no place here; at least you evidently beg the question when you urge it; because the persons you dispute against maintain, that the subsequent prophecies of Daniel are equally distinct with those preceding ones concerning the Persian and Macedonian empires, at least so much of them as they take to have been fulfilled; and that to judge of the rest, we must wait for the conclusion of them.

However, you admit that the suspicion arising from the clearest prophecy may be removed by direct positive evidence that it was composed before the event. But then you carry your notions of that evidence very far, when you require, " that the existence of
" such a prophecy, prior to its accomplishment,
" should be proved by the knowledge of its being
" generally diffused amongst an enlightened nation
" previous to that period, and its public existence
" attested by an unbroken chain of authentic
" writers. "

What you here claim as a matter of *right* is, without question, very desirable, but should, I think, be accepted, if it be given at all, as a matter of *favor*. For what you describe is the utmost evidence that the case admits: but what right have we in this, or any other subject whatever of natural or revealed religion, to the utmost evidence? Is it not enough that the evidence be sufficient to induce a reasonable assent? and is not that assent reasonable, which is given to real evidence, though of an inferior kind, when uncontrolled by any greater? And such evidence we clearly have for the authenticity of the book of Daniel, in the reception of it by the Jewish nation down to the time of Jesus, whose appeal to it supposes and implies that reception to have been constant and general: not to observe, that the testimony of Jesus is further supported by all the considerations that are alledged for his own divine character. To this evidence, which is positive so far as it goes, you have nothing to oppose but surmise and conjectures; that is, nothing that deserves to be called evidence. But

I doubt, Sir, you take for granted that the claim of inspiration is never to be allowed, so long as there is a possibility of supposing that it was not given.

II. In the second division of your letter, which is longer, and more elaborate, than the first, you endeavour to show that the *historical* part of the book of Daniel, chiefly that of the sixth chapter, is false and fabulous, and as such, confutes and overthrows the *prophetical*. What you advance on this head, is contained under *five* articles:

I. You think it strange that Daniel, or any other man, should be promoted to a secret office of state, for his *skill in divination*.

But here, first, you forget that Joseph was thus promoted for the same reason. Or, if you object to this instance, what should hinder the promotion either of Joseph or Daniel, (when their skill in divination had once brought them to the notice and favor of their sovereign,) for what you call *mere human accomplishments*? For such assuredly both these great men possessed, if we may believe the plain part of their story, which asserts of Joseph, and indeed proves, that he was in no common degree *discreet and wise*; and of Daniel, that *an excellent spirit was found in him*; nay, that *he had knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom*, over and above his *understanding in all visions and dreams*. In short, Sir, though princes of old might not make it a rule to chuse their ministers out of their soothsayers, yet neither would their being soothsayers, if they were otherwise well accomplished, prevent them from being ministers. Just as in modern times, though churchmen have not often, I will sup-

pose, been made officers of state, even by bigotted princes, because they were churchmen; yet neither have they been always excluded from serving in those stations when they have been found eminently qualified for them.

2. Your next exception is, that a combination could scarce have been formed in the court of Babylon against the favorite minister, (though such factions are common in other courts,) because the courtiers of Darius *must have apprehended that the piety of Daniel would be asserted by a miraculous interposition*; of which they had seen a recent instance. And here, Sir, you expatiate with a little too much complacency on the strange indifference which the ancient world showed to the gift of miracles. You do not, I dare say, expect a serious answer to this charge; or if you do, it may be enough to observe, what I am sure your own reading and experience must have rendered very familiar to you, that the strongest belief, or conviction of the mind, perpetually gives way to the inflamed selfish passions; and that, when men have any scheme of interest or revenge much at heart, they are not restrained from pursuing it, though the scaffold and the axe stand before them in full view, and have perhaps been streaming but the day before with the blood of other state criminals. I ask not, whether miracles have ever *actually* existed, but whether you do not think that multitudes have been firmly *persuaded* of their existence; and yet their indifference about them, is a fact which I readily concede to you.

3. Your third criticism is directed against what is

said of *the law of the Medes and Persians*, that it *altereth not*; where I find nothing to admire, but the extreme rigor of Asiatic despotism. For I consider this irrevocability of the law, when once promulgated by the sovereign, not as contrived to be a check on his will, but rather to show the irresistible and fatal course of it. And this idea was so much cherished by the despots of Persia, that, rather than revoke the iniquitous law, obtained by surprise, for exterminating the Jews, Ahasuerus took the part, as we read in the book of Esther, (and as Baron Montesquieu, I remember, observes,) to permit the Jews to defend themselves against the execution of it; whence we see how consistent this law is with the determination of the judges, quoted by you from Herodotus, "that it was lawful for the king to do whatever he pleased;" for we understand that he did *not* please that this law, when once declared by him, should be altered.

You add under this head, "May I not assert that the Greek writers, who have so copiously treated of the affairs of Persia, have not left us the smallest vestige of a restraint, equally injurious to the monarch and prejudicial to the people." I have not the Greek writers by me to consult, but a common book I chance to have at hand refers me to one such vestige, in a very eminent Greek historian, Diodorus Siculus. *Lowth's Comment. in loc.*

4. A fourth objection to the historic truth of the book of Daniel is taken, with more plausibility, from the matter of this law, which, as you truly observe, was very strange for the king's counsellor to advise, and for any despot whatever to enact.

But, 1. I a little question whether prayer was so constant and considerable a part of Pagan worship as is supposed; and if it was not, the prejudices of the people would not be so much shocked by this interdiction as we are ready to think. Daniel indeed prayed three times a day; but the idolaters might content themselves with praying now and then at a stated solemnity. It is clear, that when you speak of *depriving men of the comforts, and priests of the profits, of religion*, you have Christian, and even modern principles and manners in your eye: perhaps in the *comforts*, you represented to yourself a company of poor inflamed Huguenots under persecution; and in the *profits*, the lucrative trade of popish masses. But be this as it may, it should be considered, 2. That this law could not, in the nature of the thing, suppress all prayer, if the people had any great propensity to it. It could not suppress *mental* prayer; it could not even suppress *bodily* worship, if performed, as it easily might be, in the night, or in secret. Daniel, it was well known, was used to pray in open day-light, and in a place exposed to inspection, from his usual manner of praying; which manner, it was easily concluded, so zealous a votary as he was, would not change or discontinue, on account of the edict. Lastly, though the edict passed for thirty days, to make sure work, yet there was no doubt but the end proposed would be soon accomplished, and then it was not likely that much care would be taken about the observance of it.

All this put together, I can very well conceive that extreme envy and malice in the courtiers might suggest the idea of such a law, and that an impotent

despot might be flattered by it. Certainly, if what we read in the third chapter be admitted, that *one* of these despots required all people, nations, and languages, to worship his image on pain of death, there is no great wonder that *another* of them should demand the exclusive worship of himself for a month; nay, perhaps, he might think himself civil, and even bounteous to his gods, when he left them a share of the other eleven. For as to the presumption,

Nihil est quod credere de se

Non possit, cum laudatur diis æqua potestas.—

5. A fifth, and what you seem to think the strongest, objection to the credit of the book of Daniel is, that “no such person as Darius the Mede is to be found “in the succession of the Babylonish princes,” (you mean as given in Ptolemy’s canon and the Greek writers,) “between the time of Nebuchadnezzar and “that of Cyrus.” In saying this, you do not forget or disown what our ablest chronologers have said on the subject; but then you object that Xenophon’s Cyaxares (to serve a turn) has been made to personate Darius the Mede; and yet that Xenophon’s book, whether it be a romance or a true history, overturns the use which they have made of this hypothesis.

I permit myself perhaps to be too much flattered by your civility in referring me to my own taste, rather than to the authority of Cicero: but the truth is, I am much disposed to agree with you, that, “if we “unravel with any care the fine texture of the Cyropædia, we shall discover in every thread the Spartan “discipline and the philosophy of Socrates.” But then, as the judicious author chose to make so recent

a story as that of Cyrus, and one so well known, the vehicle of his political and moral instructions, he would be sure to keep up to the truth of the story as far as might be; especially in the leading facts, and in the principal persons, as we may say, of the drama. This obvious rule of decorum such a writer as Xenophon could not fail to observe; and therefore, on the supposition that his *Cyropædia* is a romance, I should conclude certainly that the outline of it was genuine history. But,

2. If it be so, you conclude that there is no ground for thinking that Darius the Mede ever reigned at Babylon, because Cyaxares himself never reigned there.

Now, on the idea of Xenophon's book being a romance, there might be good reason for the author's taking no notice of the short reign of Cyaxares, which would break the unity of his work, and divert the reader's attention too much from the hero of it: while yet the omission could hardly seem to violate historic truth, since the lustre of his hero's fame, and the real power, which, out of question, he reserved to himself, would make us forget or overlook Cyaxares. But, as to the fact, it seems no way incredible that Cyrus should concede to his royal ally, his uncle, and his father-in-law, (for he was all these,) the *nominal* possession of the sovereignty; or that he should *share* the sovereignty with him; or, at least, that he should leave the *administration*, as we say, in his hands at Babylon, while he himself was prosecuting his other conquests at a distance. Any of these things is supposable enough; and I would rather admit any of

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them than reject the express, the repeated, the circumstantial testimony of a not confessedly fabulous historian.

After all, Sir, I should forfeit, I know, your good opinion, if I did not acknowledge that some, at least, of these circumstances are such as one should not, perhaps, expect at first sight. But then such is the condition of things here; and what is true in human life, is not always, I had almost said, not often, that which was previously to be expected; whence an ordinary romance is, they say, more *probable* than the best history.

But should any or all of these circumstances convince you perfectly, that some degree of error or fiction is to be found in the book of Daniel, it would be too precipitate to conclude that therefore the whole book was of no authority: for, at most, you could but infer, that the historical part, in which those circumstances are observed, namely, the 6th chapter, is not genuine; just as you know has been judged of some other historical tracts which had formerly been inserted in the book of Daniel. For it is not with these collections, which go under the names of the Prophets, as with some regularly connected system, where a charge of falshood, if made good against one part, shakes the credit of the whole. Fictitious histories may have been joined to true prophecies, when all that bore the name of the same person, or any way related to him, came to be put together in the same volume: but the detection of such misalliance could not affect the prophecies; certainly not those of Daniel, which respect *the latter times*; for these have

an intrinsic evidence in themselves, and assert their own authenticity, in proportion as we see, or have reason to admit the accomplishment of them.

And now, Sir, I have only to commit these hasty reflections to your candor; a virtue which cannot be separated from the love of truth, and of which I observe many traces in your agreeable letter; and if you should indulge this quality still further, so as to conceive the possibility of that being *true and reasonable*, in matters of religion, which may seem strange, or, to so lively a fancy as yours, even ridiculous, you would not hurt the credit of your excellent understanding, and would thus remove one, perhaps a principal, occasion of those mists which, as you complain, *hang over these nice and difficult subjects*. I am with true respect, SIR, yours, &c.

(Signed) R. H.

The following Fragment was found with the foregoing Letter, in Mr. GIBBON's handwriting.

YOUR answers to my five objections against the 6th chapter of Daniel come next to be considered.

1. With regard to Daniel's promotion, I consent to withdraw my opposition, and to allow the cases of Ximenes, Wolsey, and Richlieu as parallel instances; though there is surely some difference between a young foreign soothsayer being *suddenly* rewarded, for the interpretation of a dream, with the government of Babylon, and a priest of the established church, rising gradually to the great offices of state.

2. You apprehend, Sir, that my second objection scarcely deserves a serious answer; and that it is quite

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sufficient to appeal to my own reading and experience, whether *the strongest conviction of the mind does not perpetually give way to the inflamed and selfish passions.* Since you appeal to me, I shall fairly lay before you the result of my observations on that subject. 1. It must be confessed that the drunkard often sinks into the grave, and the prodigal into a gaol, without a possibility of deceiving or of checking themselves. But they sink by slow degrees; and, whilst they indulge the ruling passion, attend only to the trifling moment of each guinea, or of each bottle, without calculating their accumulated weight, till they feel themselves irretrievably crushed under it. 2. In most of the hazardous enterprises of life there is a mixture of chance and good fortune; what is called good fortune, is often the effect of skill: and as our vanity flatters us into an opinion of our superior merit, we are neither surprised nor dismayed by the miscarriage of our rash predecessors. *The conspirator turns his eyes from the axe and scaffold, perhaps still streaming with blood,* to the successful boldness of Sylla, of Cæsar, and of Cromwell; and convinces himself that on such a golden pursuit it is even *prudent* to stake a precarious and insipid life. We may add, that the most daring flights of ambition are as often the effects of necessity as of choice. The princes of Hindostan must either reign or perish; and when Cæsar passed the Rubicon, it was scarcely possibly for him to return to a private station. 3. You think, Sir, we may learn from our own experience, that an indifference concerning miracles is very compatible with a full conviction of their truth; and so it undoubtedly is with such a conviction as we have an opportunity of observing.

N^o XXXV.E. GIBBON *Esquire* to J. B. HOLROYD *Esquire*.

DEAR HOLROYD, BERITON, Octob. 13, 1772.

I AM just arrived; as well as yourself, at my *dii penates*, but with very different intention. You will ever remain a bigot to those rustic deities; I propose to abjure them soon, and to reconcile myself to the catholic church of London.

I am so happy, so exquisitely happy, at feeling so many mountains taken off my shoulders, that I can brave your indignation, and even the three-forked lightning of Jupiter himself. My reasons for taking so unwarrantable a step (approved of by Hugonin) were no unmanly despondency, (though it daily became more apparent how much the farm would suffer, both in reality and in reputation, by another year's management). * * * * *

I see pleasure but not use in a congress, therefore decline it. I know nothing as yet of a purchaser, and can only give you full and unlimited powers. If you think it necessary, let me know when you sell; but, however, do as you please.

I am sincerely glad to hear Mrs. H. is better. Still think Bath would suit her. She, and you too, I fear, rather want the physic of the mind, than of the body. Tell me something about yourself. If, among a crowd of acquaintances, one friend can afford you any comfort, I am quite at your service. Once more, adieu.

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N^o XXXVI.EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire* to J. HOLROYD *Esquire*.

DEAR HOLROYD, PALL-MALL, 11th Dec. 1772.

By this time, I suppose you returned to the Elysian fields of Sheffield. The country (I do not mean any particular reflections on Suffex) must be vastly pleasant at this time of the year! For my own part, the punishment of my sins has at length overtaken me. On Thursday the third of December, in the present year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-two, between the hours of one and two in the afternoon, as I was crossing St. James's church-yard, I stumbled, and *again sprained my foot*; but, alas! after two days pain and confinement, a horrid monster, *ycleped the gout*, made me a short visit; and though he has now taken his leave, I am full of apprehensions that he may have liked my company well enough to call again.

The parliament, after a few soft murmurs, is gone to sleep, to awake again after Christmas, safely folded in Lord North's arms. The town is gone into the country, and I propose *visiting Sheffield* about Sunday se'nnight, if by that time I can get my household preparations (I have as good as taken Lady Rous's lease in Bentinck-street) in any forwardness. Shall I *angle for Batt*? No news stirring, except the Duchess of G's pregnancy certainly declared. * * * called on me the other day, and has taken my plan with

him to consider it; he still wishes to defer to spring; talks of bad roads, &c. and is very absolute. I remonstrated, *but want to know whether I am to submit.* Adieu. *Godfrey Clarke*, who is writing near me, begs to be remembered. The savage is going to hunt foxes in Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, &c.
Yours sincerely.

N^o XXXVII.

The Same to the Same.

DEAR HOLROYD, BOODLE'S, Ten o'Clock,
Thursday Evening, Dec. 1772.

MY schemes with regard to you have been entirely disappointed. The business that called me to town was not ready before the 20th of last month, and the same business has kept me here till now. I have however a very strong inclination to eat a Christmas mince-pie with you; and let me tell you that inclination is no small compliment. What are the trees and waters of Sheffield-Place, compared with the comfortable smoke, lazy dinners, and inflammatory Junius's, which we can every day enjoy in town? You have seen the last Junius? He calls on the distant legions to march to the Capitol, and free us from the tyranny of the Prætorian guards. I cannot answer for the ghost of the *hic & ubique*, but the Hampshire militia are determined to keep the peace for fear of a broken head. After all, do I mean to make you a visit next week? Upon my soul, I cannot tell. I tell

every body that I shall: I know that I cannot pass the week with any man in the world with whom the pleasure of seeing each other will be more sincere or more reciprocal. Yet, *entre nous*, I do not believe that I shall be able to get out of this town before you come into it. At all events I look forwards, with great impatience, to Bruton-street⁵⁶ and the Romans⁵⁷.

Believe me most truly yours.

N^o XXXVIII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. HOLROYD Esquire.*

DEAR HOLROYD,

January 12, 1773.

LENBOROUGH is no more! ***** acted like a Jew, and I dare say now repents it. In his room ***** found me a better man, a rich, brutish, honest horse-dealer, who has got a great fortune by serving the cavalry. On Thursday he saw Lenborough, on Friday came to town with ***** and this morning at nine o'clock we struck at 20,000 l. after a very hard battle. As times go, I am not dissatisfied. ***** and the new Lord of Lenborough (by name *****) dined with me; and though we did not speak the same language, yet by the help of signs, such as that of putting about the bottle, the natives seemed well satisfied.

The whole world is going down to Portsmouth, where they will enjoy the pleasures of smoke, noise, heat, bad lodgings, and expensive reckonings. For

my own part, I have firmly resisted importunity; declined parties, and mean to pass the busy week in the soft retirement of my *bocage* de Bentinck-street. Yesterday the East India Company positively refused the loan: a noble resolution, could they get money any where else. They are violent; and it was moved, and the motion heard with some degree of approbation, that they should instantly abandon India to Lord North, Sujah Dowlah, or the Devil, if he chose to take it.

Adieu.

N^o XXXIX.

The Same to the Same.

DEAR HOLROYD, BOODLE'S, May 11, 1773.

I AM full of wordly cares, anxious about the great twenty-fourth, plagued with the Public Advertiser, distressed by the most dismal dispatches from Hugin. Mrs. Lee claims a million of repairs, which will cost a million of money.

The House of Commons sat late last night. Burgoyne made some spirited motions — "That the territorial acquisitions in India belonged to the state (that was the word); that grants to the servants of the company (such as jaghires) were illegal; and that there would be no true repentance without restitution." Wedderburne defended the nabobs with great eloquence, but little argument. The motions were carried without a division;

and the hounds go out again next Friday. They are in high spirits; but the more sagacious ones have no idea they shall kill. Lord North spoke for the inquiry, but faintly and reluctantly. Lady * * * * * is said to be in town at her mother's, and a separation is unavoidable; but there is nothing certain.

Adieu.

Sincerely yours.

N^o XL.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. HOLROYD Esquire*
at Edinburgh.

DEAR HOLROYD,

BENTINCK-STREET,
Aug. 7, 1773.

I BEG ten thousand pardons for not being dead, as I certainly ought to be. But such is my abject nature, that I had rather live in Bentinck-street, attainted and convicted of the sin of laziness, than enjoy your applause either at old Nick's or even in the Elysian Fields. After all, could you expect that I should honor with my correspondence a wild barbarian of the Bogs of Erin? Had the natives intercepted my letter, the errors occasioned by such unknown magic characters might have been fatal to you. But now you have escaped the fury of their hospitality, and are arrived among a cee-vi-leezed nation, I may venture to renew my intercourse.

You tell me of a long list of dukes, lords, and chieftains of renown to whom you are introduced; were I with you, I should prefer one *David* to them

all. When you are at Edinburgh, I hope you will not fail to visit the sty of that fattest of Epicurus's hogs, and inform yourself whether there remains no hope of its recovering the use of its right paw. There is another animal of *great*, though not perhaps of *equal*, and certainly not of *similar* merit, one Robertson; has he almost created the new world? Many other men you have undoubtedly seen, in the country where you are at present, who must have commanded your esteem: but when you return, if you are not very honest, you will possess great advantages over me in any dispute concerning Caledonian merit.

Boodle's and Atwood's are now no more. The last stragglers, and Godfrey Clarke in the rear of all, are moved away to their several castles; and I now enjoy, in the midst of London, a delicious solitude. My library, Kensington Gardens, and a few parties with new acquaintance who are chained to London, (among whom I reckon Goldsmith and Sir Joshua Reynolds,) fill up my time, and the monster *Ennui* preserves a very respectful distance. By the bye, your friends Batt, Sir John Russell, and Lafcelles, dined with me one day before they set off; for I sometimes give the prettiest little dinner in the world. But all this composure draws near its conclusion. About the sixteenth of this month Mr. Eliot carries me away, and after picking up Mrs. Gibbon at Bath, sets me down at Port Eliot: there I shall certainly remain six weeks, or, in other words, to the end of September. My future motions, whether to London, Derbyshire, or a longer stay in Cornwall, (pray is not "motion to stay" rather in the Hibernian

style?) will depend on the life of Port Eliot, the time of the meeting of parliament, and perhaps the impatience of Mr. *****, Lord of Lenborough. One of my pleasures in town I forgot to mention, the unexpected visit of Deyverdun, who accompanies his young lord (very young indeed!) on a two months tour to England. He took the opportunity of the Earl's going down to the Duke of *****, to spend a fortnight (nor do I recollect a more pleasant one) in Bentinck-street. They are now gone together into Yorkshire, and I think it doubtful whether I shall see him again before his return to Leipzig. It is a melancholy reflection, that while one is plagued with acquaintance at the corner of every street, real friends should be separated from each other by unfurmoutable bars, and obliged to catch at a few transient moments of interview. I desire that you and my Lady (whom I most respectfully greet) would take your share of that very new and acute observation, not so large a share indeed as my Swift friend, since nature and fortune give *us* more frequent opportunities of being together. You cannot expect news from a desert, and such is London at present. The papers give you the full harvest of public intelligence; and I imagine that the eloquent nymphs of Twickenham "communicate all the transactions of the polite, the amorous, and the marrying world. The great pantomime of Portsmouth was universally admired; and I am angry at my own laziness in neglecting an excellent opportunity of seeing it. Foote has given us the Bankrupt, a serious and sentimental piece, with very severe strictures on the licence of

scandal in attacking private characters. Adieu. Forgive and epistolize me. I shall not believe you sincere in the former, unless you make Beatinck-street your inn. I fear I shall be gone; but Mrs Ford^o and the parrot will be proud to receive you and my Lady after your long peregrination, from which I expect great improvements. Has she got the brogue upon the tip of her tongue “?”

N^o XLI.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. HOLROYD Esquire.*

DEAR HOLROYD, PORT ELIOT, Sept. 10th, 1773.

BY this time you have surely finished your tour, touched at Edinburgh, where you found a letter, which you have not answered, and are now contemplating the beauties of the Weald of Suffex. I shall demand a long and particular account of your peregrinations, but will excuse it till we meet; and for the present expect only a short memorandum of your health and situation, together with that of my much-honored friend Mrs. Abigail Holroyd. A word too, if you please, concerning father and sister; to the latter I enclose a receipt from Mrs. G. who is now with me at Port Eliot.

Blind as you accuse me of being to the beauties of nature, I am wonderfully pleased with this country. Of her three dull notes, *ground*, *plants*, and *water*, Cornwall possesses the first and last in very high perfection. Think of a hundred solitary streams peace.

fully gliding between amazing cliffs on one side ; and rich meadows on the other, gradually swelling by the aid of the tide into noble rivers, successively losing themselves in each other, and all at length terminating in the harbour of Plymouth, whose broad expanse is irregularly dotted with two and forty line-of-battle ships. In plants indeed we are deficient; and though all the gentlemen now attend to posterity, the country will for a long time be very naked. We have spent several days agreeably enough in little parties; but in general our time rolls away in complete uniformity. Our landlord possesses neither a pack of hounds, nor a stable of running horses, nor a large farm, nor a good library. The last only could interest me; but it is singular that a man of fortune, who chuses to pass nine months of the year in the country, should have none of them.

According to our present design, Mrs. G. and myself return to Bath about the beginning of next month. I shall probably make but a short stay with her, and defer my Derbyshire journey till another year. Sufficient for the summer is the evil thereof, viz. one distant country excursion. Natural inclination, the prosecution of my great work, and the conclusion of my Lenborough business, plead strongly in favor of London. However I desire, and one always finds time for what one really desires, to visit Sheffield-Place before the end of October, should it only be for a few days. I know several houses where I am invited to think myself at home, but I know no other, where I seem inclined to accept of the invitation. I forgot to tell you, that I have declined the

publication of Lord Chesterfield's Letters. The public will see them, and upon the whole, I think, with pleasure; but the family were strongly bent against it; and especially on Deyverdun's account, I deemed it more prudent to avoid making them my personal enemies.

N^o XLII.EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. HOLROYD Esquire.*

January 1774.

I HAVE a letter from Hugonin, a *dreadful* one I believe, but it has lain four days unperused in my drawer. Let me turn it over to you.

Foster is playing at what he calls whist; his partner swearing inwardly. He would write to you to-night, but he thinks he had rather write *next* post; he will think so a good while. Every thing public, still as death. Our Committee of the Catch Club has done more business this morning than all those of the House of Commons since their meeting. Roberts does not petition. This from the best authority, and yet perhaps totally false. Hare married to Sir Abraham Hume's daughter. You see how hard pressed I am for news. Besides, at any time, I had rather talk an hour, than write a page. Therefore adieu. I am glad to hear of your speedy removal. Remember Bentinck-street.

The Same to the Same.

January 29th, 1774.

I AM now getting acquainted with authors, managers, &c. good company to know, but not to live with. Yesterday I dined at the British Coffee-house, with Garrick, Coleman, Goldsmith, Macpherson, John Hume, &c. I am this moment come from Coleman's Man of Business. We dined at the Shakspeare, and went in a body to support it. Between friends, though we got a verdict for our client, his cause was but a bad one. It is a very confused miscellany of several plays and tales; sets out brilliantly enough, but as we advance the plot grows thicker, the wit thinner, till the lucky fall of the curtain preserves us from total chaos.

Bentinck street has visited Welbeck-street. Sappho is very happy that she is there yet: on Sheffield-place she squints with regret and gratitude. Mamma consulted me about buying coals; we cannot get any round ones. Quintus is gone to head the civil war. Of Mrs. **** I have nothing to say. I have got my intelligence for insuring, and will immediately get the preservative against fire. Foster has sent me eight-and-twenty pair of Paris silk stockings, with an intimation that my lady wished for half-a-dozen. They are much at her service; but if she will look into David Hume's Essay on National Characters, she will see that I durst not offer them to a Queen of Spain. *Sachez qu'une reine d'Espagne n'a point de jambes.* Adieu.

N° XLIV.

N^o XLIV.

EDWARD GIBBON Esquire to J. HOLROYD Esquire.

1774.

WE have conquered; * * * was amazed at the tempest just ready to break over his head. He does not desire to go to law, wishes to live in peace, has no complaints to make, hopes for a little indulgence. *Hugonin is now in the attitude of St. Michael trampling upon Satan; he holds him down, till Andrews has prepared a little chain of adamant to bind the foul fiend. In return, receive my congratulation on your Irish victory. Batt told me yesterday, as from good authority, that administration designed a second attempt this session; but to-day I have it from much better, that they always discouraged it, and that it was totally an Hibernian scheme. You remark that I saw Batt. He passed two hours with me; a pleasant man! He and Sir John Russel dine with me next week: you will have both their portraits; the originals are engaged.*

N^o XLV.*The Same to the Same.*

February 1774.

DID you get down safe and early? Is my lady in good spirits and humor? You do not deserve that she should, for hurrying her away. Does Maria

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coquet with Divedown " ? Adieu. Bentinck-street looks very dismal. You may suppose that nothing very important can have occurred since you left town : but I will send you some account of America after Monday, though indeed my anxiety about an old manor takes away much of my attention from a new continent. The mildness of Godfrey Clarke is roused into military fury ; but he is an old Tory, and you only suppose yourself an old Whig. I alone am a true Englishman, Philosopher, and Whig.

N^o XLVI.

The Same to the Same.

BOODLE's, Wednesday Evening, March 16th, 1774.

I WAS this morning with ***. He was positive that the attempt to settle the preliminaries of arbitration by letters, would lead us on to the middle of the summer, and that a meeting was the only practicable measure. I acquiesced, and we blended his epistle and yours into one, which goes by this post. If you can contrive to suit to it your Oxford journey, your presence at the meeting would be received as the descent of a guardian angel.

Very little that is satisfactory has transpired of America. On Monday Lord North moved for leave to bring in a bill to remove the customs and courts of justice from Boston to New Salem ; a step so detrimental to the former town, as must soon reduce it to your own terms ; and yet of so mild an appearance,

that it was agreed to, without a division, and almost without a debate. Something more is, however, intended, and a committee is appointed to inquire into the general state of America. But administration keep their secret as well as that of free masonry, and, as Coxe profanely suggests, for the same reason.

Don't you remember that in our pantheon walks we admired the *modest beauty* of Mrs. ****? *Eh bien*, alas! she is ***. You ask me with whom? With ****, of the guards; both the ****'s, ****, a steward of ****'s, her first love, and half the town besides. A meeting of ****'s friends assembled about a week ago, to consult of the best method of acquainting him with his frontal honors. Edmund Burke was named as the orator, and communicated the transaction in a most eloquent speech.

N. B. The same lady, who at public dinners appeared to have the most delicate appetite, was accustomed in her own apartment to feast on pork-steaks and sausages, and to swill porter till she was dead drunk. *** is abused by the *** family, has been bullied by ***, and can prove himself a Cornuto, to the satisfaction of every one but a court of justice. Oh rare matrimony!

N^o XLVII.

EDWARD GIBBON Esquire to J. HOLROYD Esquire.

March 29th, 1774.

AMERICA. Had I written Saturday night, as I once intended, fire and sword, oaths of allegiance and

high treason tried in England, in consequence of the refusal, would have formed my letter. Lord North, however, opened a most lenient prescription last night; and the utmost attempt towards a new settlement seemed to be no more than investing the governors with a greater share of executive power, nomination of civil officers, (judges, however, for life,) and some regulations of juries. The Boston port bill passed the Lords last night; some lively conversation, but no division.

Bentinck-street. Rose Fuller was against the Boston port bill, and against his niece's going to Boodle's masquerade. He was laughed at in the first instance, but succeeded in the second. Sappho and Fanny very indifferent (as mamma says) about going. They seem of a different opinion. Adieu.

N^o XLVIII.

The Same to the Same.

DEAR HOLROYD,

April 2d, 1774.

YOU owe me a letter; so this extra goes only to acquaint you with a misfortune that has just happened to poor Clarke, and which he really considers as such, the loss of a very excellent father. The blow was sudden; a thin little man, as abstemious as a hermit, was destroyed by a stroke of apoplexy in his coach as he was going to dinner. He appeared perfectly well, and only two days before had very good-naturedly dined with us at a tavern, a thing he had not done for many years before. I am the only person

Clarke wishes to see, except his own family; and I pass a great part of the day with him. A line from you would be kindly received.

Great news, you see, from India. Tanjour four hundred thousand pounds to the company. Suja Dowla six hundred thousand. Adieu.

N^o XLIX.

The Same to the Same.

April 13th 1774.

AT length I am a little more at liberty. Godfrey Clarke went out of town this morning. Instead of going directly into Derbyshire, where he would have been overwhelmed with visits, &c. he has taken his sister, brother, and aunts to a villa near Farnham, in which he has the happiness of having no neighbourhood. If my esteem and friendship for Godfrey had been capable of any addition, it would have been very much increased by the manner in which he felt and lamented his father's death. He is now in very different circumstances than before; instead of an easy and ample allowance, he has taken possession of a great estate, with low rents and high incumbrances. I hope the one may make amends for the other: under your conduct I am sure they would, and I have freely offered him your assistance, in case he should wish to apply for it.

In the mean time I must not forget my own affairs, which seem to be covered with inextricable perplexity. * * *, as I mentioned about a century ago,

promised to see *** and his attorney, and to oil the wheels of the arbitration. As yet I have not heard from him. I have some thoughts of writing *myself* to the jockey, stating the various steps of the affair, and offering him, with polite firmness, the *immediate* choice of Chancery or arbitration.

For the time, however, I forgot all these difficulties, in the present enjoyment of Deyverdun's company; and I glory in thinking, that although my house is small, it is just of a sufficient size to hold my real friends, male and *female*; among the latter my Lady holds the very first place.

We are all quiet. — American business is suspended and almost forgot. The other day we had a brisk report of a Spanish war. It was said they had taken one of our Leward Islands. It since turns out, that we are the invaders, but the invasion is trifling.

Bien obligé non (at present) for your invitation. I wish my Lady and you would come up to our masquerade the third of May. The finest thing ever seen. We sup in a transparent temple that costs four hundred and fifty pounds.

N^o L.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire* to J. HOLROYD *Esquire*.

DEAR HOLROYD,

April 21st, 1774.

I BEGIN to flag, and though you already reproach me as a bad correspondent, I much fear that I shall every week become a more hardened sinner. Besides

the occasional obstructions of Clarke and Deyverdun, I must intreat you to consider, with your usual candor, 1. The aversion to epistolary conversation, which it has pleased the dæmon to implant in my nature. 2. That I am a very fine gentleman, a subscriber to the masquerade, where you and my Lady ought to come, and am now writing at Boodle's, in a fine velvet coat, with ruffles of my lady's chusing, &c. 3. That the aforesaid fine gentleman is likewise a historian; and in truth, when I am writing a page, I do not only think it a sufficient reason for delay, but even consider myself as writing for you, and that, much more to the purpose than if I were sending you the little tattle of the town, of which indeed there is none stirring. With regard to America, the Minister seems moderate, and the House obedient.

* * * 's last letter, by some unaccountable accident had never reached me; so that your's, in every instance, amazed me. I immediately dispatched to him groans and approbation. * * *, however, gives me very little uneasiness. I see that he is a bully, and that I have a stick. But the cursed business of Lenborough, in the midst of study, dissipation, and friendship at times almost distracts me. I am surely in a worse situation than before I sold the estate, and what distresses me is, that

His ego nec metas rerum, nec tempora pono.——

Both Deyverdun and Clarke wish to be remembered to you. The former, who has more taste for the country than * * * *, could wish to visit you, but he sets out in a few days for the continent with Lord Middleton. Adieu.

N^o LI.EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire* to J. HOLROYD *Esquire*.

DEAR HOLROYD,

May 4th, 1774.

LAST night was the triumph of Boodle's. Our masquerade cost two thousand guineas; a sum that might have fertilized a province, (I speak in your own style,) vanished in a few hours, but not without leaving behind it the fame of the most splendid and elegant *fête* that was perhaps ever given in a seat of the arts and opulence. It would be as difficult to describe the magnificence of the scene, as it would be easy to record the humor of the night. The one was above, the other below, all relation. I left the Pantheon about five this morning, rose at ten, took a good walk and returned home to a more rational entertainment of Batt, Sir John Russell, and Lascelles, who dined with me. They have left me this moment; and were I to enumerate the things said of Sheffield, it would form a much longer letter than I have any inclination to write. Let it suffice, that Sir John means to pass in Suffex the interval of the two terms. Every thing, in a word, goes on very pleasantly, except the terrestrial business of Lenborough. Last Saturday se'nnight I wrote to * * *, to press him to see * * *, and urge the arbitration. He has not *condescended* to answer me. All is a dead calm, sometimes more fatal than a storm. For God's sake send me advice.

Adieu.

N^o LII.EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON*, Bath.

DEAR MADAM,

BOODLE'S, May 24th, 1774.

Do you remember that there exists in the world one Edward Gibbon, a housekeeper in Bentinck-street? If the standard of writing and of affection were the same, I am sure he would ill-deserve it. I do not wish to discover, how many days (I am afraid I ought to use another word) have elapsed since the date of my last, or even of your last letter, and yet such is the sluggish nature of the beast, that I am afraid nothing but the arrival of Mrs. Bonfoy, and the expectation of Mr. Eliot, could have roused me from my lethargy. The Lady gave me great satisfaction, by her general account of your health and spirits, but communicated some uneasiness, by the mention of a little encounter, in the style of one of Don Quixote's, but which proved, I hope, as trifling as you at first imagined it. For my own part, I am well in mind and body, busy with my books, (which may perhaps produce something next year, either to tire or amuse the world,) and every day more satisfied with my present mode of life, which I always believed was calculated to make me happy. My only remaining uneasiness is Lenborough, which is not terminated. By Holroyd's advice, I rather try what may be obtained by a little more patience, than rush at once into the horrors of Chancery. But let us talk of something else. Mrs. Porten grows younger every day. You remember, I

think, in Newman-street, an agreeable woman, Miss W * * * *. The Under-secretary is seriously in love with her, and seriously uneasy that his precarious situation precludes him from happiness. We shall soon see which will get the better, love or reason. I bet three to two on love.

Guess my surprise, when Mrs. Gibbon of Northamptonshire suddenly communicated her arrival. I immediately went to Surrey-street, where she lodged, but though it was no more than half an hour after nine, the Saint had finished her evening devotions, and was already retired to rest. Yesterday morning (by appointment) I breakfasted with her at eight o'clock, dined with her to-day at two in Newman-street, and am just returned from setting her down. She is, in truth, a very great curiosity: her dress and figure exceed any thing we had at the masquerade: her language and ideas belong to the last century. However, in point of religion she was rational; that is to say, silent. I do not believe that she asked a single question, or said the least thing concerning it. To me she behaved with great cordiality, and *in her way* expressed a great regard.

Mrs. Porten tells me, that she has just written to you. She ought to go to a masquerade once a year. Did you think her such a girl?

I am, dear Madam, most truly yours.

N^o LIII.EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. HOLROYD Esquire,*

BOODLE'S, May 24th, 1774.

I WROTE three folio pages to you this morning, and yet you complain. Have reason, and have mercy; consider all the excellent reasons for silence which I gave you in one of my last, and expect my arrival in Sussex, when I shall talk more in a quarter of an hour than I could write in a day. *Apropos* of that arrival; never pretend to allure me, by painting in odious colors the dust of London. I love the dust, and whenever I move into the Weald, it is to visit you and my Lady, and not your trees. About this day-month I mean to give you *a visitation*. I leave it to Guise, Clarke, and the other light horse, to prance down for a day or two. They all talk of mounting, but will not fix the day. Sir John Russell, whom I salute, has brought you, I suppose, all the news of Versailles. Let me only add, that the Mesdames, by attending their father, have both got the small pox. I can make nothing of * * *, or his lawyer. You will swear at the shortness of this letter.—Swear.

N^o LIV.*The Same to the Same.*

Saturday evening, August 27th, 1774.

BY your submission to the voice of reason, you eased me of a heavy load of anxiety. I did not like

your enterprife. * * * * *. As to papers, I will show you that I can keep them safe till we meet. What think you of the Turks and Ruffians? Romanzow is a great man. He wrote an account of his amazing fuccefs to Moufkin Poufkin here, and declared his intention of retiring as foon as he had conducted the army home; defiring that Poufkin would fend him the beft plan he could procure of an Englifh gentleman's farm. In his anfwer, Poufkin promifed to get it; but added, that at the fame time he fhould fend the Emprefs a *plan of Blenheim*. A handsome compliment, I think. My Lady and Maria, as ufual.

Nº LV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. HOLROYD Esquire.*

BENTINCK-STREET, Sept. 10th, 1774.

SINCE Heberden is returned, I think the road lies plain before you, I mean the turnpike road; the only party which in good fenfe can be embraced is, without delay, to bring my Lady to Bentinck-ftreet, where you may inhabit two or three nights, and have any advice (Turton, Heberden, &c.) which the town may afford, in a cafe that moft affuredly ought not to be trifled with. Do this as you value our good opinion. The Cantabs are ftrongly in the fame fentiments. There can be no apprehenfions of late hours, &c. as none of Mrs. H.'s raking acquaintance are in town. * * * * * You give me no account of the works. When do you inhabit the library? *Turn over—great things await you.*

It is surely infinite condescension for a senator to bestow his attention on the affairs of a jurymen. A senator? Yes, Sir, at last

— *Quod . . . Divum promittere nemo
Auderet, volvenda dies, en attulit ultro.*

Yesterday morning, about half an hour after seven, as I was destroying an army of Barbarians, I heard a double rap at the door, and my friend * * * * was soon introduced. After some idle conversation, he told me, that if I was desirous of being in parliament, he had an *independent* seat very much at my service. * * * * This is a fine prospect opening upon me, and if next spring I should take my seat, and publish my book, it will be a very memorable era in my life. I am ignorant whether my borough will be * * *. You despise boroughs, and fly at nobler game. Adieu.

Nº LVI.

The Same to the Same.

December 2d, 1774:

I SEND you inclosed a dismal letter from Hugonin. Return it without delay, with observations. A manifesto has been sent to * * *, which must, I think produce immediate peace or war. Adieu. We shall have a warm day on the address next Monday. A number of young members! Whittshed, a *dry man* assured me, that he heard one of them ask, whether the king always sat in that chair, pointing to the Speaker's. Adieu.

N^o LVII.*The Same to the Same.*BOODLE'S, Jan. 31st, 1775.

SOMETIMES people do not write because they are too idle, and sometimes because they are too busy. The former was usually my case, but a present it is the latter. The fate of Europe and America seems fully sufficient to take up the time of one man; and especially of a man who gives up a great deal of time for the purpose of public and private information. I think I have sucked Mauduit and Hutcheson very dry; and if my confidence was equal to my eloquence, and my eloquence to my knowledge, perhaps I might make no very intolerable speaker. At all events, I fancy I shall try to expose myself.

Semper ego auditor tantum? nunquamne reponam?

For my own part, I am more and more convinced that we have both the right and the power on our side, and that, though the effort may be accompanied with some melancholy circumstances, we are now arrived at the decisive moment of preserving, or of losing for ever, both our trade and empire. We expect next Thursday or Friday to be a very great day. Hitherto we have been chiefly employed in reading papers, and rejecting petitions. Petitions were brought from London, Bristol, Norwich, &c. framed by party, and designed to delay. By the aid of some parliamentary quirks, they have been all referred to a separate inactive committee, which Burke calls a committee of oblivion, and are now considered as dead in

aw. I could write you fifty little House of Commons stories, but from their number and nature they suit better a conference than a letter. Our general divisions are about two hundred and fifty to eighty or ninety. Adieu.

N^o LVIII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON, Bath.*

DEAR MADAM,

LONDON, Jan. 31st, 1775.

AN idle man has no time, and a busy man very little. As yet the House of Commons turns out very well to me, and though it should never prove of any real benefit to me, I find it at least a very agreeable coffee-house. We are plunging every day deeper and deeper into the great business of America; and I have hitherto been a zealous, though silent, friend to the cause of government, which, *in this instance*, I think the cause of England. I passed about ten days, as I designed, at Uppark. I found Lord * * * and four-score fox-hounds.

The troubles of Beriton are perfectly composed, and the insurgents reduced to a state, though not a temper of submission. You may suppose I heard a great deal of Petersfield. L * * * means to convict your friend of bribery, to transport him for using a second time old stamps, and to prove that Petersfield is still a part of the manor of Beriton. I remain an impartial spectator. I am, dear Madam, most truly yours.

No. LIX.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire* to J. B. HOLORYD *Esquire*

February 8 th, 1775.

I AM not d——d, according to your charitable wishes, because I have not acted; there was such an inundation of speakers, young speakers in every sense of the word, both on Thursday in the grand committee, and Monday on the report to the House, that neither Lord George Germaine nor myself could find room for a single word. The principal men both days were Fox and Wedderburne, on the opposite sides; the latter displayed his usual talents; the former, taking the vast compass of the question before us, discovered powers for regular debate, which neither his friends hoped, nor his enemies dreaded. We voted an address, (three hundred and four to one hundred and five,) of lives and fortunes, declaring Massachusetts Bay in a state of rebellion. More troops, but I fear not enough, go to America, to make an army of ten thousand men at Boston; three generals, Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton. In a few days we stop the ports of New England. I cannot write volumes; but I am more and more convinced, that with firmness all may go well; yet I sometimes doubt. I am now writing with ladies, (Sir S. Porten and his bride,) and two card tables, in the library. As to my silence, judge of my situation by last Monday. I am on the Grenvillian committee of Downton.

Downton. We always sit from ten to three and a half; after which, that day, I went into the House, and sat till three in the morning. Adieu.

N^o LX.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. B. HOLROYD Esquire.*

February 25th, 1775.

WE go on with regard to America, if we can be said to go on; for on last Monday a conciliatory motion of allowing the Colonies to tax themselves, was introduced by Lord North, in the midst of lives and fortunes, war and famine. We went into the House in confusion, every moment expecting that the Bedfords would fly into rebellion against those measures. Lord North rose six times to appease the storm, but all in vain; till at length Sir Gilbert declared for administration, and the troops all rallied under their proper standard. On Wednesday we had the Middlesex election. I was a patriot; sat by the Lord Mayor, who spoke well, and with temper, but before the end of the debate fell fast asleep. I am still a mute; it is more tremendous than I imagined; the great speakers fill me with despair, the bad ones with terror.

When do you move? My Lady answered like a woman of sense, spirit, and good nature. Neither she nor I could bear it. She was right, and the Dukes of Braganza would have made the same answer.

Adieu.

VOL. II.

M

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON.*

DEAR MADAM,

March 30th, 1775.

I HARDLY know to take up the pen. I talked in my last of two or three posts, and I am almost ashamed to calculate how many have elapsed. I will endeavour for the future to be less scandalous. Only believe that my heart is innocent of the laziness of my hand. I do not mean to have recourse to the stale and absurd excuse of business, though I have really had a very considerable hurry of new parliamentary business: one day, for instance, of seventeen hours, from ten in the morning till between three and four the next morning. It is, upon the whole, an agreeable improvement in my life, and forms just the mixture of business, of study, and of society, which I always imagined I should, and now find I do like. Whether the House of Commons may ever prove of benefit to myself or country, is another question. As yet I have been mute. In the course of our American affairs, I have sometimes had a wish to speak, but though I felt tolerably prepared as to the matter, I dreaded exposing myself in the manner, and remained in my seat safe, but inglorious. Upon the whole, (though I still believe I shall try,) I doubt whether Nature, not that in some instances I am ungrateful, has given me the talents of an orator, and I feel that I came into parliament much too late to exert them.

Do you hear of Port Eliot coming to Bath? and, above, all, do you hear of Charles street² coming to Bentinck-street, in its way to Essex, &c.

Adieu. Dear Madam,

I am most truly yours.

N^o. LXII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON.*

DEAR MADAM, HOUSE OF COMMONS, May 2d, 1775.

I ACCEPT of the Pomeranian Lady with gratitude and pleasure, and shall be impatient to form an acquaintance with her. My presentations at St. James's passed graciously. My dinner at Twickenham was attended with less ceremony and more amusement. If they turned out Lord North to-morrow, they would still leave him one of the best companions in the kingdom. By this time I suppose the Eliots are with you. I am sure you will say every thing kind and proper on the occasion. I am glad to hear of the approbation of my constituents for my vote on the Middlesex election. On the subject of America, I have been something more of a courtier. You know, I suppose, that Holroyd is just stepped over to Ireland for a fortnight. He passed three days with me on his way. Deyverdun had left me just before your letter arrived, which I shall soon have an opportunity of conveying to him. Though, I flatter myself, he broke from me with some degree of uneasiness, the engagement could not be declined. At the end of four years he has an annuity of one hundred pounds

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for life, and may for the remainder of his days enjoy a decent independence in that country, which a philosopher would perhaps prefer to the rest of Europe. For my own part after the hurry of the town and of parliament, I am now retired to my villa in Bentinck-street, which I begin to find a very pleasing solitude, at least as well as if it were two hundred miles from London; because when I am tired of the Roman Empire, I can laugh away the evening at Foote's theatre, which I could not do in Hampshire or Cornwall. I am, dear Madam, most truly yours,

Nº. LXIII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire* to J. B. HOLROYD *Esquire*:

BENTINCK-STREET, August 1st, 1775.

YOUR apprehensions of a precipitate work, &c. are perfectly groundless. I should be much more addicted to a contrary extreme. The *head* is now printing: true, but it was written last year and the year before. The first chapter has been composed *de nouveau* three times; the second twice, and all the others have undergone reviews, corrections, &c. As to the tail, it is perfectly formed and digested, (and were I so much given to self-content and haste,) it is almost all written. The ecclesiastical part, for instance, is written out in fourteen sheets, which I mean to *re-fondre* from beginning to end. As to the friendly critic, it is very difficult to find one who has leisure, candor, freedom, and knowledge sufficient. However, Batt and Deyverdun have read and observed.

After all, the public is the best critic. I print no more than five hundred copies of the first edition; and the second (as it happens frequently to my betters) may receive many improvements. So much for Rome. We have nothing new from America. But I can venture to assure you, that administration is now as unanimous and decided as the occasion requires. Something will be done this year; but in the Spring the force of the country will be exerted to the utmost. Scotch Highlanders, Irish Papists, Hanoverians, Canadians, Indians, &c. will all in various shapes be employed. Parliament meet the first week in November. I think his Catholic Majesty may be satisfied with his Summer's amusement. The Spaniards fought with great bravery, and made a fine retreat; but our Algerine friends surpassed them as much in conduct as in number. Adieu.

The Duchesse has stopped Foote's piece. She sent for him to Kingston-house, and threatened, bribed, argued, and wept for about two hours. He assured her, that if the Chamberlain was obstinate, he should publish it, with a dedication to her Grace.

N^o LXIV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON*, Bath.

DEAR MADAM,

LONDON, August, 1775.

WILL you accept my present literary business as an excuse for my not writing? I think you will be in the wrong if you do, since I was just as idle

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before. At all events, however, it is better to say three words, than to be totally a dumb dog. *Apropos* of dog, but not of dumb: your Pomeranian is the comfort of my life; pretty, impertinent, fantastical, all that a young lady of fashion ought to be. I flatter myself that our passion is reciprocal. I am just at present engaged in a great historical work; no less than a History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire; with the first volume of which I may very possibly oppress the public next winter. It would require some pages to give a more particular idea of it; but I shall only say in general, that the subject is curious, and never yet treated as it deserves; and that during some years it has been in my thoughts, and even under my pen. Should the attempt fail, it must be by the fault of the execution. Adieu. Dear Madam, believe me most truly yours.

N^o LXV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire* to J. HOLROYD *Esquire*.

BENTINCK-STREET O^rober 14th, 1775.

I SEND you two pieces of intelligence from the best authority, and which, unless you hear them from some other quarter, I do not wish you should talk much about. 1st, When the Russians arrive, (if they refresh themselves in England or Ireland,) will you go and see their camp? We have great hopes of getting a body of these Barbarians. In consequence of some very plain advances, King George, with his own hand, wrote a very polite epistle to sister Kitty,

requesting her friendly assistance. Full powers and instructions were sent at the same time to Gunning, to agree for any force between five, and twenty thousand men, *carte blanche* for the terms; on condition, however, that they should serve, not as auxiliaries, but as mercenaries, and that the Russian general should be absolutely under the command of the British. They daily and hourly expect a messenger, and hope to hear that the business is concluded. The worst of it is, that the Baltic will soon be frozen up, and that it must be late next year before they can get to America. 2. In the mean time we are not quite easy about Canada; and even if it should be safe from an attack, we cannot flatter ourselves with the expectation of bringing down that martial people on the Back-Settlements. The priests are ours; the gentlemen very prudently wait the event, and are disposed to join the stronger party; but the same lawless spirit and impatience of government which have infected our Colonies, are gone forth among the Canadian peasants, over whom, since the conquest, the noblesse lost much of their ancient influence. Another thing which will please and surprise, is the assurance which I received from a man who might tell me a lie, but who could not be mistaken, that no arts, no management whatsoever, have been used to procure the addresses which fill the Gazette, and that Lord North was as much surprised at the first that came up, as we could be at Sheffield. We shall have, I suppose, some brisk skirmishing in parliament, but the business will soon be decided by our superior weight of fire. *A propos*, I believe

there has been some vague but serious conversation about *calling out the militia*. The new levies go on very slowly in Ireland. The Dissenters, both there and here, are violent and active. Adieu. I embrace my Lady and Maria.

Nº LXVI.

GEORGE LEWIS SCOTT *Esquire to* EDWARD GIBBON
Esquire.

DEAR SIR,

December 29 th, 1775.

I AM obliged to you for the liberty of perusing part of your work. What I have read, has given me a great deal of pleasure. I have found but few slips of the press, or the pen.

The style of the work is clear, and every way agreeable; and I dare say you will be thought to have written with all due moderation and decency with respect to received (at least once received) opinions. The notes and quotations will add not a little to the value of the work. The authority of French writers, so familiar to you, has not infected you, however, with the fault of superficial and careless quotations. I find, since I saw you, that I must be in the chair at the Excise Office to-morrow; which service will confine me too much for a week, to permit me to wait upon you so soon as I could wish.

I am very truly, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble Servant.

N^o LXVII.EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire* to J. HOLROYD *Esquire*.

LONDON, January 18th, 1776.

HOW do you do? Are you alive? Are you buried under mountains of snow? I write merely to triumph in the superiority of my own situation, and to rejoice in my own prudence, in not going down to Sheffield-place, as I seriously, but foolishly, intended to do last week. We proceed triumphantly with the Roman Empire, and shall certainly make our appearance before the end of next month. I have nothing public. You know we have got eighteen thousand Germans from Hesse, Brunswick, and Hesse Darmstadt. I think our meeting will be lively; a spirited minority, and a desponding majority. The higher people are placed, the more gloomy are their countenances, the more melancholy their language. You may call this cowardice, but I fear it arises from their knowledge (a late knowledge) of the difficulty and magnitude of the business. Quebec is not yet taken. I hear that Carleton is determined never to capitulate with rebels. A glorious resolution, if it were supported with fifty thousand men! Adieu. I embrace my Lady and Maria. Make my excuses to the latter, for having neglected her birth-day.

N^o LXVIII.EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. HOLROYD Esquire.*

January 29th, 1776.

HARES, &c. arrived safe; were received with thanks, and devoured with appetite. Send more (*id est*) of hares. I believe, in my last I forgot saying any thing of the son of Fergus; his letters reached him. What think you of the season? Siberia, is it not? A pleasant campaign in America. I read and pondered your last, and think that, in the place of Lord G. G. you might perhaps succeed; but I much fear that our Leaders have not a genius which can act at the distance of three thousand miles. You know, that a large draught of guards are just going to America; poor dear creatures! We are met; but no business. Next week may be busy; Scotch militia, &c. Roman Empire (first part) will be finished in a week, or fortnight. At last, I have heard Texier; wonderful! Embrace my Lady. The weather too cold to turn over the page. Adieu.

Since this, I received your last, and honor your care of the old women; a respectable name, which, in spite of my Lady, may suit Judges, Bishops, Generals, &c. I am rejoiced to hear of Maria's inoculation. I know not when you have done so wise a thing. You may depend upon getting an excellent House.

Adieu.

N^o LXIX.EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. HOLROYD Esquire.*

BENTINCK-STREET, February 9th, 1776.

YOU are mistaken about your dates. It is to-morrow *seven-night*, the seventeenth, that my book will decline into the world.

I am glad to find, that by degrees you begin to understand the advantage of a civilized city. Adieu. No public business; parliament has sat every day, but we have not had a single debate. I think you will have *the book* on Monday. The parent is not forgot, though I had not a single one to spare.

N^o LXX.

Extract of a Letter from Dr. ROBERTSON to Mr. STRAHAN, dated Edinburgh College, March 15, 1776.

* * * * **S**INCE my last I have read Mr. Gibbon's History with much attention, and great pleasure. It is a work of very high merit indeed. He possesses that industry of research, without which no man deserves the name of a Historian. His narrative is perspicuous and interesting; his style is elegant and forcible, though in some passages I think rather too labored, and in others too quaint. But these defects are amply compensated by the beauty of the general flow of language, and a very peculiar happiness in many of his expressions. I have traced him in many of his quotations, (for experience has taught me to suspect the

accuracy of my brother pen-men,) and I find he refers to no passage but what he has seen with his own eyes. I hope the book will be as successful as it deserves to be. I have not yet read the two last chapters, but am sorry, from what I have heard of them, that he has taken such a tone in them as will give great offence, and hurt the sale of the book.

N^o LXXI.

Mr. FERGUSON to Mr. GIBBON.

DEAR SIR,

EDINBURGH, March 19th, 1776

I RECEIVED, about eight days ago, after I had been reading your History, the copy which you have been so good as to send me, and for which I now trouble you with my thanks. But even if I had not been thus called upon to offer you my respects, I could not have refrained from congratulating you on the merit, and undoubted success, of this valuable performance. The persons of this place whose judgment you will value most, agree in opinion, that you have made a great addition to the classical literature of England, and given us what Thucydides proposed leaving with his own countrymen, a *possession in perpetuity*. Men of a certain modesty and merit always exceed the expectations of their friends; and it is with very great pleasure I tell you, that although you must have observed in me every mark of consideration and regard, that this is, nevertheless, the case, I receive your in-

struction, and study your model, with great deference, and join with every one else, in applauding the extent of your plan, in hands so well able to execute it. Some of your readers, I find, were impatient to get at the fifteenth chapter, and began at that place. I have not heard much of their criticism, but am told that many doubt of your orthodoxy. I wish to be always of the charitable side, while I own you have proved that the clearest stream may become foul when it comes to run over the muddy bottom of human nature. I have not stayed to make any particular remarks. If any should occur on the second reading, I shall not fail to lay in my claim to a more needed, and more useful admonition from you, in case I ever produce any thing that merits your attention. And am, with the greatest respect, dear Sir,

Your most obliged, and most humble Servant,

ADAM FERGUSON.

Nº LXXII.

Extract of a Letter from Mr. DAVID HUME to Mr. STRAHAN, dated Edinburgh, April 8, 1776.

* * * * I AM very much taken with Mr. Gibbon's Roman History, which came from your press, and am glad to hear of its success. There will no books of reputation now be printed in London but through your hands and Mr. Cadell's. The Author tells me, that he is already preparing a second edition. I resolved to have given him my advice with regard

to the manner of printing it; but as I am now writing to you, it is the same thing. He ought certainly to print the number of the chapter at the head of the margin; and it would be better if something of the contents could also be added. One is also plagued with his notes, according to the present method of printing the book: when a note is announced, you turn to the end of the volume; and there you often find nothing but a reference to an authority. All these authorities ought only to be printed at the margin, or bottom of the page. I desire a copy of my new edition should be sent to Mr. Gibbon; as wishing that gentleman, whom I so highly value, should peruse me in a form the least imperfect to which I can bring my work.

* * * * * Dr. Smith's performance is another excellent work that has come from your press this winter; but I have ventured to tell him, that it requires too much thought to be as popular as Mr. Gibbon's.

Nº LXXIII.

Mr. FERGUSON to Mr. GIBBON.

DEAR SIR,

EDINBURGH, April 18th, 1776.

I SHOULD make some apology for not writing you sooner an answer to your obliging letter: but if you should honor me frequently with such requests, you will find, that, with very good intentions, I am a very dilatory and irregular correspondent. I am

sorry to tell you, that our respectable friend " is still declining in his health; he is greatly emaciated, and looses strength. He talks familiarly of his near prospect of dying. His mother, it seems, died under the same symptoms; and it appears so little necessary, or proper, to flatter him, that no one attempts it. I never observed his understanding more clear, or his humor more pleasant and lively. He has a great aversion to leave the tranquillity of his own house, to go in search of health among inns and hostlers. And his friends here gave way to him for some time; but now think it necessary he should make an effort to try what change of place and air, or any thing else Sir John Pringle may advise, can do for him. I left him this morning in the mind to comply in this article, and I hope he will be prevailed on to set out in a few days. He is just now sixty-five.

I am very glad that the pleasure you give us recoils a little on yourself, through our feeble testimony. I have, as you suppose, been employed, at any intervals of leisure or rest I have had for some years, in taking notes, or collecting materials, for a History of the distractions that broke down the Roman Republic, and ended in the establishment of Augustus and his immediate successors. The compliment you are pleased to pay, I cannot accept of even to my subject. Your subject now appears with advantages it was not supposed to have had; and I suspect that the magnificence of the mouldering ruin will appear more striking, than the same building when the view is perplexed with scaffold-

ing, workmen, and disorderly lodgers, and the ear is stunned with the noise of destructions and repairs, and the alarms of fire. The night which you begin to describe is solemn, and there are gleams of light superior to what is to be found in any other time. I comfort myself, that as my trade is the study of human nature, I could not fix on a more interesting corner of it, than the end of the Roman Republic. Whether my compilations should ever deserve the attention of any one besides myself, must remain to be determined after they are farther advanced. I take the liberty to trouble you with the inclosed for Mr. Smith, whose uncertain stay in London makes me at a loss how to direct for him. You have both such reason to be pleased with the world just now, that I hope you are pleased with each other.

I am, with the greatest respect,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient, and most humble Servant,

ADAM FERGUSON.

N^o LXXIV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire* to J. HOLROYD *Esquire*.

LONDON, May 20th, 1776.

I AM angry that you should impede my noble designs of visiting foreign parts, more especially as I have an advantage which Sir Wilful had not, that of understanding your foreign lingos. With regard to Mrs. Gibbon, her intended visit, to which I was
not

not totally a stranger, will do me honor; and, though it should delay my emigration till the end of July, there will still remain the months of August, September, and October. Above all, abstain from giving the least hint to any Bath correspondent, and perhaps, if I am not provoked by opposition, the thing may not be absolutely certain. At all events, you may depend on a previous visit. At present, I am very busy with the Neckers. I live with her, just as I used to do twenty years ago, laugh at her Paris-varnish, and oblige her to become a simple reasonable Suisse. The man who might read English husbands' lessons of proper and dutiful behaviour, is a sensible good-natured creature. In about a fortnight I launch again into the world in the shape of a quarto volume. Cadell assures me, that he never remembered so eager and impatient a demand for a second edition. The town is beginning to break up; the day after to-morrow we have our last day in the House of Commons, to inquire into the instructions of the commissioners. I like the man, and the motion appears plain. Adieu. I dined with Lord Palmerstone to-day; great dinner of catches. I embrace my Lady and the Maria.

LXXV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. HOLROYD Esquire.*

To tell you any thing of the change, or rather changes, of governors, I must have known something of them myself, but all is darkness, confusion,

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and uncertainty, to such a degree, that people do not even know what lies to invent. The news from America have indeed diverted the public attention into another, and far greater channel. All that you see in the papers, of the repulse at Quebec, as well as the capture of Lee, rests on the authority (a very unexceptionable one) of the provincial papers, as they have been transmitted by Governor Tryon from New York. Howe is well, and eats plentifully; and the weather seems to clear up so fast, that, according to the English custom, we have passed from the lowest despondency to a full assurance of success. My new birth happened last Monday; seven hundred of the fifteen hundred were gone yesterday. I now understand, from pretty good authority, that Dr. * * * *, the friend and chaplain of * * * *, is actually sharpening his goose quill against the two last chapters. Adieu.

June the 6th, 1776, from Almack's, where I was chosen last week.

N^o LXXVI.

The Same to the Same.

ALMACK'S, June 24th, 1776.

YES, yes, I am alive, and well; but what shall I say? Town grows empty, and this house, where I have passed very agreeable hours, is the only place which still unites the flower of the English youth. The style of living, though *somewhat* expensive, is exceedingly pleasant, and, notwithstanding the rage of

play, I have found more entertaining, and even rational society here, than in any other club to which I belong. Mrs. Gibbon still hangs in suspense, and seems to consider a town-expedition with horror. I think, however, that she will be soon in motion; and when I have her in Bentinck-street, we shall perhaps talk of a Sheffield excursion. I am now deeply engaged in the reign of Constantine, and, from the specimens which I have already seen, I can venture to promise, that the second volume will not be less interesting than the first. The fifteen hundred copies are moving off with decent speed, and the obliging Cadell begins to mutter something of a third edition for next year. No news of Deyverdun, or his French translation. What a lazy dog! Madame Necker has been gone a great while. I gave her *en partant*, the most solemn assurances of following her *paws* in less than two months; but the voice of indolence begins to whisper a thousand difficulties, and unless your absurd policy should thoroughly provoke me, the Parisian journey may possibly be deferred. I rejoice in the progress of * * * * towards light. We are in expectation of American news. Carleton is made a Knight of the Bath. The old report of Washington's resignation, and quarrel with the congress, seems to revive. Adieu.

*Extract of a Letter from Dr. GEORGE CAMPBELL.
Professor at Aberdeen, to Mr. STRAHAN, dated
Aberdeen, June 25, 1776.*

I HAVE lately read over one of your last winter's publications with very great pleasure, and I hope some instruction. My expectations were indeed high when I began it; but, I assure you the entertainment I received greatly exceeded them. What made me fall to it with the greater avidity was, that it had in part a pretty close connexion with a subject I had occasion to treat sometimes in my Theological Lectures; to wit, the Rise and Progress of Hierarchy: and you will believe that I was not the less pleased to discover in a historian of so much learning and penetration, so great a coincidence with my own sentiments, in relation to some obscure points in the Christian antiquities. I suppose I need not now inform you, that the book I mean is Gibbon's History of the Fall of the Roman Empire; which, in respect of the style and manner, as well as the matter, is a most masterly performance.

N^o LXXVIII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire* to J. HOLROYD *Esquire*.

Saturday, August, 1776.

WE expect you at five o'clock Tuesday, without a sore throat. You have ere this heard of the shocking accident which takes up the attention of

the town our old acquaintance * * * * *

By his own indolence, rather than extravagance, his circumstances were embarrassed, and he had frequently declared himself tired of life. No public news nor any material expected, till the end of this, or the beginning of next month, when Howe will probably have collected his whole force. A tough business indeed. You see by their declaration, that they have now passed the Rubicon, and rendered the work of a treaty infinitely more difficult. You will perhaps say, so much the better; but I do assure you, that the *thinking* friends of Government are by no means sanguine. I take the opportunity of eating turtle with Garrick at Hampton. Adieu.

N° LXXIX.

The Same to the Same.

Saturday, $\frac{1}{2}$ past Eleven, 1776.

FOR the' present I am so deeply engaged, that you must renounce the hasty apparition at Sheffield-place; but if you should be very impatient, I will try (after the meeting) to run down, between the Friday and Monday, and bring you the last editions of things. At present *nought* but expectation. The attack on me is begun; an anonymous eighteen-penny pamphlet, which will get the author more glory in the next world than in this. The heavy troops, Watson and another, are on their march. Adieu.

Extract of a Letter from Mr. WALLACE to Mr. STRAHAN, dated Edinburgh, August 30. 1776.

ALAS, for David Hume"! His friends have sustained a great loss in his death. He was interred yesterday, at a place he lately purchased in the burying-ground on the Calton.

*" For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
 " This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
 " Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
 " Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind?*

A monument on the airy elevated cemetery, which, on account of a magnificent terrace now carried round the hill, is greatly frequented, will be extremely conspicuous, and must often call his name to remembrance. It has been remarked, that the same day on which Lucretius died, gave birth to Virgil; and amidst their late severe loss, philosophy and literature will probably find themselves not wholly disconsolate, on reflecting on the same year in which they were deprived of Hume, Gibbon arose; his superior in some respects. This gentleman's History of the Decline of the Roman Empire appears to me, in point of composition, incomparably the finest production in English without any exception. I hardly thought the language capable of arriving at his correctness, perspicuity, and strength.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. HOLROYD Esquire.*

1776.

I HOPE you bark and growl at my silence; growl and bark. This is not a time for correspondence. Parliament, visits, dinners, suppers, and an hour or two stolen with difficulty for the Decline, leave but very little leisure. I send you the Gazette, and have scarcely any thing to add, except that about five hundred of them have deserted to us, and that the New York incendiaries were immediately, and very justifiably, destined to the cord. Lord G. G. with whom I had a long conversation last night, was in high spirits, and hopes to conquer Germany in America. On the side of Canada, he only fears Carleton's *slowness*, but entertains great expectations that the light troops, and Indians, under Sir William Johnson, who are sent from Oswego down the Mohawk River to Albany, will oblige the Provincials to give up the defence of the Lakes, for fear of being cut off. The report of a foreign war subsides. House of commons dull, and opposition talk of suspending hostilities from despair.

An anonymous pamphlet and Dr. Watson out against me; (in my opinion,) the former feeble, and very illiberal; the latter uncommonly genteel. At last I have had a letter from Deyverdun; wretched excuses; nothing done; vexations enough. Tomorrow I write to Suard, a very skilful translator of Paris, who was here in the spring with the Neckers to get him (if not too late) to undertake it. Adieu.

*Mr. GIBBON to the Reverend Dr. WATSON (now
Bishop of Landaff).*

BENTINCK-STREET, November 2d, 1776.

MR. Gibbon takes the earliest opportunity of presenting his compliments and thanks to Dr Watson, and of expressing his sense of the liberal treatment which he has received from so candid an adversary. Mr. Gibbon entirely coincides in opinion with Dr. Watson, that as their different sentiments, on a very important period of history, are now submitted to the Public, they both may employ their time in a manner much more useful, as well as agreeable, than they could possibly do by exhibiting a single combat in the amphitheatre of controversy. Mr. Gibbon is therefore determined to resist the temptation of justifying, in a professed reply, any passages of his History, which might perhaps be easily cleared from censure and misapprehension; but he still reserves to himself the privilege of inserting in a future edition some occasional remarks and explanations of his meaning. If any calls of pleasure or business should bring Dr. Watson to town, Mr. Gibbon would think himself happy in being permitted to solicit the honor of his acquaintance.

EDWARD GIBBON Esquire. 185

N^o LXXXIII.

Dr. WATSON to Mr. GIBBON.

CAMBRIDGE, November 4th, 1776.

DR. Watſon accepts with pleaſure Mr. Gibbon's polite invitation to a perſonal acquaintance. If he comes to town this winter, will certainly do himſelf the honor to wait upon him. Begs, at the ſame time, to aſſure Mr. Gibbon, that he will be very happy to have an opportunity of ſhowing him every civility, if curioſity, or other motives, ſhould bring him to Cambridge. Dr. Watſon can have ſome faint idea of Mr. Gibbon's difficulty in reſiſting the temptation he ſpeaks of, from having been of late in a ſituation ſomewhat ſimilar himſelf. It would be very extraordinary, if Mr. Gibbon did not feel a parent's partiality for an offspring which has juſtly excited the admiration of all who have ſeen it; and Dr. Watſon would be the laſt perſon in the world to wiſh him to ſuppreſs any explanation which might tend to exalt its merits.

N^o LXXXIV.

EDWARD GIBBON Esquire to J. HOLROYD Esquire.

ALMACK'S, November 7th, 1776.

LETTERS from Burgoyne. They embarked on the Lakes the thirtieth September, with eight hundred Britiſh ſailors, ſix thouſand regulars, and a naval force ſuperior to any poſſible oppoſition: but the ſeaſon was ſo far advanced, that they expected only

to occupy and strengthen Ticonderoga, and afterwards to return and take up their winter-quarters in Canada. Yesterday we had a surprize in the House, from a proclamation of the Howes, which made its first appearance in the Morning Post, and which nobody seems to understand. By this time, my Lady may see that I have not much reason to fear my antagonists. Adieu, till next Thursday.

N^o LXXXV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. HOLROYD Esquire.*

Friday Evening, November 22d.

News from the Lakes. A naval combat, in which the Provincials were repulsed with considerable loss. They burnt and abandoned Crown Point. Carleton is besieging Ticonderoga. Carleton, I say; for he is there, and it is apprehended that Burgoyne is coming home. We dismissed the Nabobs without a division. Burke and the Attorney General spoke very well. Adieu.

N^o LXXXVI.

The Same to the Same.

BENTINCK-STREET, January 18th, 1777.

As I presume, my Lady does not make a practice of tumbling down stairs every day after dinner, by this time the colors must have faded, and the high places (I mean the temples) are reduced to a proper

level. But what, in the name of the great prince, is the meaning of her declining the Urban expedition? Is it the spontaneous result of her own proud spirit? or does it proceed from the secret machinations of her domestic tyrant? At all events, I expect you will both remember your engagement of next Saturday in Bentinck-street, with Donna Catherina, the Mountaineer^{es}, &c. Things go on very prosperously in America. Howe is himself in the Jerseys, and will push at least as far as the Delawar River. The continental (perhaps *now* the rebel) army is in a great measure dispersed, and Washington, who wishes to cover Philadelphia, has not more than six or seven thousand men with him. Clinton designs to conquer Rhode Island in his way home. But, what I think of much greater consequence, a province made its submission, and desired to be reinstated in the peace of the King. It is indeed only poor little Georgia; and the application was made to Governor Tonyn of Florida. Some disgust at a violent step of the Congress, who removed the President of their Provincial Assembly, a leading and popular man, cooperated with the fear of the Indians, who began to amuse themselves with the exercise of scalping on their Back Settlements. Town fills, and we are mighty agreeable. Last year, on the Queen's birthday, Sir G. Warren had his diamond star cut off his coat; this day the same accident happened to him again, with another star worth seven hundred pounds. He had better compound by the year. Adieu.

N° LXXXVII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire* to J. HOLROYD *Esquire*.

ALMACK'S, Wednesday Evening.

I due obedience to thy dread commands I write.

But what shall I say? My life, though more lively than yours, is almost as uniform. A very little reading and writing in the morning, bones or guts "from two to four, pleasant dinners from five to eight, and afterwards clubs, with an occasional assembly, or supper. America affords nothing very satisfactory; though we have many flying reports, you may be assured that we are ignorant of the consequences of Trenton, &c. Charles Fox is now at my elbow, declaiming on the impossibility of keeping America, since a victorious army has been unable to maintain any extent of posts in the single province of Jersey. Lord North is out of danger (we trembled for his important existence). I now expect that my Lady and you should fix the time for the promised visitation to Bentinck-street. March and April are open, chuse. Adieu.

N° LXXXVIII.

The Same to the Same.

1777.

YOU deserve, and we exult in your weather and disappointments. Why would you bury yourself? I dined in Downing-street Thursday last; and I

think Wedderburne was at least as agreeable a companion as your timber-surveyor could be. Lee is certainly taken, but Lord North does not apprehend he is coming home. We are not clear whether he behaved with courage or pusillanimity when he surrendered himself; but Colonel Keene told me to-day, that he had seen a letter from Lee since his confinement. "He imputes his being taken, to the alertness of Harcourt, and cowardice of his own guard; hopes he shall meet his fate with fortitude; but laments that freedom is not likely to find a resting-place in any part of the globe." It is said, he was to succeed Washington. We know nothing certain of the Hessians; but there *has* been a blow. Adieu.

N° LXXXIX.

The Same to the Same.

Saturday Night, April 12th, 1777.

YOUR dispatch is gone to * * *, and I flatter myself that by your assistance I shall be enabled to lose a thousand pounds upon Lenborough before I return from Paris. The day of my departure is not absolutely fixed; Sunday seven night, the twenty-seventh instant, is talked of: But if any India business should come on after the Civil List, it will occasion some delay, otherwise things are in great forwardness. Mrs. Gibbon is an enemy to the whole plan; and I must answer, in a long letter, two very ingenious objections which she has started 1st, That I shall be confined, or put to death by the priests;

and, 2dly, That I shall fully my *moral* character; by making love to Necker's wife. Before I go, I will consult Newton, about a power of attorney for you. By the bye, I wish you would remember a sort of promise, and give me one day before I go. We talk chiefly of the Marquis de la Fayette, who was here a few weeks ago. He is about twenty, with a hundred and thirty thousand livres a year; the nephew of Noailles, who is ambassador here. He has bought the Duke of Kingston's yacht, and is gone to join the Americans. The Court *appear* to be angry with him. Adieu.

N^o XC.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire* to J. HOLROYD *Esquire*.

ATWOOD's, Saturday Night, April 19th, 1777.

IT is not possible as yet to fix the day of my departure. That circumstance depends on the state of India, and will not be determined till the General Court of next Wednesday. I know from the *first* authority, if the violence of the Proprietors about the Pigot, can be checked in the India-house by the influence of a Government majority, the Minister does not wish to exert the omnipotence of Parliament; and I shall be dismissed from hence time enough to set forwards on Thursday the first of May. On the contrary, should we be involved in those perplexing affairs, they may easily detain me till the middle of next month. But as all this is very uncertain, I direct you and my Lady to appear in town to-morrow

seven-night. I have many things to say. We have been animated this week, and, notwithstanding the strict economy recommended by Charles Fox and John Wilkes, we have paid the Royal debts. Adieu.

N^o XCI.

The Same to the Same.

Monday Night, April 21st, 1777.

BAD news from Hampshire. — Support Hugonin, comfort me; correct or expel****; sell Lenborough, and remove my temporal cares. When do you arrive?

N^o XCII.

The Same to the Same.

Wednesday Night, April 23d, 1777.

IT is uncertain whether India comes to Westminster this year, and it is certain that Gibbon goes to Paris next Saturday seven-night. Therefore Holroyd must appear in town the beginning of next week. Gibbon wants the cordial of his presence before the journey. My Lady *must* come.

N^o XCIII.

The Same to the Same.

DOVER, Tuesday Evening, May 6th, 1777.

My expedition does not begin very auspiciously. The wind, which for some days had been fair, paid me the compliment of changing on my arrival; and,

though I immediately secured a vessel, it has been impossible to make the least use of it during the whole of this tedious day. It seems doubtful, whether I shall get out to-morrow morning; and the Captain assures me, that the passage will have the double advantage of being both cold and rough. Last night a small privateer, fitted out at Dunkirk, with a commission from Dr. Franklin, attacked, took, and has carried into Dunkirk Road, the Harwich Packet. The King's messenger had just time to throw his dispatches over-board. He passed through this town about four o'clock this afternoon, in his return to London. As the alarm is now given, our American friend will probably remain quiet, or will be soon caught; so that I have not *much* apprehension for my personal safety; but if so daring an outrage is not followed by punishment and restitution, it may become a very serious business, and may possibly shorten my stay at Paris.

Adieu. I shall write by the first opportunity, either from Calais or Philadelphia.

Nº XCIV.

Mr. GIBBON to Mr. HOLROYD.

CALAIS, Wednesday, May 7th, 1777.

POST nubila Phœbus. A pleasant passage, an excellent house, a good dinner, with Lord ***, whom I found here. Easy Custom-house officers, fine weather, &c. I am detained to-night by the temptation of a French comedy, in a theatre at the end of Dessen's

Deffain's garden; but shall be in motion to-morrow early, and hope to dine at Paris Saturday. Adieu. I think I am a punctual correspondent; but this beginning is too good to last.

N^o XCV.

Dr. WILLIAM ROBERTSON to Mr. GIBBON.

SIR, COLLEGE of EDINBURGH, June 5th, 1777.

I HAVE desired Mr. Strahan to take the liberty of sending you, in my name, a copy of the History of America, which I hope you will do me the honor of accepting, as a testimony, not only of my respect, but of my gratitude, for the instruction which I have received from your writings, as well as the credit you have done me, by the most obliging manner in which you have mentioned my name. I wish the present work may not diminish sentiments so flattering to me. I have taken much pains to obtain the approbation of those whose good opinion one ought to be solicitous to secure, and I trust that my industry at least will be applauded.

An unlucky indisposition prevented me from executing a scheme which I had formed, of passing two months of last spring in London. The honor of being made known to you, was one of the pleasures with which I had flattered myself. But I hope to be more fortunate next year; and beg that you will believe that I am, with great respect, Sir, your most obedient, and most humble servant.

Mr. GIBBON to Dr. ROBERTSON.

S I R,

PARIS, 1777.

WHEN I ventured to assume the character of Historian, the first, the most natural, but at the same time the most ambitious, wish which I entertained, was to obtain the approbation of Dr. Robertson and of Mr. Hume; two names which friendship united, and which posterity will never separate. I shall not therefore attempt to dissemble, though I cannot easily express, the pleasure which I received from your obliging letter, as well as from the intelligence of your most valuable present. The satisfaction which I should otherwise have enjoyed, in common with the public, will now be heightened by a sentiment of a more personal and flattering nature; and I shall frequently whisper to myself, that I have in some measure deserved the esteem of the writer whom I admire.

A short excursion which I have made to this place, during the summer months, has occasioned some delay in my receiving your letter, and will prevent my possessing, till my return, the copy of your History, which you so politely desired Mr. Strahan to send me. But I have already gratified the eagerness of my impatience; and although I was obliged to return the book much sooner than I could have wished, I have seen enough to convince me, that the present publication will support, and, if possi-

ble, will extend the fame of the Author; that the materials are collected with diligence, and arranged with skill; that the first book contains a learned and satisfactory account of the progress of discovery; that the achievements, the dangers, and the crimes, of the Spanish adventurers are related with a temperate spirit; and that the most original, perhaps the most curious, portion of the history of human manners is at length rescued from the hands of sophists and declaimers. Lord Stormont, and the few in this Capital, who have had an opportunity of perusing the History of America, unanimously concur in the same sentiments. Your work is already become a favorite topic of public conversation; and Mr. Suard is repeatedly pressed, in my hearing, to fix the time when his translation will appear.

I flatter myself you will not abandon your design of visiting London next winter; as I already anticipate, in my own mind, the advantages which I shall derive from so pleasing and so honorable a connexion. In the mean while, I should esteem myself happy, if you could think of any literary commission in the execution of which I might be useful to you at Paris, where I propose to stay till very near the meeting of Parliament. Let me for instance, suggest an inquiry, which cannot be indifferent to you, and which might perhaps be within my reach. A few days ago I dined with Bagnionsky, the famous adventurer, who escaped from his exile at Kamtschatka, and returned into Europe by Japan and China. His narrative was amusing, though I know not how far his veracity, in point of circum-

stances, may safely be trusted to. It was his original design to penetrate through the North East Passage; and he actually followed the coast of Asia as high as the latitude $67^{\circ} 35'$, till his progress was stopped by the ice, in a Streight between the two Continents, which was only seven leagues broad. Thence he descended along the coast of America, as low as Cape Mendocin; but was repulsed by contrary winds in his attempts to reach the port of Acapulco. The Journal of his Voyage with his original Charts, is now at Versailles, in the *Dépôt des Affaires Etrangères*; and if you conceived that it would be of any use to you for a second edition, I would try what might be obtained; though I am not ignorant of that mean jealousy which you yourself have experienced, and so deservedly stigmatized. I am, &c.

N^o XCVII.

Dr. ROBERTSON to Mr. GIBBON.

S I R,

I HAD the honor of your obliging Letter, and I should be a very proud man indeed, if I were not vain of the approbation which you are pleased to bestow upon me. As you will now have had an opportunity to peruse the book, which you had only seen when you wrote to me, I indulge myself in the hopes, that the favorable opinion you had formed of it, is not diminished. I am much pleased with your mentioning my friendship with Mr. Hume; I have always considered that as one of the most fortunate

and honorable circumstances of my life. It is a felicity of the age and country in which we live, that men of letters can enter into the same walk of science, and go on successfully, without feeling one sentiment of envy or rivalry. In the intercourse between Mr. Hume and me, we always found *something to blame*, as well as *something to commend*. I have received frequently very valuable criticisms on my performances from him; and I have sometimes ventured to offer him my strictures on his works. Permit me to hope for the same indulgence from you. If, in reading the History of America, any thing, either in the matter or style, has occurred to you as reprehensible, I will deem it a most obliging favor if you will communicate it freely to me. I am certain of profiting by such a communication.

I return you thanks for your frank offer of executing any literary commission for me. I accept of it without ceremony, and am flattered with the idea of receiving such aid from your hands. I know nothing of Bagnioufki's Adventures, but what was published in some Newspaper. If one can rely on his veracity, what he relates must be very interesting to me. If you had been writing the History of America, the question concerning the mode of peopling it, might not perhaps have occupied your attention very much. But it was proper for me to consider it more fully. Bagnioufki (if he may be credited) has seen what it may be useful for me to know. I can see no reason why the Court of France should be shy about communicating his Journal, and the Charts which illustrate it; possibly my name

may operate somewhat towards obtaining a copy of both; your interposition, I am confident, will do a great deal. It will be very illiberal indeed, if such a communication were refused. My Lord Stormont (by whose attention I have been much honored) would not decline to give his aid, were that necessary. But if your court resembles that of Spain, I am afraid every proposal from an ambassador is received with some degree of jealousy. Your own private application will, I apprehend, be more effectual. As it is probable that a second edition may go to press early in the winter, it will add to the favor, if you can soon inform me concerning the success of your negotiation. As this is something in the style of the *Corps Diplomatique*, allow me to recommend one of its members to you. Mr. Fullarton, the new secretary of the embassy, is a particular friend of mine. He is a young man of such qualities both of head and heart, that I am sure you will esteem and love him. Please remember me to him. I have the honor to be, with great respect,
Your obliged humble servant,

WILLIAM ROBERTSON.

Nº XCVIII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire* to J. B. HOLROYD *Esquire*.

PARIS, June 16, 1777.

I TOLD told you what would infallibly happen, and you know enough of the nature of the beast not to be surpris'd at it. I have now been at Paris ex-

actly five weeks; during which time I have not written to any person whatsoever within the British dominions, except two lines of notification to Mrs. Gibbon. The dæmon of procrastination has at length yielded to the genius of friendship, assisted indeed by the powers of fear and shame. But when I have seated myself before a table, and begin to revolve all that I have seen and tasted during this busy period, I feel myself oppressed and confounded; and I am very near throwing away the pen, and resigning myself to indolent despair. A complete history would require a volume, at least, as copulent as the Decline and Fall; and if I attempt to select and abridge, besides the difficulty of the choice, there occur so many things which cannot properly be intrusted to paper, and so many others of too slight a texture to support the journey, that I am almost tempted to reserve for our future conversation the detail of my pleasures and occupations. But as I am sensible that you are *rigid* and impatient, I will try to convey, in a few words, a general idea of my situation as a man of the world, and as a man of letters. You remember that the Neckers were my principal dependance; and the reception I have met with from them very far surpassed my most sanguine expectations. I do not indeed lodge in their house, (as it might incite the jealousy of the husband, and procure me a *lettre de cachet*, but I live very much with them; and dine and sup whenever they have company, which is almost every day, and whenever I like it, for they are not in the least *exigeans*. Mr. Walpole gave

me an introduction to Madame du Deffand, an agreeable young lady of eighty-two years of age, who has constant suppers, and the best company in Paris. When you see the Duke of Richmond, he will give you an account of that house, where I meet him almost every evening. Ask him about Madame de Cambis. I have met the Duke of Choiseul at his particular request, dined by *accident* with Franklin, conversed with the Emperor, been presented at court, and gradually, or rather rapidly, I find my acquaintance spreading over the most valuable parts of Paris. They pretend to like me, and whatever you may think of French professions, I am convinced that some at least are sincere. On the other hand, I feel myself easy and happy in their company, and only regret that I did not come over two or three months sooner. Though Paris throughout the summer promises me a very agreeable society, yet I am hurt every day by the departure of men and women whom I begin to know with some familiarity, the departure of officers for their governments and garrisons, of bishops for their dioceses, and even of country-gentlemen for their estates, as a rural taste gains ground in this country. So much for the general idea of my acquaintance; details would be endless, yet unsatisfactory. You may add, to the pleasures of society those of the spectacles and promenades, and you will find that I lead a very agreeable life; let me just condescend to observe, that it is not extravagant. After decking myself out with silks and silver, the ordinary establishment of coach, lodging, servants, eating, and pocket

expenses, does not exceed sixty pounds *per* month. Yet I have two footmen in handsome liveries behind my coach, and my apartment is hung with damask. Adieu for the present: I have more to say, but were I to attempt any further progress, you must wait another post; and you have already waited long enough, of all conscience.

Let me just in two words give you an idea of my day. I am now going (nine o'clock) to the King's library, where I shall stay till twelve; as soon as I am dressed, I set out to dine with the Duke de Nivernois; shall go from thence to the French comedy, into the Princess de Beauveau's loge grillée, and cannot quite determine whether I shall sup at Madame du Deffand's, Madame Necker's or the Sardinian Ambassadors's. Once more Adieu.

I embrace my Lady and *Bambini*. I shall with cheerfulness execute any of her commissions.

Nº XCIX.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. HOLROYD Esquire.*

PARIS, August 13, 1777.

WELL, and who is the culprit now? — Thus far had I written in the pride of my heart, and fully determined to inflict an epistle upon you, even before I received any answer to my former; I was very near a bull. But this forward half line lay ten days barren and inactive, till its generative powers were excited by the missive which I received yesterday. What a wretched piece of work do we seem to be making of it

in America? The greatest force which any European power ever ventured to transport into that continent, is not strong enough to attack the enemy; the naval strength of great Britain is not sufficient to prevent the Americans (they have almost lost the appellation of Rebels) from receiving every assistance that they wanted; and in the mean time you are obliged to call out the militia to defend your own coasts against their privateers. You possibly may expect from me some account of the designs and policy of the French court, but I chuse to decline that task for two reasons: 1st, Because you may find them laid open in every newspaper; and 2^{dly}, Because I live too much with their courtiers and ministers to know any thing about them. I shall only say, that I am not under any immediate apprehensions of a war with France. It is much more pleasant as well as profitable to view in safety the raging of the tempest, occasionally to pick up some pieces of the wreck, and to improve their trade, their agriculture, and their finances, while the two countries are *lento collisa duello*. Far from taking any step to put a speedy end to this astonishing dispute, I should not be surpris'd if next summer they were to lend their cordial assistance to England, as to the weaker party. As to my personal engagement with the D. of R. I recollect a few slight skirmishes, but nothing that deserves the name of a general engagement. The extravagance of some disputants, both French and English, who have espoused the cause of America, sometimes inspires me with an extraordinary vigor. Upon the whole, I find it much easier to defend the jus-

tice than the policy of our measures; but there are certain cases, where whatever is repugnant to sound policy ceases to be just.

The more I see of Paris the more I like it. The regular course of the society in which I live is easy, polite, and entertaining; and almost every day is marked by the acquisition of some new acquaintance, who is worth cultivating, or who, at least, is worth remembering. To the great admiration of the French, I regularly dine and regularly sup, drink a dish of strong coffee after each meal, and find my stomach a citizen of the world. The spectacles (particularly the Italian, and above all the French Comedies,) which are open the whole summer, afford me an agreeable relaxation from company; and to show you that I frequent them from taste, and not from idleness, I have not yet seen the *Colisée*, the *Vauxhall*, the *Boulevards*, or any of those places of entertainment which constitute Paris to most of our countrymen. Occasional trips to dine or sup in some of the thousand country-houses which are scattered round the environs of Paris, serve to vary the scene.

In the mean while the summer insensibly glides away, and the fatal month of October approaches, when I must change the House of Madame Necker for the House of Commons. I regret that I could not chuse the winter, instead of the summer, for this excursion: I should have found many valuable persons, and should have preserved others whom I have lost as I began to know them. The Duke de Choiseul, who deserves attention both for himself, and for keeping the best house in Paris, passes seven

months of the year in Touraine: and though I have been tempted, I consider with horror a journey of sixty leagues into the country. The Princess of Beauveau, who is a most superior woman, has been absent above six weeks, and does not return till the 24th of this month. A large body of recruits will be assembled by the Fontainebleau journey; but in order to have a thorough knowledge of this splendid country, I ought to stay till the month of January; and if I could be sure that Opposition would be as tranquil as they were last year — I think your life has been as animated, or, at least, as tumultuous, and I envy you Lady Payne, &c. much more than either the Primate, or the chief-Justice. Let not the generous breast of my Lady be torn by the black serpent of envy. She still possesses the first place in the sentiments of her slave; but the adventure of the fan was a mere accident, owing to Lord Carmarthen. Adieu. I think you may be satisfied. I say nothing of my terrestrial affairs.

N^o C.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire* to J. HOLROYD *Esquire*.

BENTINCK-STREET, Saturday November, 1777.

HAD you four horns as well as four eyes and four hands, I should still maintain that you are the most unreasonable monster in the creation. My pain is lively, my weakness excessive, the season cold, and only twelve days remain to the meeting. Far from thinking of trips into the country, I shall be

well satisfied if I am on my legs the 20th, in the medical sense of the word. At present I am a corpse, carried about by four arms which do not belong to me. Yet I try to smile: I salute the hen and chickens. Adieu. Writing is really painful.

N^o CI.

The Same to the Same.

Friday, November 14th, 1777.

I do not like this disorder on your eyes: and when I consider your temperance and activity, I cannot understand why any spring of the machine should ever be deranged. With regard to myself, the gout has behaved in a very honorable manner; after a complete conquest, and after making me feel his power for some days, the generous enemy has disdained to abuse his victory, or to torment any longer an unresisting victim. He has already ceased to torture the lower extremities of your humble servant; the swelling is so amazingly diminished, that they are no longer above twice their ordinary size. Yesterday I moved about the room with the laborious majesty of crutches; to-day I have exchanged them for a stick; and by the beginning of next week, I hope, with due precaution, to take the air, and to inure myself for the interesting representation of Thursday. How cursedly unlucky, I wanted to see you both: a thousand things to say and to hear, and every thing of that kind broken to pieces. If you are not able to come to Bentinck street, I must contrive to steal three or four vacant days during the session, and run down to Sheffield. The town

fills, and I begin to have numerous levies, and conchees; more particularly the latter. We are still in expectation, but in the mean while we believe (I mean ministers), that the news of Howe's victory and the taking of Philadelphia are true. Adieu.

N^o CII.

The Same to the Same.

December 2d, 1777.

By the inclosed you will see that America is not yet conquered. Opposition are very lively; and though in the House we keep our numbers, there seems to be an universal desire of peace, even on the most humble conditions. Are you still fierce?

N^o CIII.

The Same to the Same.

Monday Night, December, 1777.

I CONGRATULATE your noble firmness, as I suppose it must arise from the knowledge of some hidden resources, which will enable us to open the next campaign with new armies of fifty or sixty thousand men. But I believe you will find yourself obliged to carry on this glorious war almost alone. It would be idle to dispute any more about politics, as we shall soon have an opportunity of a personal combat. Your journey gives me some hopes that you have not entirely lost your reason. Your bed shall be ready.

N^o CIV.

EDWARD GIBBON Esquire to J. A. HOLROYD Esquire.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, Thursday, Dec. 4, 1777.

DREADFUL news indeed! You will see them partly in the papers, and we have not yet any particulars. An English army of nearly ten thousand men laid down their arms, and surrendered prisoners of war, on condition of being sent to England, and of never serving against America. They had fought bravely, and were three days without eating. Bourgoyne is said to have received three wounds. General Frazer, with two thousand men, killed. Colonel Ackland likewise killed. A general cry for peace. Adieu. We have constant late days.

N^o CV.*The Same to the Same.*

February 28, 1778.

***** As to politics, we should easily fill pages, and therefore had better be silent. You are mistaken in supposing that the bills are opposed; some particular objections have been stated, and in the *only* division I voted with government.

N^o CVI.*The Same to the Same.*

February 23d, 1778.

YOU do not readily believe in præternatural miscarriages of letters; nor I neither. Listen, however, to

a plain and honest narrative. This morning after breakfast, as I was ruminating on *your* silence, Thomas, my new footman, with confusion in his looks and stammering on his tongue, produced a letter reasonably foiled, which he was to have brought me the day of his arrival, and which had lain forgotten from that time in his pocket. To shorten as much as possible the continuance, I immediately inquired, whether any method of conveyance could be devised more expeditious than the post, and was fortunately informed of your coachman's intentions. You probably know the heads of the plan; an Act of Parliament to declare, that we never *had* any intention of taxing America: another Act, to empower the Crown to name Commissioners, authorized to suspend hostilities by sea and land, as well as all obnoxious Acts; and, in short, to grant every thing, except independence. Opposition, after expressing their doubts whether the lance of Achilles could cure the wound which it had inflicted, could not refuse their assent to the principles of conduct which they themselves had always recommended. Yet you must acknowledge, that in a business of this magnitude there may arise several important questions, which, without a spirit of faction, will deserve to be debated: whether Parliament ought not to name the Commissioners? whether it would not be better to repeal the obnoxious Acts ourselves? I do not find that the world; that is, a few people whom I happen to converse with; are much inclined to praise Lord N.'s ductility of temper. In the service of next Friday you will, however, take notice of the injunction given by the Liturgy:

Liturg: "And all the People shall say after the *Mi-*
nister, Turn us again, O Lord, and so shall we be
 "turned." While we consider whether we shall ne-
 gociate, I fear the French have been more diligent.
 It is positively asserted, both in private and in Parlia-
 ment, and not contradicted by the Ministers, that on
 the fifth of this month a Treaty of Commerce (which
 naturally leads to a war) was signed at Paris with the
 independent States of America. Yet there still remains
 a hope that England may obtain the preference. The
 two greatest countries in Europe are fairly running a
 race for the favor of America. Adieu.

No. CLII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. B. HOLROYD Esquire.*

ALMACK'S. Saturday Night, March 21st, 1778.

As business thickens, and you may expect me to
 write sometimes, I shall lay down one rule; totally to
 avoid political argument, conjecture, lamentation,
 declamation, &c. which would fill pages, not to say
 volumes; and to confine myself to short, authentic
 pieces of intelligence, for which I may be able to
 afford moments and lines. Hear then—The French
 Ambassador went off yesterday morning, not without
 some slight expressions of ill-humor from John Bull.
 Lord Stormont is probably arrived to-day. No *im-*
mediate declaration, except on our side. A report (but
 vague) of an action in the Bay, between La Motte
 Piquet and Digby; the former has five ships and three
 frigates, with three large store-ships under convoy;

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the latter has eleven ships of the line. If the Frenchman should sail to the mouth of the Delaware, he may possibly be followed and shut up. When Franklin was received at Versailles, Deane went in the same character to Vienna, and Arthur Lee to Madrid. Notwithstanding the reports of an action in Silesia, they subside; and I have seen a letter from Eliot at Berlin of the tenth instant, without any mention of actual hostilities, and even speaking of the impending war as not absolutely inevitable. Last Tuesday the first payment of the loan of six hundred thousand pounds was certainly made; and as it would otherwise be forfeited, it is a security for the remainder. I have not yet got the intelligence you want about former prices of stock in critical times. There are surely such. *Dixi. Vale.* Send me some good news from Bucks; in spite of the war, I must sell. We want you in town. Simon Frazer is impatient: but if you come without my Lady, every door will be shut.

N^o CVIII.

The Same to the Same.

ALMACK'S, Friday, June 12th, 1778.

* * * *s Letter gave me that sort of satisfaction which one may receive from a good physician, who, after a careful examination, pronounces your case incurable. But no more of that. I take up the pen, as I suppose by this time you begin to swear at my silence. Yet literally (a bull) I have not a word to say. Since D'Estaing's fleet has passed through the Gut (I leave you to guess where it must have got out) it has

been totally forgotten, and the most wonderful lethargy and oblivion, of war and peace, of Europe and of America, seems to prevail. Lord Chatham's funeral was meanly attended, and Government ingeniously contrived to secure the double odium of suffering the thing to be done, and of doing it with an ill grace. Their chief conversation at Almack's is about tents, drill-serjeants, subdivisions, firings, &c. and I am revered as a veteran. Adieu. When do you return? If it suits your evolutions, aunt Kitty and myself meditate a Suffex journey next week. I embrace my Lady.

N° CIX.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire* to J. B. HOLROYD *Esquire*.

Wednesday Evening, July 1st, 1778.

YOUR plan of operations is clear and distinct; yet, notwithstanding your zeal, and the ideas of ducal discipline, I think you will be more and longer at Sheffield-Place than you imagine. However, I am disposed to advance my journey as much as possible. I want to see you; my martial ardor makes me look to Coxheath, necessity obliges me to think of Beriton, and I feel something of a very new inclination to taste the sweets of the country. Aunt Kitty shares the same sentiments; but various obstacles will not allow us to be with you before Saturday, or perhaps Sunday evening; I say *evening*, as we mean to take the cool part of the day, and shall probably arrive after supper. Keppel's return has occasioned infinite and inexpressible consternation, which gradually changes into discontent against him. He is ordered out again

with three or four large ships; two of ninety, two of seventy four, and the fiftieth regiment, as marines. In the mean time the French, with a superior fleet, are masters of the sea; and our outward bound East and West India trade is in the most imminent danger. Adieu.

N^o CX.

The Same to the Same.

BENTINCK-STREET, July 7th, 1778.

EXPECT me——when you see me; and do not regulate your active motions by my uncertainty. Saturday is impossible. The most probable days are, Tuesday or Friday. I live not unpleasantly, in a round of ministerial dinners; but I am rather impatient to see my white house at Brighton. I cannot find that Sheffield has the same attractions for you²². Lord North, as a mark of his gratitude, observed the other day, that your regiment would make a very good figure in North Carolina. Adieu. I wrote two lines to Mitchel, lest he should think me dead.

N^o CXI.

The Same to the Same.

Saturday Night, September 25th, 1778.

NO news from the fleets; we are so tired of waiting, that our impatience seems gradually to subside into a careless and supine indifference. We sometimes yawn, and ask, just by way of conversation, Whether Spain will join? I believe you may depend on the truth,

not the sincerity, of an answer from their Court, that they will not support or acknowledge the independence of the Americans. But, on the other hand, magazines are forming, troops marching, in a style which manifestly threatens Gibraltar. Gib is, however, a hard morsel; five thousand effectives, and every article of defence in the most complete state. We are certainly courting Russia. So much for the Republic. Adieu.

N^o CXII.

The Same to the Same.

Tuesday, Night November, 1778.

YOU sometimes complain that I do not send you early news; but you will now be satisfied with receiving a full and true account of all the parliamentary transactions of *next* Thursday. In town we think it an excellent piece of humor " (the author is Tickell). Burke and C. Fox are pleased with their own speeches, but serious patriots groan that such things should be turned to farce. We seem to have a chance of an additional Dutch war: you may depend upon its being a very important business, from which we cannot extricate ourselves without either loss or shame. *Vale.*

N^o CXIII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. B. HOLROYD Esquire.*

ALMACK'S, Wednesday evening, 1778.

I DELAYED writing, not so much through indolence, as because I expected every post to hear from you.

The state of Beriton is uncertain, incomprehensible, tremendous. It would be endless to send you the folios of Hugonin, but I have inclosed you one of his most picturesque epistles, on which you may meditate. Few offers; one, promising enough, came from a gentleman at Camberwell. I detected him, with masterly skill and diligence, to be only an attorney's Clerk, without money, credit, or experience. I have written as yet in vain to Sir John Shelley, about Hearsay; perhaps you might get intelligence. I much fear that the Beriton expedition is necessary; but it has occurred to me, that if I *met*, instead of *accompanying* you, it would save me a journey of above one hundred miles. That reflection led to another of a very impudent nature; viz. that if I did not accompany you, I certainly could be of no use to you or myself on the spot; that I had much rather, while you examined the premises, pass the time in a horse-pond; and that I had still rather pass it in my library with the Decline and Fall. But that would be an effort of friendship worthy of Theseus or Perithous: modern times would hardly credit, much less imitate, such exalted virtue. No news from America; yet there are people, large ones too, who talk of conquering it next summer with the help of twenty thousand Russians. I fancy you are better satisfied with private than public war. The Lisbon packet in coming home met above forty of our privateers. Adieu. I hardly know whether I direct right to you, but I think Sheffield-Place the surest.

N^o CXIV.Dr. WATSON (*now Bishop of Llandaff*) to Mr. GIBBON.

SIR,

CAMBRIDGE, January 14th, 1779.

IT will give me the greatest pleasure to have an opportunity of becoming better acquainted with Mr. Gibbon. I beg he would accept my sincere thanks for the too favorable manner in which he has spoken of a performance, which derives its chief merit from the elegance and importance of the work it attempts to oppose. I have no hope of a future existence, except that which is grounded on the truth of Christianity. I wish not to be deprived of this hope; but I should be an apostate from the mild principle of the religion I profess, if I could be actuated with the least animosity against those who do not think with me upon this, of all others, the most important subject. I beg your pardon for this declaration of my belief; but my temper is naturally open, and it ought assuredly to be without disguise to a man whom I wish no longer to look upon as an antagonist, but as a friend. I have the honor to be, with every sentiment of respect, your obliged servant,

R^D WATSON.N^o CXV.

EDWARD GIBBON Esq. to J. B. HOLROYD Esq.

February 6th, 1779.

YOU are quiet and peaceable, and do not bark, as usual, at my silence. To reward you, I would send you some news; but we are asleep; no foreign intel-

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ligence, except the capture of a frigate; no certain account from the West Indies, and a dissolution of Parliament, which seems to have taken place since Christmas. In the papers you will see negociations, changes of departments, &c. and I have *some* reason to believe, that those reports are not entirely without foundation. Portsmouth is no longer an object of speculation; the whole stream of all men, and all parties, runs one way. Sir Hugh is disgraced, ruined, &c. &c.; and as an old wound has broken out again, they say he must have his leg cut off as soon as he has time. In a night or two we shall be in a blaze of illumination, from the zeal of naval heroes, land patriots, and tallow-chandlers; the last are not the least sincere. I want to hear some details of your military and familiar proceedings. By your silence I suppose you admire Davis, and dislike my pamphlet; yet such is the public folly, that we have a second edition in the press: the fashionable style of the clergy, is to say they have not read it. If Maria does not take care, I shall write a much sharper invective against her, for *not* answering my diabolical book. My Lady carried it down, with a solemn promise that I should receive an *unassisted* French letter. Yet I embrace the little animal, as well as my Lady, and the *Spes altera Romæ*. Adieu.

There is a buz about a peace, and Spanish mediation.

N° CXVI.

Dr. WILLIAM ROBERTSON to Mr. GIBBON.

DEAR SIR, COLLEGE of EDINBURGH, March 10, 1779.

I SHOULD have long since returned you thanks for the pamphlet you took the trouble of sending to me. I hope you are not one of those who estimate kindness by punctuality in correspondence. I read your little performance with much eagerness, and some solicitude. The latter soon ceased. The tone you take with your adversary in this *impar congressus* appears to me perfectly proper; and, though I watched you with some attention, I have not observed any expression which I should, on your own account, wish to be altered. Davis's book never reached us here. Our distance from the Capital operates somewhat like time. Nothing but what has intrinsic value comes down to us. We hear sometimes of the worthless and vile things that float for a day on the stream, but we seldom see them. I am satisfied, however, that it was necessary for you to animadvert on a man who had brought accusations against you, which no gentleman can allow to be made without notice. I am persuaded, that the persons who instigated the man to such an illiberal attack, will now be ashamed of him. At the same time I applaud your resolution, of not degrading yourself, by a second conflict, with such antagonists.

I am ashamed to tell you, how little I have done since I had the pleasure of seeing you. I have been prevented, partly by ill health, partly by causes

which I shall explain when we meet: I hope that
may be next spring. Believe me to be with great truth,

Your affectionate and faithful humble servant,

WILLIAM ROBERTSON;

N^o CXVII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. B. HOLROYD Esquire.*

May 7th, 1779.

By some of the strangest accidents, (Lord G. G.'s indiscretion, Rigby's boldness, &c.) which it would require ten pages to explain, our wise resolution of last Thursday is changed, and Lord Cornwallis will be examined; Sir William Howe's inquiry will proceed, and we shall be oppressed by the load of information. You have heard of the Jersey invasion; every body praises Arbuthnot's decided spirit. Conway went last night to throw himself into the island.

N^o CXVIII.

The Same to the Same.

May, 1779.

ALAS! alas! fourteen ships of the line: you understand by this, that you have not got a single long-boat. Ministry are more crest-fallen than I ever knew them, with the last intelligence; and I am sorry to say, that I see a smile of triumph on some opposition faces. Though the business of the West Indies may still produce something, I am much afraid that we shall have a campaign of immense expense, and little or no action.

The most busy scene is at present in the House of Commons; and we shall be involved, during a great part of next month, in tedious, fruitless, but, in my opinion, proper inquiries. You see how difficult it would be for me to visit Brighton; and I fancy I must content myself with receiving you on your passage to Ireland. Indeed, I much want to have a *very serious* conversation with you. Another reason, which must in a great measure pin me to Bentinck-street, is the Decline and Fall. I have resolved to bring out the *suite* in the course of next year; and, though I have been tolerably diligent, so much remains to be done, that I can hardly spare a singly day from the shop. I can guess but one reason which should prevent you from supposing that the picture in Leicester Fields was intended for the Sheffield library; viz. my having told you some time ago that I was under a formal engagement to Mr. Walpole⁴. Probably I should not have been in any great hurry to execute my promise, if Mr. Cadell had not strenuously urged the curiosity of the Public, who may be willing to repay the exorbitant price of *fifty* guineas. It is now finished, and my friends say, that, in every sense of the word, it is a good head. Next week it will be given to Hall the engraver, and I promise you a first impression. Adieu. I embrace my Lady, and infants.

N^o CXIX.*The Same to the Same.*

W H E N do you come to town? You gave me hopes of a visit, and I want to talk over things in ge.

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neral with you, before you march to the extremities of the West, where the sun goes to sleep in the sea. Mrs. Trevor told me, your destination was Exeter ⁷⁰; and I suppose nothing but truth can proceed from a pretty mouth. — I have been, and am still very diligent; and, though it is a huge beast, (the Roman Empire,) yet, if I am not mistaken, I see it move a little.—You seem surpris'd that I was able to get off Bath: very easily, the extreme shortness of our holidays was a fair excuse; her recovery of health, spirits, &c. made it less necessary, and she accepted my apology, which was however accompanied with an offer, if she chose it, in the prettiest manner possible. A load of business in this House, (I write from it,) will be the amusement of the spring; motions, inquiries, taxes, &c. &c. We are now engaged in Lord Pigott's affair, brought on by a motion from the Admiral, that the Attorney General should prosecute Mr. Stratton and Council; all the Masters, Charles, Burke, Wedderburne, are of the same side, for it; Lord North seems to make a feeble stand, for the pleasure of being in a minority. The day is hot and dull; will belong: some curious evidence; one man who refused three lacks of rupees, (thirty-seven thousand five hundred pounds,) merely not to go to council; our mouths watered at such royal corruption; how pitiful is our insular bribery! A letter from aunt Hester. Adieu.

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N^o CXX.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to J. B. HOLROYD, Esquire.*

July 2, 1779.

THE inclosed will inform you of an event⁷¹, not the most disagreeable of those which I have lately experienced. I have only to add, that it was effected by the firm and sincere friendship of the Attorney General. So many incidents have happened, that I hardly know how to talk of news. You will learn that the Lords have strangely castrated the new Militia Bill. The Ferrol Squadron, eight or nine ships, have joined the French. The numbers stand on our side thirty-two, on theirs thirty-seven; but our force is at least equal, and the general consternation much dispelled. If you do not Hibernize, you might at least Bentinckize. I embrace, &c. Parliament will be prorogued to morrow.

N^o CXXI.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON, Bath.*

DEAR MADAM, BENTINCK-STREET, Sept. 17th. 1779.

I AM well and happy; two words which you will accept as the substance of a very long letter; and even as a sufficient excuse for a very long silence. Yet I really do intend to behave better; and to prevent the abominable consequence of hours and days and posts stealing away, till the sum total amounts to a formidable account, I have a great mind to enter into

an agreement, of sending you regularly every month, a *miniature* picture of my actual state and condition on the first day of the aforesaid month.

I am glad to hear of the very beneficial effects you have derived from your recent friendship with the goats⁷²; and as I cannot discover in what respect this poor country is more prosperous or secure than it was last year, I must consider your present confidence as a proof that you view the prospect through a purer medium, and a glass of a more cheerful color. I find myself so much more susceptible of private friendship than of public spirit, that I am very well satisfied with that conclusion. My summer has been passed in the town and neighbourhood, which I still maintain to be the best society and the best retirement; the latter, however, has been sometimes interrupted by the Colonel of Dragoons⁷³ with a train of serjeants, trumpets, recruits, &c. &c. My own time is much and agreeably employed in the prosecution of my business. After doing much more than I expected to have done within the time, I find myself much less advanced than I expected: yet I begin to reckon, and as well as I can calculate, I believe, that in twelve or fourteen months I shall be brought to bed, perhaps of twins; may they live, and prove as healthy as their eldest brother. With regard to the little founding which so many friends or enemies chose to lay at my door, I am perfectly innocent, even of the knowledge of that production; and all the faults or merits of the History of Opposition must, as I am informed, be imputed to Macpherson, the author or translator of Fingal. Dear Madam, most truly yours.

N^o CXXII.EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Colonel HOLROYD*
at Coventry.

LONDON, Monday, February 7th, 1780.

WHEN the Attorney General informed me of the express he had just sent down to Coventry, I had not the least doubt of your embracing the bolder resolution. You are indeed obliged to him for his real friendship, which he feels and expresses warmly; on this occasion I hope it will be successful, and that in a few days you will find yourself among us at St. Stephen's in the heat of the battle. But you know that I am a dastardly, pusillanimous spirit, more inclined to fear than to hope, and not very eager in the pursuit of *expensive* vanity. On this vacancy the celerity of your motions may probably prevent opposition; but at the general election your enemy the corporation will not be asleep, and I wish, if it be not too late, to warn you against any promises or engagements which may terminate in a defeat, or at least a contest of ten thousand pounds. Adieu. I could believe (without seeing it under her paw) that my Lady wishes to leave Coventry. No news! foreign or domestic. I did not forget to mention the *companies*, but find people, as I expected, torpid. Burke makes his motion Friday; but I think the rumors of a civil war subside every day: petitions are thought less formidable; and I hear your Suffex protest gathers signatures in the country.

N° CXXIII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON*, Bath.

DEAR MADAM, BENTINCK-STREET, March 10th, 1780.

WHEN you awakened me with your pen, it was my intention to have shown some signs of life by the next post. But so uncertain are all human affairs, that I found myself arrested by a mighty unrelenting tyrant, called the gout; and though my feet were the part on which he chose to exercise his cruelty, he left me neither strength nor spirits to use my hand in relating the melancholy tale. At present, I have the pleasure of informing you, that the fever and inflammation have subsided: but the absolute weakness and monstrous swelling of my two feet confine me to my chair and flannels; and this confinement most unluckily happens at a very nice and important moment of parliamentary affairs. Col. H. pursues those affairs with eager and persevering zeal; and has the pleasure of undertaking more business than any three men could possibly execute. He is much obliged to you for your kind congratulation. Mrs. Eliot is in town; but I am quite ignorant (not more so than they are themselves) of their intentions. I will write again very soon. I am, dear Madam, most truly yours.

N° CXXIV.

The Same to the Same.

DEAR MADAM,

June 6th, 1780.

As the old story of religion has raised most formidable tumults in this town, and as they will of course seem

seen much more formidable at the distance of a hundred miles, you may not be sorry to hear that I am perfectly safe and well: my known attachment to the Protestant religion has most probably saved me. Measures, and effectual measures, are taken to suppress those disorders, and every street is filled with horse and foot. Mrs. Holroyd went out of town yesterday morning; the Colonel remains, and shows his usual spirit. I am sincerely yours.

N^o CXXV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON, Bath.*

DEAR MADAM,

LONDON, June 8th 1780.

As a Member of Parliament, I cannot be exposed to any danger, since the House of Commons has adjourned to Monday se'nnight; as an individual, I do not conceive myself to be obnoxious. I am not apt, without duty or necessity, to thrust myself into a mob: and our part of the town is as quiet as a country village. So much for personal safety; but I cannot give the same assurances of public tranquillity: forty thousand Puritans, such as they might be in the time of Cromwell have started out of their graves; the tumult has been dreadful; and even the remedy of military force and martial law is unpleasant. But Government, with fifteen thousand regulars in town, and every gentleman (but one) on their side, must extinguish the flame. The execution of last night was severe; perhaps it must be repeated to night: yet, upon the whole, the tumult subsides. Colonel Holroyd was all last night in Holborn among the flames,

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with the Northumberland Militia, and performed very bold and able service. I will write again in a post or two.

I am, my dear Madam, ever yours.

N° CXXVI.

The Same to the Same.

DEAR MADAM,

June 10th, 1780.

I SHOULD write with great pleasure, to say that this audacious tumult is perfectly quelled; that Lord George Gordon is sent to the Tower; and that, instead of safety or danger, we are now at leisure to think of justice: but I am now alarmed on your account, as we have just got a report, that a similar disorder has broken out at Bath. I shall be impatient to hear from you; but I flatter myself that your pretty town does not contain much of that scum which has boiled up to the surface in this huge cauldron. I am, dear Madam, most sincerely yours.

N° CXXVII.

The Same to the Same.

DEAR MADAM, BENTINCK-STREET, June 27th, 1780.

I BELIEVE we may now rejoice in our common security. All tumult has perfectly subsided, and we only think of the justice which must be properly and severely inflicted on such flagitious criminals. The measures of Government have been seasonable and vigorous; and even opposition has been forced to

confess, that the military power was applied and regulated with the utmost propriety. Our danger is at an end, but our disgrace will be lasting, and the month of June 1780, will ever be marked by a dark and diabolical fanaticism, which I had supposed to be extinct, but which actually subsists in Great Britain, perhaps beyond any other country in Europe. Our parliamentary work draws to a conclusion; and I am much more pleasingly, though laboriously, engaged in revising and correcting for the press, the continuation of my History, two volumes of which will certainly appear next winter. This business fixes me to Bentinck-street more closely than any other part of my literary labor; as it is absolutely necessary that I should be in the midst of all the books which I have at any time used during the composition. But I feel a strong desire (irritated, like all other passions, by repeated obstacles) to escape to Bath.

Dear Madam,

Most truly yours.

N^o CXXVIII.

EDWARD GIBBON Esquire to Colonel HOLROYD.

July 25th, 1780.

As your motions are spontaneous, and the stations of the Lord Chief "unalterably fixed, I cannot perceive the necessity of your sending or receiving intelligence. However, your commands are obeyed. You wish I would write, as a sign of life. I am alive; but, as I am immersed in the Decline and Fall, I shall only make the sign. It is made. You may suppose

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that we are not pleased with the junction of the fleets; nor can an ounce of West India loss be compensated by a pound of East India success: but the circuit will roll down all the news and politics of London. I rejoice to hear that the Suffex regiment of Dragoons⁷⁶ are such well-disciplined cannibals; but I want to know when the Chief cannibal will return to his den. It would suit me better that it should happen soon. Adieu.

N^o CXXIX.

The Same to the Same.

BROOKES'S, November 28th, 1780.

PERHAPS the Sheriffs⁷⁶, the tools of your enemies, may venture to make a false and hostile return, on the presumption that they shall have a whole year of impunity; and that the merits of your petition cannot be heard this session. Some of your most respectable friends in the House of Commons are resolved, (if the return should be such,) to state it forcibly as a special and extraordinary case; and to exert all proper strength for bringing on the trial of your Petition without delay. The knowledge of such a resolution may awe the Sheriffs; and it may be prudent to admonish them of the *impending* danger, in the way that you judge most advisable. Adieu. God send you a good deliverance.

N° CXXX.

Mr. GIBBON to Mrs. GIBBON, Belvedere, Bath:

DEAR MADAM, BENTINCK-STREET, Dec. 21st, 1780.

THIS constant attendance on the Board of Trade almost every day this week, has obliged me to defer till next Monday a visit of inclination and propriety to Lord Loughborough (at Mitcham, in Surry). I shall not return till Wednesday or Thursday; and, instead of my Christmas, I shall eat my New-year's dinner, at the Belvedere, Bath. May that New Year prove fortunate to you, to me, and to this weary country, which is this day involved in a new war! I shall write again about the middle of next week, with a precise account of my motions. I think the gallant Colonel, who is now Lord Sheffield, will succeed at Coventry; *perhaps* on the return, *certainly* on the petition. I am, dear Madam, ever yours.

N° CXXXI.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON, Bath.*

DEAR MADAM, BENTINCK-STREET, Feb. 24th, 1781.

AS you have probably received my last letter of thirteen hundred pages", I shall be very concise; read, judge, pronounce; and believe that I sincerely agree with my friend Julian, in esteeming the praise of those only who will freely censure my defects. Next Thursday I shall be delivered to the world, for whose inconstant and malicious levity I am coolly

but firmly prepared. Excuse me to Sarah. I see more clearly than ever, the absolute necessity of confining my presents to my own family: *that*, and that only, is a determined line, and Lord S. is the first to approve his exclusion. He has a strong assurance of success, and some hopes of a speedy decision. How suddenly your friend General Pierfon disappeared! You thought him happy. What is happiness! My dear Madam, ever yours.

N° CXXXII.

Dr. WILLIAM ROBERTSON to Mr. GIBBON.

DEAR SIR, COLLEGE OF EDINBURGH, May 12th, 1781.

I AM ashamed of having deferred so long to thank you for the agreeable present of your two new volumes; but just as I had finished the first reading of them, I was taken ill, and continued, for two or three weeks, nervous, deaf, and languid. I have now recovered as much spirit as to tell you, with what perfect satisfaction I have not only perused, but studied, this part of your work. I knew enough of your talents and industry to expect a great deal, but you have gone far beyond my expectation. I can recollect no historical work from which I ever received so much instruction; and, when I consider in what a barren field you had to glean and pick up materials, I am truly astonished at the connected and interesting story you have formed. I like the style of these volumes better than that of the first; there is the same beauty, richness, and perspicuity of language, with less of that quaintness, into which

your admiration of Tacitus sometimes seduced you. I am highly pleased with the reign of Julian. I was a little afraid that *you* might lean with some partiality towards him; but even bigots, I should think, must allow, that you have delineated his most singular character with a more masterly hand than ever touched it before. You set me a reading his works, with which I was very slenderly acquainted; and I am much struck with the felicity wherewith you have described that odd infusion of Heathen fanaticism and philosophical coxcombry, which mingled with the great qualities of a hero, and a genius. Your chapter concerning the pastoral nations is admirable; and, though I hold myself to be a tolerably good general historian, a great part of it was new to me. As soon as I have leisure, I purpose to trace you to your sources of information; and I have no doubt of finding you as exact there, as I have found you in other passages where I have made a scrutiny. It was always my idea that a historian should feel himself a witness giving evidence upon oath. I am glad to perceive by your minute scrupulosity, that your notions are the same. The last chapter in your work is the only one with which I am not entirely satisfied. I imagine you rather anticipate, in describing the jurisprudence and institutions of the Franks; and should think that the account of private war, ordeals, chivalry, &c. would have come in more in its place about the age of Charlemagne, or later: but with respect to this, and some other petty criticisms, I will have an opportunity of talking fully to you soon, as I propose setting out for London on Monday. I have

indeed, many things to say to you; and, as my stay in London is to be very short, I shall hope to find your door (at which I will be very often) always open to me. I cannot conclude without approving of the caution with which the new volumes are written; I hope it will exempt you from the illiberal abuse the first volume drew upon you. I ever am,
yours, faithfully and affectionately,

WILLIAM ROBERTSON.

N^o CXXXIII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Lady SHEFFIELD*,
at Sheffield-Place.

BENTINCK STREET, Friday Evening, 10 o'clock, 1781.

OH, oh! I have given you the slip; saved thirty miles, by proceeding this day directly from Earham to town, and am now *comfortably* seated in my library, in *my own* easy chair, and before *my own* fire; a style which you understand, though it is unintelligible to your Lord. The town is empty; but I am surrounded with a thousand old acquaintance of all ages and characters, who are ready to answer a thousand questions which I am impatient to ask. I shall not easily be tired of their company; yet I still remember, and will honorably execute, my promise of visiting you at Brighton about the middle of next month. I have seen nobody, nor learned any thing, in four hours of a town life; but I can inform you, that Lady ***** is now the declared Mistress of Prince Henry of Prussia, whom she encountered at Spa; and that the Emperor has invited the amiable couple

to pass the winter at Vienna: fine encouragement for married women who behave themselves properly. I spent a very pleasant day in the little paradise of Eartham, and the hermit expressed a desire (no vulgar compliment) to see and to know Lord S. Adieu. I cordially embrace, &c.

N^o CXXXIV.

Sir WILLIAM JONES to Mr. GIBBON.

DEAR SIR, LAMB'S-BUILDINGS, June 30th, 1781.

I HAVE more than once sought, without having been so fortunate as to obtain, a proper opportunity of thanking you very sincerely for the elegant compliment which you pay me, in a work abounding in elegance of all kinds.

My *Seven Arabian Poets* will see the light before next winter, and be proud to wait upon you in their English dress. Their wild productions will, I flatter myself, be thought interesting, and not venerable merely on account of their antiquity.

In the mean while, let me request you to honor me with accepting a copy of a Law Tract, which is not yet published: the subject is so generally important, that I make no apology for sending you a professional work.

You must pardon my inveterate hatred of C. Octavianus, basely surnamed Augustus. I feel myself unable to forgive the death of Cicero, which, if he did not promote, he might have prevented. Besides, even Mecænas knew the cruelty of his disposition, and ventured to reproach him with it. In short, I have not *Christian* charity for him.

With regard to Asiatic letters, a necessary attention to my profession will compel me wholly and eternally to abandon them, *unless* Lord North (to whom I am already under no small obligation) should think me worthy to concur in the *improved* administration of justice in Bengal, and should appoint me to supply the vacancy on the India Bench. Were that appointment to take place this year, I should probably travel, for speed, through part of Egypt and Arabia, and should be able, in my way, to procure many Eastern tracts of literature and jurisprudence. I might become a good *Mahomedan* lawyer before I reached Calcutta, and, in my vacations, should find leisure to explain, in my native language, whatever the Arabs, Persians, and Turks, have written on science, history, and the fine arts.

My happiness by no means depends on obtaining this appointment, as I am in easy circumstances without my profession, and have flattering prospects in it; but if the present summer and the ensuing autumn elapse without my receiving any answer, favorable or unfavorable, I shall be forced to consider that silence as a polite refusal, and, having given sincere thanks for past favors, shall entirely drop all thoughts of *Asia*, and, "deep as ever plummet sounded, shall drown my *Persian* books." If my politics have given offence, it would be manly in Ministers to tell me so. I shall never be *personally* hostile to them, nor insist under party banners of any color; but I will never resign my opinions for *interest*, though I would cheerfully abandon them on *conviction*. My reason, such as it is, can only be controlled by better reason,

to which I am ever open. As to my freedom of thought, speech, and action, I shall ever say what Charles XII. wrote under the map of Riga, "*Dieu me l'a donnée; le diable ne me l'ôtera pas.*" But the fair answer to this objection is, that my system is purely speculative, and has no relation to my seat on the bench in India, where I should hardly think of instructing the Gentoos in the maxims of the Athenians. I believe I should not have troubled you with this letter, if I did not fear that your attendance in Parliament might deprive me of the pleasure of meeting you at the Club next Tuesday; and I shall go to Oxford a few days after. At all times, and in all places, I shall ever be, with undissembled regard, dear Sir, your much obliged and faithful servant,

W. JONES.

N° CXXXV.

Lord HARDWICKE to Mr. GIBBON.

S I R,

WIMPLE, September 20th, 1781.

As I have perused your History of the Decline, &c. with the greatest pleasure and instruction, I cannot help wishing that, as health and leisure permit, you would gratify your numerous readers and admirers, by continuing it, at least till the irruption of the Arabs after Mahomet. From that period the History of the East is not very interesting, and often disgusting. I particularly wish to see the reigns of Justin, Justinian, and I think Justin the Second, written by so masterly a hand. There are striking facts and remarkable characters in all those reigns, which have not yet met with an able and sagacious *Historian*. You

seemed (as well as I recollect) to think the anecdotes of Procopius spurious; there are strange anecdotes in them, and of a very different cast from his History. Can it be traced up when they first came to light?

Excuse this short interruption from much better employments or amusements; and believe me, Sir, with the greatest regard, your most obedient humble servant,

HARDWICKE.

P. S. It has occurred to me, that a map of the progress and native seat of the northern hives would greatly elucidate and explain that part of your History. It may be done in a second edition.

N^o CXXXVI.

Dr. ROBERTSON to Mr. GIBBON.

DEAR SIR, COLLEGE of EDINBURGH, Nov. 6th, 1781.

SOON after my return I had a long conversation with our friend Mr. Smith, in which I stated to him every particular you mentioned to me, with respect to the propriety of going on with your great work. I was happy to find, that his opinion coincided perfectly with that which I had ventured to give you. His decisions, you know, are both prompt and vigorous; and he would not allow that you ought to hesitate a moment in your choice. He promised to write his sentiments to you very fully. But as he may have neglected to do this, for it is not willingly that he puts pen to paper, I thought it might be agreeable to you to know his opinion, though I imagine you could hardly entertain any doubt concerning it. I hope you have brought such a stock of health and

spirits from Brighthelmstone, that you are set seriously at your desk, and that in two winters or so, you will display the crescent of Mahomet on the dome of St. Sophia. I met t'other day, in a work addressed to yourself, a sensible passage from E. Paul, which perfectly removes one of your chief difficulties, as to the barrenness of some parts of your period. Hayley's Essay on History, p. 133. By the bye, who is this Mr. Hayley? His poetry has more merit than that of most of his contemporaries; but his whiggism is so bigotted, and his Christianity so fierce, that he almost disgusts one with two very good things.

I have got quite well long ago, and am perfectly free from deafness; but I cannot yet place myself in any class but that of the *multa & præclara minantes*. Be so kind as to remember me to Lord Loughborough and Mr. Craufurd, and believe me to be, with most sincere respect and attachment, yours very faithfully,

WILLIAM ROBERTSON.

Nº CXXXVII.

EDWARD GIBBON Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON, Bath.

DEAR MADAM, BRIGHTHELMSTONE, Nov. 2d, 1781.

I RETURNED to this place with Lord and Lady Sheffield, with the design of passing two or three weeks in a situation which had so highly delighted me. But how vain are all sublunary hopes! I had forgot that there is some difference between the sunshine of August and the cold fogs (though we have uncommon good weather) of November. Instead of my beautiful sea shore, I am confined to a dark lodging

in the middle of the town; for the place is still full; and our time is now spent in the dull imitation of a London life. To complete my misfortunes, Lord Sheffield was hastily ordered to Canterbury and Deal, to suppress some disturbances, and I was left almost alone with my Lady, in the servile state of a married man. But he returns to-day, and I hope to be seated in my own library by the middle of next week. However, you will not be sorry to hear that I have refreshed myself by a very *idle* summer, and indeed a much idler and more pleasant winter than the House of Commons will ever allow me to enjoy again. I had almost forgot Mr. Hayley; ungratefully enough, since I already passed a very simple, but entertaining day with him. His place, though small, is elegant as his mind, which I value much more highly. Mrs. * * * * wrote a melancholy story of an American mother, a friend of her friend, who in a short time had lost three sons; one killed by the savages, one run mad from the fright at that accident, and the third taken at sea, now in England, a prisoner in Forton hospital. For *him* something might perhaps be done. Your humanity will prompt you to obtain from Mrs. * * * * a more accurate account of names, dates, and circumstances; but you will prudently suppress my request, lest I should raise hopes which it may not be in my power to gratify. Lady S. begs to send her kindest compliments to you. I am, dear Madam, ever yours.

N^o CXXXVIII.EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON*, Bath.

DEAR MADAM,

July 3d, 1782.

I HOPE you have not had a moment's uneasiness about the delay of my Midsummer letter. Whatever may happen, you may rest fully secure, that the materials of it shall always be *found*. But on this occasion I have missed four or five posts; postponing, as usual, from morning to the evening bell, which now rings, till it has occurred to me, that it might not be amiss to enclose the two essential lines, if I only added that the influenza has been known to me only by the report of others. Lord Rockingham is at last dead; a good man, whatever he might be a minister: his successor is not yet named, and divisions in the Cabinet are suspected. If Lord Shelburne should be the man, as I think he will, the friends of his predecessor will quarrel with him before Christmas. At all events, I foresee much tumult and strong opposition, from which I should be very glad to extricate myself, by quitting the House of Commons with honor. Whatever you may hear, I believe there is not the least intention of dissolving Parliament, which would indeed be a rash and dangerous measure. I hope you like Mr. Hayley's poem; he rises with his subject, and since Pope's death, I am satisfied that England has not seen so happy a mixture of strong sense and flowing numbers. Are you not delighted with his address to his mother? I understand that she was in plain prose every thing that he speaks her in verse. This summer I shall stay in town, and work at my

trade, till I make some holidays for my Bath excursion. Lady Sheffield is at Brighton, and he is under tents, like the wild Arabs; so that my country house is shut up. I am, dear Madam, ever yours.

N° CXXXIX.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD, Camp, Coxheath.

BENTINCK-STREET, 1782.

I SYMPATHIZE with your fatigues; yet Alexander, Hannibal, &c. have suffered hardships almost equal to yours. At such a moment it is disagreeable (besides laziness) to write, because every hour teems with a new lie. As yet, however, only Charles has formally resigned; but Lord Johnth, Burke, Keppel, Lord Althorpe, &c. certainly follow; your Lord Lieutenant stays. In short, three months of prosperity has dissolved a phalanx, which had stood ten years adversity. Next Tuesday, Fox will give his reasons, and possibly be encountered by Pitt, the new Secretary, or Chancellorth, at three-and-twenty. The day will be rare and curious, and, if I were a light dragoon, I would take a gallop on purpose to Westminster. Adieu. I hear the bell. How could I write before I knew where you dwelt?

N° CXL,

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD, Coxheath Camp.

September 29th, 1782.

I SHOULD like to hear sometimes, whether you survive the scenes of action and danger in which a dragoon is continually involved. What a difference between the life of a dragoon and that of a philosopher! and I will freely own that I (the philosopher) am much better satisfied with my own independent and tranquil situation, in which I have always something to do, without ever being obliged to do any thing. The Hampton Court villa has answered my expectation, and proved no small addition to my comforts; so that I am resolved next summer to hire, borrow, or steal, either the same, or something of the same kind. Every morning I walk a mile or more before breakfast, read and write *quantum sufficit*, mount my chaise and visit in the neighbourhood, accept some invitations, and escape others, use the Lucans as my daily bread, dine pleasantly at home, or sociably abroad, reserve for study an hour or two in the evening, lie in town regularly once a week, &c. &c. I have announced to Mrs. G. my new arrangements; the certainty that October will be fine, and my increasing doubts whether I shall be able to reach Bath before Christmas. Do you intend (but how can you intend any thing?) to pass the winter under canvass. Perhaps under the veil of Hampton Court I may lurk ten days or a fortnight at Sheffield, if the enraged Lady does not shut the doors against

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me. The Warden ** passed through in his way to Dover. He is not so fat, and more cheerful than ever. I had not any private conversation with him; but he clearly holds the balance, unless he lets it drop out of his hand. The Pandæmonium (as I understand) does not meet till the twenty-sixth of November. Town is more a desert than I ever knew it. I arrived yesterday, dined at Sir Joshua's with a tolerable party; the chaise is now at the door; I dine at Richmond, lie at Hampton, &c. Adieu.

N^o CXLI.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Lord SHEFFIELD, at Coxheath Camp.*

BENTINCK-STREET, October 14th, 1782.

ON the approach of winter, my paper house at Hampton becomes less comfortable; my visits to Bentinck-street grow longer and more frequent, and the end of next week will restore me to the town, with a lively wish, however, to repeat the same, or a similar experiment, next summer. I admire the assurance with which you propose a month's residence at Sheffield, when you are not sure of being allowed three days. Here it is currently reported, that camps will not separate till Lord Howe's return from Gibraltar, and as yet we have no news of his arrival. Perhaps indeed you may have more intimate correspondence with your old friend Lord Shelburne, and already know the hour of your deliverance. I should like to be informed. As Lady S. has entirely forgotten me, I shall have the pleasure of forming a new acquaintance. I have often thought of writing, but it is now too late to repent.

I am at a loss what to say or think about our parliamentary state. A certain late Secretary of Ireland reckons the House of Commons thus: Minister one hundred and forty, Reynard ninety, Boreas one hundred and twenty, the rest unknown, or uncertain. The last of the three, by self or agents, talks too much of absence, neutrality, moderation. I still think he will discard the game.

I am not in such a fury with the letter of American independence; but I think it seems ill-timed and useless; and I am much entertained with the metaphysical disputes between Government and Secession about the meaning of it. Lord Loughborough will be in town Sunday seven-night. I long to see him and Co. I think he will take a very decided part. If he could throw aside his gown, he would make a noble leader. The East India news are excellent. The French gone to the Mauritius, Heyder desirous of peace, the Nizam and Mahrattas our friends, and seventy lacks of rupees in the Bengal treasury, while we were voting the recal of Hastings. Adieu. Write soon.

N^o CXLII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Lord SHEFFIELD.*

1782.

I HAVE designed writing every post. The air of London is admirable; my complaints have vanished, and the gout still respects me. Lord Loughborough, with whom I passed an entire day, is very well satisfied with his Irish expedition, and found the barbarous people very kind to him. The castle is strong, but the volunteers are formidable. London is dead,

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and all intelligence so totally extinct, that the loss of an army would be a favorable incident. We have not even the advantage of shipwrecks, which must soon, with the society of you and Gerard Hamilton, become the only pleasures of Brighton. My Lady is precious, and deserves to shine in London, when she regains her palace. The workmen are slow, but I hear that the Minister talks of hiring another house after Christmas". Adieu, till Monday seven-night.

N^o CXLIII.

The Same to the Same.

January 17th, 1783.

As I arrived about seven o'clock on Wednesday last we were some time in town in mutual ignorance. Unlucky enough; yet our loss will be speedily repaired. Your reason for not writing is worthy of an Irish Baron: you thought Sarah might be at Bath, because you directed letters to her at Clifton near Bristol; where indeed I saw her in a delightful situation, swept by the winter winds, and scorched by the summer sun. A nobler reason for your silence would be the care of the public papers, to record your steps, words, and actions. I was pleased with your Coventry oration: a panegyric on * * * * is a subject entirely new, and which no orator before yourself would have dared to undertake. You have acted with prudence and dignity in casting away the military yoke. This next summer you will sit down (if you can sit) in the long lost character of a country gentleman.

For my own part, my late journey has only con-

*firmed me in the opinion, that Number Seven in Bentinck-street is the best house in the world. I find that peace and war alternately, and daily, take their turns of conversation, and this (Friday) is the pacific day. Next week we shall probably hear some questions on that head very strongly asked, and very foolishly answered, &c. Give me a line by return of post, and probably I may visit Downing-street on Monday evening; late, however, as I am engaged to dinner and cards. Adieu.

N° CXCIV.

[Although Dr. Priestley may not be justified for publishing the following Letters, yet as he thought fit to print them with a volume of sermons soon after Mr. Gibbon's death, it will not be improper to insert them in this collection.]

Mr. GIBBON to Dr. PRIESTLEY.

SIR,

January 23d, 1783.

As a mark of your esteem, I should have accepted with pleasure your History of the Corruptions of Christianity. You have been careful to inform me, that it is intended, not as a gift, but as a challenge, and such a challenge you must permit me to decline. At the same time you glory in outstripping the zeal of the Mussi and the Lama, it may be proper to declare, that I should equally refuse the defiance of those venerable divines. Once, and once only, the just defence of my own veracity provoked me to descend into the amphitheatre; but as long as you attack opinions which I have never maintained, or maintain principles which I have never

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denied, you may safely exult in my silence and your own victory. The difference between us, (on the credibility of miracles,) which you chuse to suppose, and wish to argue, is a trite and ancient topic of controversy, and from the opinion which you entertain of yourself and of me, it does not appear probable that our dispute would either edify or enlighten the Public.

That Public will decide to whom the *invidious* name of Unbeliever more justly belongs; to the Historian, who, without interposing his own sentiments, had delivered a simple narrative of authentic facts, or to the disputant who proudly rejects all natural proofs of the immortality of the soul, overthrows (by circumscribing) the inspiration of the evangelists and apostles, and condemns the religion of every Christian nation, as a fable less innocent, but not less absurd, than Mahomet's journey to the third Heaven.

And now, Sir, since you assume a right to determine the objects of my past and future studies, give me leave to convey to your ear the almost unanimous, and not offensive wish, of the philosophic world:—that you would confine your talents and industry to those sciences in which real and useful improvements *can* be made. Remember the end of your predecessor Servetus, not of his life, (the Calvins of our days are restrained from the use of the same fiery arguments,) but, I mean, the end of his reputation. His theological writings are lost in oblivion; and if his book on the Trinity be still preserved, it is only because it contains the first rudiments of the discovery of the circulation of the blood.

I am, Sir, your obedient humble servant,

EDWARD GIBBON Esquire. 247

N° CXLV.

Dr. PRIESTLEY to Mr. GIBBON.

SIR,

BIRMINGHAM, 3d February 1783.

IT would have been impertinent in me, especially considering the object of my *History*, to have sent you a copy of it as a mark of my *esteem* or *friendship*. What I meant was to act the part of a fair and open *adversary*. and I am truly sorry that you decline the discussion I proposed: for though you are of a different opinion, I do not think that either of us could be better employed; and, should the Musti and the Lama, whose challenge, you say, you would also decline, become parties in the business, I should rejoice the more. I do not well know what you can mean by intimating, that I am a greater Unbeliever than yourself; that I attack opinions which you never maintained, and maintain principles which you never denied. If you mean to assert, that you are a believer in Christianity, and meant to recommend it, I must say, that your mode of writing has been very ill adapted to gain your purpose. If there be any certain method of discovering a man's real object, yours has been to discredit Christianity in fact, while in words you represent yourself as a friend to it: a conduct which I scruple not to call highly unworthy and mean; an insult on the common sense of the Christian world; as a method of screening you from the notice of the law, (which is as hostile to me as it is to you,) you must know that it could avail you nothing; and, though that mode of writing might be deemed in-

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genious and witty in the first inventor of it, it has been too often repeated to deserve that appellation now.

According to your own rule of conduct, this charge ought to provoke you to descend into the amphitheatre once more, as much as the accusation of Mr. Davis: for it is a call upon you to defend, not your *principles* only, but also your *honor*. For what can reflect greater dishonor on a man, than to say one thing and mean another? You have certainly been very far from confining yourself, as you pretend, to a simple narrative of authentic facts, without interposing your own sentiments. I hold no opinions, obnoxious as they are, that I am not ready both to *avow* in the most explicit manner, and also to defend with any person of competent judgment and ability. Had I not considered you in this light, and also as fairly open, by the strain of your writings, to such a challenge, I should not have called upon you as I have done. The Public will form its own judgment both of that and of your silence on the occasion; and finally decide between you, the *humble historian*, and me, the *proud disputant*.

As to my *reputation*, for which you are so very obligingly concerned, give me leave to observe, that, as far as it is an object with any person, and a thing to be enjoyed by himself, it must depend upon his particular notions and feelings.—Now, odd as it will appear to you, the esteem of a very few rational Christian friends (though I know that it will ensure me the detestation of the greater part of the present nominally Christian world that happen to hear me)

gives me more real satisfaction, than the applause of what you call the philosophic world. I admire Servetus, by whose example you wish me to take warning, more for his courage in dying for the cause of important truth, than I should have done if, besides the certain discovery of the circulation of the blood, he had made any other the most celebrated discovery in philosophy.

However, I do not see what my philosophical friends (of whom I have many, and whom I think I value as I ought,) have to do with my metaphysical or theological writings. They may, if they please, consider them as my particular whims or amusements, and accordingly neglect them. They have, in fact, interfered very little with my application to philosophy, since I have had the means of doing it. I was never more busy, or more successfully so, in my philosophical pursuits, than during the time that I have been employed about the History of the Corruptions of Christianity. I am at this very time, *totus in illis*, as my friends know; and as the Public will know in due time; which with me is never long, and if you had thought proper to enter into the discussion I proposed, it would not have made me neglect my laboratory, or omit a single experiment that I should otherwise have made.

I am, Sir,

Your very humble servant,

J. PRIESTLEY.

N° CXLVI.

Mr. GIBBON to Dr. PRIESTLEY.

S I R,

BENTINCK-STREET, February 6th, 1783.

As I do not pretend to judge of the sentiments or intentions of another, I shall not inquire how far you are inclined to suffer, or inflict, martyrdom. It only becomes me to say, that the style and temper of your last letter have satisfied me of the propriety of declining all farther correspondence, whether public or private, with such an adversary. I am, Sir, your humble servant.

N° CXLVII.

Dr. PRIESTLEY to Mr. GIBBON.

S I R,

BIRMINGHAM, 10th February, 1783.

I NEITHER requested nor wished to have any *private correspondence* with you. All that my MS. card required, was a simple acknowledgment of the receipt of the copy of my work. You chose, however, to give me a specimen of your temper and feelings; and also, what I thought to be an opening to a further call upon you for a justification of yourself *in public*. Of this I was willing to take advantage; and, at the same time, to satisfy you, that my philosophical pursuits, for which, whether in earnest or not, you were pleased to express some concern, would not be interrupted in consequence of it.

As this correspondence, from the origin and nature of it, cannot be deemed *confidential*, I may, especially if I resume my observations on

your conduct as a Historian, give the Public an opportunity of judging of the propriety of my answer to your first extraordinary letter, and also to this last truly *enigmatical* one; to interpret which requires much more sagacity, than to discover your real intentions with respect to Christianity, though you might think you had carefully concealed them from all human inspection.

Wishing to hear from you just as little as you please in private, and just as much as you please in public, I am, Sir, your humble servant.

N° CXLVIII.

Mr. GIBBON to Dr. PRIESTLEY.

February, 22d, 1783.
IF Dr. Priestley consults his friends, he will probably learn, that a single copy of a paper, addressed under a seal to a single person, and not relative to any public or official business, must always be considered as *private* correspondence; which a man of honor is not at liberty to print without the consent of the writer. That consent in the present instance, Mr. Gibbon thinks proper to withhold; and, as he desires to escape all further altercation, he shall not trouble Dr. Priestley or himself with explaining the motives of his refusal.

N° CXLIX.

Dr. PRIESTLEY to Mr. GIBBON.

BIRMINGHAM, 25 February, 1783.

DR. Priestley is as unwilling to be guilty of any real impropriety as Mr. Gibbon can wish him to be: but,

as the correspondence between them relates not to any *private*, but only to a *public matter*, he apprehends that it may, according to Mr. Gibbon's own distinction, at the pleasure of either of the parties be laid before the Public; who, in fact, are interested to know, at least, the result of it. Dr. Priestley's conduct will always be open to animadversion, as that of Mr. Gibbon, or of any other person. His appeal is to men of honor, and even men of the world; and he desires no favor.

Dr. Priestley has sent a single copy of the correspondence to a friend in London, with leave to show it to any other common friends, but with a prohibition to take any other copy: but between this and *printing* there is no difference, except in *mode* and *extent*. In the eye of the law and of reason both are equally publications; and has Mr. Gibbon never thought himself at liberty to show a copy of a letter to a third person?

Mr. Gibbon may easily escape all further altercation by discontinuing this mutually disagreeable correspondence, by leaving Dr. Priestley to act as his own discretion or indiscretion may dictate; and for this, himself only, and not Mr. Gibbon, is responsible.

N^o CL.

Mr. GIBBON à *Monsf.* DEYVERDUN, à Lausanne.

A LONDRES, ce 20 Mai 1783.

QUE j'aime la douce & parfaite confiance de nos sentimens réciproques! Nous nous aimons dans l'éloignement & le silence, & il nous suffit à l'un & à l'autre, de savoir de temps en temps, des nouvelles de la santé

& du bonheur de son ami. Aujourd'hui j'ai besoin de vous écrire ; je commence sans excuses & sans reproches, comme si nous allions reprendre la conversation familière du jour précédent. Si je propoisois de faire un *compte rendu* de mes études, de mes occupations, de mes plaisirs, de mes nouvelles liaisons, de ma politique toujours muette, mais un peu plus rapprochée des grands événemens, je multiplierois mes *in quarto*, & je ne fais pas encore votre avis sur ceux que je vous ai déjà envoyés. Dans cette histoire moderne, il seroit toujours question de la décadence des empires ; & autant que j'en puis juger sur mes réminiscences & sur le rapport de l'ami Bugnon, vous aimez aussi peu la puissance de l'Angleterre que celle des Romains. Notre chute, cependant, a été plus douce. Après une guerre sans succès, & une paix assez peu glorieuse, il nous reste de quoi vivre contents & heureux ; & lorsque je me suis dépouillé du rôle de Membre du Parlement, pour redevenir homme, philosophe, & historien, nous pourrions bien nous trouver d'accord sur la plupart des scènes étonnantes qui viennent de se passer devant nos yeux, & qui fourniront une riche matière aux plus habiles de mes successeurs.

Bornons nous à cette heure à un objet moins illustre sans doute, mais plus intéressant pour tous les deux, & c'est beaucoup que le même objet puisse intéresser deux mortels qui ne se sont pas vus, qui à peine se sont écrit depuis—oui ma foi—depuis huit ans. Ma plume, très paresseuse au commencement, ou plutôt avant le commencement, marche assez vite, lorsqu'elle s'est une fois mise en train ; mais une raison qui m'empêcheroit de lui donner carrière, c'est l'espérance de

pouvoir bientôt me servir avec vous d'un instrument encore plus commode, la langue. Quel homme, l'homme Anglois, l'homme Gibbon, est un sot animal ! Je l'espère, je le désire, je le puis, mais je ne fais pas si je le veux, encore moins si j'exécuterai cette volonté. Voici mon histoire, autant qu'elle pourra vous éclairer, qu'elle pourra m'éclairer moi-même, sur mes véritables intentions, qui me paroissent très obscures, & très équivoques ; & vous aurez la bonté de m'apprendre qu'elle fera ma conduite future. Il vous souvient, Seigneur, que mon grand père a fait sa fortune, que mon père l'a mangée avec un peu trop d'appétit, & que je jouis actuellement du fruit, ou, plutôt du reste de leurs travaux. Vous n'avez pas oublié que je suis entré au Parlement sans patriotisme, sans ambition, & que toutes mes vues se bornoient à la place commode & honnête d'un *Lord of Trade*. Cette place, je l'ai obtenue enfin ; je l'ai possédée trois ans, depuis 1779 jusqu'à 1782, & le produit net, qui se montoit à sept cens cinquante livres sterling, augmentoit mon revenu, au niveau de mes besoins, & de mes desirs. Mais au printemps de l'année précédente, l'orage a grondé sur nos têtes : Milord North a été renversé, votre serviteur chassé, & le *Board* même, dont j'étois membre, aboli & cassé pour toujours, par la réformation de M. Burke, avec beaucoup d'autres places de l'Etat, & de la maison du Roi. Pour mon malheur, je suis toujours resté Membre de la Chambre basse : à la fin du dernier Parlement (en 1780) M. Eliot a retiré sa nomination ; mais la faveur de Milord North a facilité ma rentrée, & la reconnaissance m'imposoit le devoir de faire valoir, pour son service, les droits que

je tenois en partie de lui. Cet hiver nous avons combattu sous les étendards réunis (vous savez notre histoire) de Milord North, & de M. Fox; nous avons triomphé de Milord Shelburne & de la paix, & mon ami (je n'aime pas à profaner ce nom) a remonté sur sa bête en qualité de Secrétaire d'Etat. C'est à présent qu'il peut bien me dire: "C'étoit beaucoup pour moi; ce n'étoit rien pour vous;" & malgré les assurances les plus fortes, j'ai trop de raison, pour avoir de la foi. Avec beaucoup d'esprit, & des qualités très respectables, il n'a plus ni le titre, ni le crédit de premier ministre; des collègues plus actifs lui enlèvent les morceaux les plus friands, qui sont aussitôt dévorés par la voracité de leurs créatures; nos malheurs & nos réformes ont diminué le nombre des grâces; par orgueil ou par paresse, je sollicite aussi mal, & si je parviens enfin, ce sera peut être à la veille d'une nouvelle révolution, qui me fera perdre dans un instant, ce qui m'aura coûté tant de soins & de recherches. Si je ne consultois que mon cœur & ma raison, je romprois sur le champ cette indigne chaîne de la dépendance; je quitterois le Parlement, Londres, l'Angleterre; je chercherois sous un ciel plus doux, dans un pays plus tranquille, le repos; la liberté, l'aisance, & une société éclairée & aimable. Je coulerois quelques années de ma vie sans espérance, & sans crainte, j'acheverois mon histoire, & je ne rentrerois dans ma patrie qu'en homme libre, riche, & respectable par sa position, aussi bien que par son caractère. Mes amis, & surtout Milord Sheffield, ne veulent pas me permettre d'être heureux suivant mon goût & mes lumières. Leur prudence exige que je fasse tous mes efforts, pour

obtenir un emploi très sûr à la vérité, qui me donneroit mille guinées de rente, mais qui m'enleveroit cinq jours par semaine. Je me prête à leur zèle, & je leur ai promis de ne partir qu'en automne, après avoir consacré l'été à cette dernière tentative. Le succès, cependant, est très incertain, & je ne fais si je le désire de bonne foi.

Si je parviens à me voir exilé, mon choix ne sera pas douteux. Lausanne a eu mes prémices; elle me sera toujours chère par le doux souvenir de ma jeunesse. Au bout de trente ans, je me rappelle les polissons qui sont aujourd'hui juges, les petites filles de la société du printemps, qui sont devenues grand-mères. Votre pays est charmant, &, malgré le dégoût de Jean Jacques, les mœurs, & l'esprit de ses habitants, me paroissent très assortis aux bords du lac Léman. Mais un trésor que je ne trouverois qu'à Lausanne; c'est un ami qui me convient également par les sentimens, & les idées, avec qui je n'ai jamais connu un instant d'ennui, de sécheresse, ou de réserve. Autrefois dans nos libres épanchemens, nous avons cent fois fait le projet de vivre ensemble, & cent fois nous avons épluché tous les détails du Roman, avec une chaleur qui nous étonnoit nous mêmes. A présent il demeure, ou plutôt vous demeurez, (car je me lasse de ce ton étudié,) dans une maison charmante & commode; je vois d'ici mon appartement, nos salles communes, notre table, & nos promenades; mais ce mariage ne vaut rien, s'il ne convient pas également aux deux époux, & je sens combien des circonstances locales, des goûts nouveaux, de nouvelles liaisons, peuvent s'opposer aux desseins, qui nous ont paru les plus agréables

agréables dans le lointain. Pour fixer mes idées, & pour nous épargner des regrets, il faut me dévoiler avec la franchise dont je vous ai donné l'exemple, le tableau extérieur & intérieur de George Deyverdun. Mon amour est trop délicat, pour supporter l'indifférence & les égards, & je rougirois d'un bonheur dont je ferois redevable, non à l'inclination, mais à la fidélité de mon ami. Pour m'armer contre les malheurs possibles, hélas ! peut être trop vraisemblables, j'ai essayé de me détacher de la pensée de ce projet favori, & de me représenter à Lausanne votre bon voisin, sans être précisément votre commensal. Si j'y étois réduit, je ne voudrois pas tenir maison, autant par raison d'économie, que pour éviter l'ennui de manger seul. D'un autre côté, une pension ouverte, fut elle montée sur l'ancien pied de celle de Mesery, ne conviendrait plus à mon âge, ni à mon caractère ? Passerois-je ma vie au milieu d'une foule de jeunes Anglois échappés du collège, moi qui aimerois Lausanne cent fois davantage, si j'y pouvois être le seul de ma nation ? Il me faudroit donc une maison commode & riante, un état au dessus de la bourgeoisie, un mari instruit, une femme qui ne ressembleroit pas à Madame Pavilliard, & l'assurance d'y être reçu comme le fils unique, ou plutôt comme le frère de la famille. Pour nous arranger sans gêne, je meublerai très volontiers un joli appartement sous le même toit, ou dans le voisinage, & puisque le ménage le plus foible, laisse encore de l'estoffe pour une forte pension, je ne serois pas obligé de chicaner sur les conditions pécuniaires. Si je me vois déchu de cette dernière espérance, je renoncerois en soupirant à ma seconde patrie, pour chercher un

nouvel asyle, non pas à Geneve, triste séjour du travail & de la discorde, mais aux bords du lac de Neuchâtel, parmi les bons Savoyards de Chamberry, ou sous le beau climat des Provinces Méridionales de la France. Je finis brusquement, parceque j'ai mille choses à vous dire. Je pense que nous nous ressemblons pour la correspondance. Pour le bavardage savant, ou même amical, je suis de tous les hommes le plus paresseux, mais dès qu'il s'agit d'un objet réel, d'un service essentiel, le premier Courier emporte toujours ma réponse. A la fin d'un mois, je commencerai à compter les semaines, les jours, les heures. Ne me les faites pas compter trop long temps. Vale.

N° CLI.

M. DEYVERDUN à M. GIBBON.

STRASBOURG, le 10 Juin, 1783.

JE ne saurais vous exprimer, Monsieur & cher ami, la variété & la vivacité des sensations que m'a fait éprouver votre lettre. Tout cela a fini par un fond de plaisir & d'espérance qui resteront dans mon cœur, jusqu'à ce que vous les en chassiez.

Un rapport singulier de circonstances contribue à me faire espérer que nous sommes destinés à vivre quelque tems agréablement ensemble. Je ne suis pas dégoûté d'une ambition que je ne connus jamais ; mais par d'autres circonstances, je me trouve dans la même situation d'embarras & d'incertitude où vous êtes aussi à cette époque. Il y a un an que votre lettre, mon cher ami, m'auroit fait plaisir sans doute, mais en ce moment, elle m'en fait bien davantage : elle vient en quelque façon à mon secours,

Depuis mon retour d'Italie, ne pouvant me déterminer à vendre ma maison, m'ennuyant d'y être seul (car je suis comme vous, Monsieur, & je déteste de manger sans compagnie) ne voulant pas louer à des étrangers, j'ai pris le parti de m'arranger assez joliment au premier étage, & de donner le second à une famille de mes amis, qui me nourrit, & que je loge. Cet arrangement a paru pendant long tems contribuer au bonheur des deux parties. Mais tout est transitoire sur cette terre. Ma maison fera vide, selon toute apparence, sur la fin de l'été, & je me vois d'avance tout aussi embarrassé & incertain, que je l'étais il y a quelques années, ne sachant quelle nouvelle société choisir, & assez disposé à vendre enfin cette possession qui m'a causé bien des plaisirs, & bien des peines. Ma maison est donc à votre disposition pour cet automne, & vous y arriverez comme un Dieu dans une machine qui finit l'embroglio. Voilà quant à moi; parlons de vous maintenant avec la même sincérité.

Un mot de préambule. Quelque intéressé que je sois à votre résolution, convaincu qu'il faut aimer ses amis pour eux mêmes, sentant d'ailleurs combien il seroit affreux pour moi de vous voir des regrets, je vous donne ici ma parole d'honneur, que mon intérêt n'influe en rien sur ce que je vais écrire, & que je ne dirai pas un mot que je ne vous disse, si l'hermite de la grotte étoit un autre que moi. Vos amis Anglais vous aiment pour eux mêmes: je ne veux moi que votre bonheur. Rappelez vous, mon cher ami, que je vis avec peine votre entrée dans le Parlement, & je crois n'avoir été que trop bon prophète; je suis sûr que cette carrière vous a fait éprouver plus de privations que de

jouissances, beaucoup plus de peines que de plaisirs ; j'ai cru toujours, depuis que je vous ai connu, que vous étiez destiné à vivre heureux par les plaisirs du cabinet & de la société, que tout autre marche était un écart de la route du bonheur, & que ce n'était que les qualités réunies d'homme de lettres, & d'homme aimable de société, qui pouvoient vous procurer gloire, honneur, plaisirs, & une suite continuelle de jouissances. Au bout de quelques tours dans votre salle, vous sentirez parfaitement que j'avois bien vu, & que l'événement a justifié mes idées. Lorsque j'ai appris que vous étiez *Lord of Trade*, j'en ai été fâché ; quand j'ai su que vous aviez perdu cette place, je m'en suis réjoui pour vous ; quand on m'a annoncé que Milord North étoit remonté sur sa bête, j'ai cru vous voir très mal à votre aise, en croupe derrière lui, & je m'en suis affligé pour vous. Je suis donc charmé, mon cher ami, de vous savoir à pied, & je vous conseille très sincèrement de rester dans cette position, & bien loin de solliciter la place en question, de la refuser, si elle vous était offerte. Mille guinées vous dédommageront-elles de cinq jours pris de la semaine ? Je suppose, ce que cependant j'ai peine à croire, que vous me disiez que oui : & la variété & l'inconstance continuelle de votre ministère, vous promettent - elles d'en jouir long temps constamment, & n'est il pas plus désagréable, mon cher Monsieur, de n'avoir plus 1000 livres sterl. de rente, qu'il n'a été agréable d'en jouir ? D'ailleurs ne pourrez vous pas toujours rentrer dans la carrière, si l'ambition ou l'envie de servir la patrie, vous reprennent ; ne rentrerez vous pas avec plus d'honneur, lorsque vos rentes étant augmentées naturellement, vous serez libre & indépendant ?

En faisant cette retraite en Suisse, outre la beauté du pays, & les agrémens de la société, vous acquérez deux biens que vous avez perdus, la liberté & la richesse. Vous ne serez d'ailleurs point inutile; vos ouvrages continueront à nous éclairer, & indépendamment de vos talens, l'honnête homme, le galant homme, n'est jamais inutile.

Il me reste à vous présenter le tableau que vous trouveriez. Vous aimiez ma maison & mon jardin, c'est bien autre chose à présent. Au premier étage qui donne sur la descente d'Ouchy, je me suis arrangé un appartement qui me suffit, j'ai une chambre de domestique, deux fallons, & deux cabinets. J'ai au plein pied de la terrasse, deux autres fallons dont l'un sert en été de salle à manger, & l'autre de fallon de compagnie. J'ai fait un nouvel appartement de trois pièces dans le vide entre la maison & la remise, en sorte que j'ai à vous offrir tout le grand appartement, qui consiste actuellement en onze pièces, tant grandes que petites, tournées au Levant & au Midi, meublées sans magnificence déplacée, mais avec une sorte d'élégance dont j'espère que vous seriez satisfait. La terrasse a peu changé; mais elle est terminée par un grand cabinet mieux proportionné que le précédent, garnie tout du long, de caisses d'orangers, &c. La treille, qui ne vous est pas indifférente, a embelli, prospéré, & règne presque entièrement jusqu'au bout; parvenu à ce bout, vous trouverez un petit chemin qui vous conduira à une chaumière placée dans un coin; & de ce coin, en suivant le long d'une autre route à l'Anglaise, le mur d'un manège. Vous trouverez au bout, un chalet avec écurie, vacherie, petite porte, petit

cabinet, petite bibliothèque, & une galerie de bois doré, d'où l'on voit tout ce qui sort & entre en ville par la porte du Chêne, & tout ce qui se passe dans ce Faubourg. J'ai acquis la vigne au-dessous du jardin; j'en ai arraché tout ce qui étoit devant la maison; j'en ai fait un tapis vert, arrosé par l'eau du jet d'eau; & j'ai fait tout autour de ce petit parc, une promenade très variée par les différens points de vue & les objets même intérieurs, tantôt jardin potager, tantôt parterre, tantôt vigne, tantôt prés, puis chalet, chaumière, petite montagne; bref, les étrangers viennent le voir & l'admirent, & malgré la description pompeuse que je vous en fais, vous en ferez content.

N. B. J'ai planté une quantité d'excellens arbres fruitiers.

Venons à moi; vous comprenez bien que j'ai vieilli, excepté pour la sensibilité; je suis à la mode, mes nerfs sont attaqués; je suis plus mélancolique, mais je n'ai pas plus d'humeur; vous ne souffrirez de mes maux que tout au plus négativement. Ensemble, & séparés par nos logemens, nous jouirons vis-à-vis l'un de l'autre, de la plus grande liberté. Nous prendrons une gouvernante douce & entendue, plutôt par commodité que par nécessité; car je me chargerois sans crainte de la surintendance. J'ai fait un ménage de quatre, pendant quelque temps; j'ai fait le mien, & j'ai remarqué que cela marchoit tout seul, quand c'étoit une fois en train. Les petites gens qui n'ont que ce mérite, font grand bruit pour rien. Mon jardin nous fournira avec abondance de bons fruits & d'excellens légumes. Pour le reste de la table & de la dépense domestique, je ne demanderais pas mieux que de vous

recevoir chez moi, comme vous m'avez reçu chez vous ; mais nos situations sont différentes à cet égard ; cependant si vous étiez plus ruiné, je vous l'offrirois sans doute, & je devrois le faire ; mais avec les rentes que vous aviez, quand j'étois chez vous, en les supposant même diminuées, vous vivrez très agréablement à Lausanne. Enfin à cet égard nous nous arrangerons, comme il vous fera le plus agréable, & en proportion de nos revenus. Toujours serez vous ainsi, à ce que j'espère plus décemment & plus confortablement, que vous ne seriez par tout ailleurs au même prix.

Quant à la société, quoique infiniment agréable, je commence ce chapitre par vous dire que j'évitrois de vous y inviter, si vous étiez entièrement désœuvré ; les jours sont longs alors, & laissent bien du vide ; mais homme de lettres, comme vous êtes, je ne connois point de société qui vous convienne mieux. Nous aurons autour de nous un cercle comme il serait impossible d'en trouver ailleurs dans un aussi petit espace. Madame de Corcelles, Mademoiselle Sulens, & M. de Montolieu (Madame est morte), Messrs. Polier & leurs femmes, Madame de Severy, M. & Madame de Naffau, Mademoiselle de Chandieu, Madame de St. Cierge, & M. avec leurs deux filles jolies & aimables, Mesdames de Croufaz, Polier, de Charriers, &c. font un fonds de bonne compagnie dont on ne se lasse point, & dont M. de Servan est si content qu'il regrette toujours d'être obligé de retourner dans ses terres, & ne respire que pour s'établir tout à fait à Lausanne. Il passa tout l'hiver de 1782 avec nous, & il fut, on ne peut plus, agréable. Vous trouverez les mœurs changées en bien, & plus

conformes à nos ages, & à nos caractères; peu de grandes assemblées, de grands repas, mais beaucoup de petits soupers, de petites assemblées, où l'on fait ce qu'on veut, où l'on cause, lit, &c. & dont on écarte avec soin les fâcheux de toute espèce. Il y a le Dimanche une société où tout ce qu'il y a d'un peu distingué en étrangères & étrangers, est invité. Cela fait des assemblées de 40 à 50 personnes, où l'on voit ce qu'on ne voit guères le reste de la semaine, & ces espèces de *roul* font quelquefois plaisir. Nous sommes fort dégoûtés des étrangers, surtout des jeunes gens, & nous les écartons avec soin, de nos petits comités, à moins qu'ils n'ayent du mérite, ou quelques talens. A cet égard un de nos petits travers, c'est l'engouement; mais vous en profiterez, mon cher Monsieur, comme Edward Gibbon, & comme mon ami; vous serez d'abord l'homme à la mode, & je vois d'ici que vous soutiendrez fort bien ce rôle, sans vous en fâcher, dût-on un peu vous surfaire. *Je sens que tu me flattes, mais tu me fais plaisir*, est peut-être le meilleur vers de Destouches. Voilà donc l'hiver; l'étude le matin, quelques conversations, quand vous serez fatigué, avec quelque homme de lettres, ou amateur, ou du moins qui aura vu quelque chose, à l'heure qu'il vous plaira un diner, point de fermier général, mais l'honnête épicurien avec un ou deux amis quand vous voudrez; puis quelques visites, une soirée, souvent un souper. Quant à l'été, vû votre manière d'aimer la campagne, on diroit que ma remise a été faite pour vous; pendant que vous vous y promenez en sénateur, je serai souvent en bon payfan Suisse, devant mon chalet, ou dans ma

chaumière; puis nous nous rencontrerons tout à coup, & tâcherons de nous remettre au niveau l'un de l'autre. Nous fermerons nos portes à l'ordinaire, excepté aux étrangers qui passent leur chemin, mais quand nous voudrons, nous y aurons tous ceux que nous aimerons à y voir: car on ne demande pas mieux que d'y venir se réjouir. J'ai eu, un beau jour d'Avril ce printemps, un déjeuner, qui m'a coûté quelques louis, ou il y avait plus de 40 personnes, je ne fais combien de petites tables, une bonne musique au milieu du verger, & une quantité de jeunes & jolies personnes dansant des branles, & formant des chiffres en cadence; j'ai vu bien des fêtes, j'en ai peu vu de plus jolies. Quand mon parc vous ennuyera, nous aurons, ou nous louerons ensemble (& ce sera ainsi un plaisir peu cher) un cabriolet léger, avec deux chevaux gentils, & nous irons visiter nos amis dispersés dans les campagnes, qui nous recevront à bras ouverts. Vous en ferez content de nos campagnes; toujours en proportion vous comprenez, & vous trouverez en général un heureux changement pour les agrémens de la société, & une sorte de recherche simple, mais élégante. Les bergères du *printemps*, excepté Madame de Vanberg, ne sont sans doute plus présentables, mais il y en a d'autres assez gentilles, & quoiqu'elles ne soyent pas en bien grand nombre, il y en aura toujours assez pour vous, mon cher Monsieur. Peu à peu mon imagination m'a emporté, & mon style s'égaye, comme cela nous arrivait quelquefois dans nos châteaux en Espagne. Il est bien temps de finir cet article, résu-
mons nous plus sérieusement.

Si vous exécutez le plan que vous avez imaginé, j'aimerois même à dire que vous embrassez, surtout d'après ce que vous marquez vous même, *Si je ne consultais que mon cœur & ma raison, je romprois sur le champ cette indigne chaîne, &c.* Eh! que voulez vous consulter, si ce n'est votre cœur & votre raison? Si, dis-je, vous exécutez ce plan, vous retrouverez une liberté & une indépendance, que vous n'auriez jamais du perdre & dont vous méritez de jouir, une aisance qui ne vous coûtera qu'un voyage de quelques jours, une tranquillité que vous ne pouvez avoir à Londres, & enfin un ami qui n'a peut être pas été un jour sans penser à vous, & qui malgré ses défauts, ses foibleesses & son infériorité, est encore un des compagnons qui vous convient le mieux.

Il me reste à vous apprendre pourquoi je vous répons si tard: vous savez déjà actuellement que ce n'est pas manque d'amitié & de zèle pour la chose; mais votre lettre m'a été renvoyée de Lausanne ici, à Strasbourg, & je n'ai passé qu'une poste sans y répondre, ce qui n'est pas trop, vous l'avouerez. pour un pareil bavardage. Je suis parti de Lausanne la veille de Pâques pour venir voir un M. Bourcard de Basle. fort de mes amis; il est ici auprès du Comte de Cagliostro, pour profiter de ses remèdes. Vous aurez entendu parler peut être de cet homme extraordinaire à tous égards. Comme j'ai été assez malade tout l'hiver, je profite aussi de ses remèdes; mais comme le temps du séjour du Comte ici n'est rien moins que sûr, le mieux sera que vous m'écriviez à M. D. chez M. Bourcard du Kirshgarten, à Basle.

Vous comprenez combien à tous égards, il est

nécessaire de m'écrire sans perte de tems, dèsque vous aurez pris une résolution. Adieu, mon cher ami.

N° CLII.

M. GIBBON à M. DEYVERDUN.

JE reçois votre lettre du 10 Juin, le 21 de ce mois. Aujourd'hui Mardi 24th, je mets la main à la plume (comme dit M. Fréron) pour y répondre, quoique ma missive ne puisse partir par arrangement des postes, que Vendredi prochain, 27 du courant. O merveille, de la grace efficace ! Elle n'agit pas moins puissamment sur vous, & moyennant le secours toujours prêt, & toujours prompt de nos couriers, un mois nous suffit pour la demande & la réponse. Je remercie mille fois le génie de l'amitié, qui m'a poussé, après mille efforts inutiles, à vous écrire enfin au moment le plus critique & le plus favorable. Jamais démarche n'a répondu si parfaitement à tous mes vœux & à toutes mes espérances. Je comptois sans doute sur la durée & la vérité de vos sentimens ; mais j'ignorois (telle est la foiblesse humaine) jusqu'à quel point ils avoient pu être attiédies par le temps & l'éloignement ; & je savois encore moins l'état actuel de votre santé, de votre fortune & de vos liaisons, qui auroient pu opposer tant d'obstacles à notre réunion. Vous m'écrivez, vous m'aimez toujours ; vous désirez avec zèle, avec ardeur, de réaliser nos anciens projets ; vous le pouvez, vous le voulez ; vous m'offrez dès l'automne votre maison, & quelle maison ! votre terrasse, & quelle terrasse ! votre société, & quelle

société! L'arrangement nous convient à tous les deux; je retrouve à la fois le compagnon de ma jeunesse, un sage conseiller, & un peintre qui fait représenter & exagérer même les objets les plus rians. Ces exagérations me font pour le moins autant de plaisir, que la simple vérité. Si votre portrait étoit tout à fait ressemblant, ces agrémens n'existeroient que hors de nous mêmes, & j'aime encore mieux les trouver dans la vivacité de votre cœur & de votre imagination. Ce n'est pas que je ne reconnoisse un grand fond de vérité dans le tableau de Lausanne; je connois le lieu de la scène, je me transporte en idée sur notre terrasse, je vois ces côteaux, ce lac, ces montagnes, ouvrages favoris de la nature, & je conçois sans peine les embellissemens que votre goût s'est plu d'y ajouter. Je me rappelle depuis vingt ou trente ans les mœurs, l'esprit, l'aisance de la société, & je comprends que ce véritable ton de la bonne compagnie se perpétue & s'épure de père en fils, ou plutôt de mère en fille; car il m'a toujours paru qu'à Lausanne, aussi bien qu'en France, les femmes sont très supérieures aux hommes. Dans un pareil séjour, je craindrois la dissipation bien plus que l'ennui, & le tourbillon de Lausanne étonneroit un philosophe accoutumé, depuis tant d'années à la tranquillité de Londres.

Vous êtes trop instruit pour regarder ce propos, comme une mauvaise plaisanterie; c'est dans les détroits qu'on est entraîné par la rapidité des courans; il n'y en a point en pleine mer. Dèsqu'on ne recherche plus les plaisirs bruyants, & qu'on s'affranchit volontiers des devoirs pénibles, la liberté d'un simple particulier se fortifie par l'immensité de la ville. Quant

à moi l'application à mon grand ouvrage l'habitude, & la récompence du travail, m'ont rendu plus studieux, plus sédentaire, plus ami de la retraite. La chambre des communes & les grand diners exigent beaucoup de temps; & la tempérance d'un repas Anglois, vous permet de goûter de cinq ou six vins différens, & vous ordonne de boire une bouteille de claret après le désert. Mais enfin je ne soupe jamais, je me couche de bonne heure, je reçois peu de visites, les matinées sont longues, les étés sont libres, & dèsque je ferme ma porte, je suis oublié du Monde entier. Dans une société plus bornée & plus amicale les démarches sont publiques, les droits sont réciproques, l'on dîne de bonne heure, on se goûte trop pour ne pas passer l'après-midi ensemble; on soupe, on veille, & les plaisirs de la soirée ne laissent pas de déranger le repos de la nuit, & le travail du lendemain. Quel est cependant le résultat de ces plaintes? c'est seulement que la mariée est trop belle, & que j'ose me servir de l'excuse honnête de la santé & du privilège d'un homme de lettres; il ne tiendra qu'à moi de modérer un peu l'excès de mes jouissances. Pour cet engouement quevous m'annoncez, & qui a toujours été le défaut des peuples les plus spirituels, je l'ai déjà éprouvé sur un plus grand théâtre. Il y a six ans que l'ami de Madame Necker fut reçu à Paris, comme celui de George Deyverdun pourroit l'être à Lausanne. Je ne connois rien de plus flatteur que cet accueil favorable d'un public poli & éclairé. Mais cette faveur, si douce pour l'étranger, n'est-elle pas un peu dangereuse pour l'habitant exposé à voir flétrir ses lauriers, par sa faute ou par l'incon-

stance de ses juges? Non; on se soutient toujours, peut-être pas précisément, au même point d'élévation. A l'abri de trois gros volumes in quarto en langue étrangère, encore ce qui n'est pas un petit avantage, je conserverai toujours la réputation littéraire, & cette réputation donnera du relief aux qualités sociales, si l'on trouve l'historien sans travers, sans affectation & sans prétentions. Je serai donc charmé & content de votre société, & j'aurois pu dire en deux mots, ce que j'ai bavardé en deux pages; mais il y a tant de plaisir à bavarder avec un ami! car enfin je possède à Lausanne un véritable ami; & les simples connoissances remplaceront sans beaucoup de peine, tout ce qui s'appelle liaison, & même amitié, dans ce vaste désert de Londres. Mais au moment où j'écris, je vois de tous côtés une foule d'objets dont la perte fera bien plus difficile à réparer. Vous connoissiez ma bibliothèque; mais je suis en état de vous rendre le propos de votre maison *c'est bien autre chose à cette heure*; formée peu à peu, mais avec beaucoup de soin & de dépense, elle peut se nommer aujourd'hui un beau cabinet de particulier. Non content de remplir à rangs redoublés la meillure pièce qui lui étoit destinée, elle s'est débordée dans la chambre sur la rue, dans votre ancienne chambre à coucher, dans la mienne, dans tous les recoins de la maison de *Ben-tinck-street*, & jusques dans une chaumière que je me suis donnée à *Hampton-Court*.

J'ai mille courtisans rangés autour de moi:

Ma retraite est mon Louvre & j'y commande en roi.

Le fonds est de la meilleure compagnie Grecque, Latine, Italienne, Françoisse, & Angloise, & les

auteurs les moins chers à l'homme de goût, des ecclésiastiques, des Byzantins, des Orientaux, sont les plus nécessaires à l'historien de la décadence & de la chute, &c. Vous ne sentez que trop bien le désagrément de laisser, & l'impossibilité de transporter cinq ou six milles volumes, d'autant plus que le ciel n'a pas voulu faire de la Suisse, un pays maritime. Cependant mon zèle pour la réussite de nos projets communs, me fait imaginer que ces obstacles pourront s'applanir, & que je puis adoucir ou supporter ces privations douloureuses. Les bons auteurs classiques, la bibliothèque des nations, se retrouvent dans tous les pays. Lausanne n'est pas dépourvu de livres, ni de politesse, & j'ai dans l'esprit qu'on pourroit acquérir pour un certain temps, quelque bibliothèque d'un vieillard ou d'un mineur dont la famille ne voudroit pas se défaire entièrement. Quant aux outils de mon travail, nous commencerons par examiner l'état de nos richesses; après quoi il faudroit faire un petit calcul du prix, du poids & de la rareté de chaque ouvrage, pour juger de ce qu'il seroit nécessaire de transporter de Londres, & de ce qu'on acheteroit plus commodément en Suisse; à l'égard de ces frais, on devroit les envisager comme les avances d'une manufacture transplantée en pays étranger, & dont on espère retirer dans la suite un profit raisonnable. Malheureusement votre bibliothèque publique, en y ajoutant même celle de M. de Bochat, est assez piteuse; mais celles de Berne & de Bâle sont très-nombreuses, & je compterois assez sur la bonhomie Helvétique, pour espérer que, moyennant des recommandations & des cautions, il me seroit permis

d'en tirer les livres dont j'aurois essentiellement besoin. Vous êtes très-bien placé pour prendre les informations, & pour fixer les démarches convenables ; mais vous voyez du moins combien je me retourne de tous les côtés, pour esquiver la difficulté la plus formidable.

Venons à présent à des objets moins relevés , mais très-importans à l'existence & au bien-être de l'animal, le logement, les domestiques, & la table. Pour mon appartement particulier, une chambre à coucher, avec un grand cabinet & une antichambre, auroient suffi à tous mes besoins ; mais si vous pouvez vous en passer, je me promènerai avec plaisir dans l'immensité de vos onze pièces, qui s'accommoderont sans doute aux heures & aux saisons différentes. L'article des domestiques renferme une assez forte difficulté, sur laquelle je dois vous consulter. Vous connoissez, & vous estimez Caplin mon valet de chambre, maître d'hôtel, &c. qui a été nourri dans notre maison, & qui comptoit y finir ses jours. Depuis votre départ, ses talens & ses vertus se sont développés de plus en plus, & je le considère bien moins sur le pied d'un domestique, que sur celui d'un ami. Malheureusement il ne sait que l'Anglois, & jamais il n'apprendra de langue étrangère. Il m'accompagna, il y a six ans, dans mon voyage à Paris, mais il rapporta fidèlement à Londres toute l'ignorance, & tous les préjugés d'un bon patriote. A Lausanne il me coûteroit beaucoup, & à l'exception du service personnel, il ne nous feroit que d'une très-petite utilité. Cependant je supporterois volontiers cette dépense, mais je suis très-persuadé que, si son attachement le portoit à me suivre,

suivre, il s'ennuyeroit à mourir dans un pays où tout lui seroit étranger & désagréable. Il faudroit donc me détacher d'un homme dont je connois le zèle, la fidélité, rompre tout d'un coup de petites habitudes qui sont liées avec le bien être journalier & momentané, & se résoudre à lui substituer un visage nouveau, peut être un mauvais sujet, toujours quelque aventurier Suisse pris sur le pavé de Londres. Vous rappelez vous un certain George Suisse qui a fait autrefois avec moi, le voyage de France & d'Italie ? Je le crois marié & établi à Lausanne; s'il vit encore, si vous pouvez l'engager à se rendre ici, pour me ramener en Suisse, la compagnie d'un bon & ancien serviteur ne laisseroit pas d'adoucir la chute, & il resteroit peut être auprès de moi, jusqu'à ce que nous eussions choisi un jeune homme du pays, adroit, modeste & bien élevé, à qui je ferois un parti avantageux. Les autres domestiques, gouvernantes, laquais, cuisinière, &c. se prennent & se renvoyent sans difficulté. Un article bien plus important, c'est notre table, car enfin nous ne sommes pas assez hermites, pour nous contenter des légumes & des fruits de votre jardin, tout excellens qu'ils sont; mais je n'ai presque rien à ajouter à l'honnêteté de vos propos, qui me donnent beaucoup plus de plaisir que de surprise. Si je me trouvois sans fortune, au lieu de rougir des bienfaits de l'amitié, j'accepterois vos offres aussi simplement que vous les faites. Mais nous ne sommes pas réduits à ce point, & vous comprenez assez qu'une déconfiture Angloise laisse encore une fortune fort décente au Pays de Vaud, & pour vous dire quelque chose de plus précis, je dépenserois sans peine & sans in-

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convénient cinq ou six cents louis. Vous connoissez le résultat aussi bien que les détails d'un ménage ; en supposant une petite table de deux philosophes Epicuriens, quatre, cinq, ou six domestiques, des amis assez souvent, des repas assez rarement, beaucoup de sensualité, & peu de luxe, à combien estimez-vous en gros la dépense d'un mois & d'une année ? Le partage que vous avez déjà fait, me paroît des plus raisonnables ; vous me logez, & je vous nourris. A votre calcul, j'ajouterois mon entretien personnel, habits, plaisirs, gages de domestiques, &c. & je verrois d'une manière assez nette, l'ensemble de mon petit établissement.

Après avoir essuyé tant de détails minutieux, le cher lecteur s'imagine sans doute que la résolution de me fixer pendant quelque temps aux bords du Lac Léman, est parfaitement décidée. Hélas ! rien n'est moins vrai ; mais je me suis livré au charme délicieux de compter, de fonder, de palper ce bonheur, dont je sens tout le prix, qui est à ma portée, & auquel j'aurai peut-être la bêtise de renoncer. Vous avez raison de croire, mais vous ignorez jusqu'à quel point vous l'avez, que ma carrière politique a été plus semée d'épines que de roses. Eh ! quel objet, quel mortel, pourroit me consoler de l'ennui des affaires, & de la honte de la dépendance ? *La gloire ?* Comme homme de lettres, j'en jouis, comme orateur je ne l'aurai jamais, & le nom des simples soldats est oublié dans les victoires aussi bien que dans les défaites. *Le devoir.* Dans ces combats à l'aveugle, où les chefs ne cherchent que leur avantage particulier, il y a toujours à parier que les subalternes feront plus

de mal que de bien. *L'attachement personnel?* Les ministres sont rarement dignes de l'inspirer; jusqu'à présent Lord North n'a pas eu à se plaindre de moi, & si je me retire du Parlement, il lui sera très aisé d'y substituer un autre muet, tout aussi affidé que son ancien serviteur. Je suis intimement convaincu, & par la raison, & par le sentiment, qu'il n'y a point de parti, qui me convienne aussi bien que de vivre avec vous, & auprès de vous à Lausanne; & si je parviens à la place (*Commissioner of the Excise or Customs*) où je vise, il y aura toutes les semaines cinq longues matinées, qui m'avertiront de la folie de mon choix. Vous vous trompez à la vérité à l'égard de l'instabilité de ces emplois; ils sont presque les seuls qui ne se ressentent jamais des révolutions du ministère. Cependant si cette place s'offroit bientôt, je n'aurois pas le bon sens & le courage de la refuser. Quels autres conseillers veux-je prendre, si non mon cœur & ma raison? Il en est de puissans & toujours écoutés: les égards, la mauvaise honte, tous mes amis, ou soi disant tels, s'écrieront que je suis un homme perdu, ruiné, un fou qui se dérobe à ses protecteurs, un misanthrope qui s'exile au bout du monde, & puis les exagérations sur tout ce qui seroit fait en ma faveur, si sûrement, si promptement, si libéralement. Milord Sheffield opinera à me faire interdire & enfermer; mes deux tantes & ma belle mère se plaindront que je les quitte pour jamais, &c. Et l'embarras de prendre mon bonnet de nuit, comme disoit le sage Fontenelle, lorsqu'il n'étoit question que de se coucher, combien de bonnets de nuit ne me faudra-t-il pas prendre, & les prendre tout seul,

car tout le monde, amis, parens, domestiques, s'opposera à ma fuite. Voila à la vérité des obstacles assez peu redoutables, & en les décrivant, je sens qu'ils s'affoiblissent dans mon esprit. Grace à ce long bavardage vous connoissez mon intérieur, comme moi même, c'est-à-dire assez mal; mais cette incertitude, très-amicale pour moi, seroit très-fâcheuse pour vous. Votre réponse me parviendra vers la fin de Juillet, & huit jours après, je vous promets une réplique nette & décisive: *je pars* ou *je reste*. Si je pars, ce sera au milieu de Septembre; je mangerai les raisins de votre treille, les premiers jours d'Octobre, & vous aurez encore le temps de me charger de vos commissions. Ne me dites plus: *Monsieur, & très cher ami*; le premier est froid, le second est superflu.

N° CLIII.

M. DEYVERDUN à M. GIBBON.

ME voilà un peu embarrassé actuellement; je ne dois vous appeler ni Monsieur, ni ami. Eh bien! vous saurez qu'étant parti Samedi de Strasbourg, pendant que je venois ici, votre seconde lettre alloit-là, & qu'ainsi je reçus votre troisième, Dimanche, & votre seconde, hier. La mention que vous y faisiez du Suisse George, dont je n'ai pu rien trouver dans la première, m'a fait comprendre qu'il y en avoit une seconde, & j'ai cru devoir attendre un courier, la troisième n'exigeant pas de réponse.

Pour votre parole, permettez que je vous en dispense encore, & même jusqu'au dernier jour, je sens bien qu'un procédé contraire, vous convien-

droit ; mais certes il ne me convient pas du tout. Ceci, comme vous le dites, est une espèce de mariage, & pensez vous que malgré les engagemens les plus solennels, je n'eusse pas reconduit chez elle, du pied des autels, la femme la plus aimable qui m'eût témoigné des regrets. Jamais je ne me consolerois, si je vous voyois mécontent dans la suite, & dans le cas de me faire des reproches. C'est-à-vous à faire, si vous croyez nécessaire, des démarches de votre côté, qui fortifient votre résolution ; pour moi, je n'en ferai point d'essentielles, jusqu'à ce que j'aye reçu encore une lettre de vous. Après ce petit préambule, parlons toujours comme si l'affaire étoit décidée, & repassons votre lettre. Tout ce que vous dites des grandes & petites villes, est très-vrai, & votre comparaison des détroits & de la pleine mer, est on ne peut pas plus juste & agréable ; mais enfin, *comme on fait son lit, on se couche*, disoit Sancho Pancha d'agréable mémoire, & qui peut mieux faire son lit à sa guise qu'un étranger, qui, n'ayant ni devoirs d'état ni de sang à remplir, peut vivre entièrement isolé, sans que personne y puisse trouver à redire ? Moi-même, bourgeois & citoyen de la ville, je suis presque entièrement libre. L'été, par exemple, je déteste de m'enfermer le soir dans des chambres chaudes, pour faire une partie. Eh bien ! on m'a persécuté un peu la première année ; à présent on me laisse en repos. Il y aura sans doute quelque changement dans votre manière de vivre ; mais il me semble qu'on se fait aisément à cela. Les diners, surtout en femmes, sont très-rares ; les soupers peu grands ; on reste plutôt pour être ensemble, que pour manger, &

plusieurs personnes ne s'asseyent point. Je crois, tout compté & rabattu, que vous aurez encore plus de temps pour le cabinet qu'à Londres; on sort peu le matin, & quand nos amis communs viendront chez moi, & vous demanderont, je leur dirai; "ce n'est pas un oisif comme vous autres, il travaille dans son cabinet," & ils se tairont respectueusement.

Pour les bibliothèques publiques, votre idée ne pourroit, je pense, se réaliser pour un lecteur, ou même un écrivain ordinaire, mais un homme qui joue un rôle dans la république des lettres, un homme aimé & considéré, trouvera, je m'imagine, bien des facilités; d'ailleurs, j'ai de bons amis à Berne, & je prendrai ici des informations.

Passons à la table. Si j'étois à Lausanne, cet article feroit plus sur, je pourrais revoir mes papiers, consulter; j'ai une chienne de mémoire. A vue de pays cela pourra aller de 20 à 30 Louis par mois, plus ou moins, vous sentez, suivant la friandise, & le plus ou moins de convives. Marquez moi dans votre première combien vous coûte le vôtre.

Je sens fort bien tous les bonnets de nuit: point de grands changemens sans embarras, même sans regrets; vous en aurez quelquefois sans doute: par exemple, si votre salle à manger, votre salle de compagnie, sont plus riantes, vous perdrez pour le vale de la bibliothèque. Pour ce qui est des représentations, des discours au moins inutiles, il me semble que le mieux feroit de masquer vos grandes opérations, de ne parler que d'une course, d'une visite chez moi, de six mois ou plus ou moins. Vous feriez bien, je pense, d'aller chez mon ami Louis Teissier; c'est

un brave & honnête homme, qui m'est attaché, qui aime notre pays; il vous donnera tout plein de bons conseils avec zèle, & vous gardera le secret.

Vous aurez quelquefois à votre table un poète; — oui, Monsieur, un poète: — nous en avons un enfin. Procurez vous un volume 8vo. *Poésies Helvétiennes, imprimés l'année passée chez Mourer, à Lausanne.* Vous trouverez entr'autres dans l'épître au jardinier de la grotte, votre ami & votre parc. Toute la prose est de votre très-humble serviteur, qui désire qu'elle trouve grace devant vous.

Le Comte de Cagliostro a fait un séjour à Londres. On ne fait qui il est, d'où il est, d'où il tire son argent; il exerce *gratis* ses talens pour la médecine; il a fait des cures admirables; mais c'est d'ailleurs le composé le plus étrange. J'ai cessé de prendre ses remèdes qui m'échauffoient — l'homme d'ailleurs me gâtoit le médecin. Je suis revenu à Basse avec mon ami. Adieu; récrivez moi le plutôt possible.

N° CLIV.

M. GIBBON à M. DEYVERDUN.

HAMPTON COURT, ce 1 Juillet 1783.

APRÈS avoir pris ma résolution, l'honneur, & ce qui vaut encore mieux l'amitié, me défendent de vous laisser un moment dans l'incertitude. JE PARS. Je vous en donne ma parole, & comme je suis bien aisé de me fortifier d'un nouveau lien, je vous prie très-sérieusement de ne pas m'en dispenser. Ma possession, sans doute, ne vaut pas celle de Julie; mais vous serez plus inexorable que St. Preux. Je ne sens plus qu'une

vive impatience pour notre réunion. Mais le mois d'Octobre est encore loin; 92 jours, & nous aurons tout le temps de prendre, & de nous donner des éclaircissemens dont nous avons besoin. Après un mûr examen, je renonce au voyage de George Suisse, qui me paroît incertain, cher & difficile. Après tout mon valet de chambre & ma bibliothèque, sont les deux articles les plus embarrassans. Si je ne retenois pas ma plume, je remplirois sans peine la feuille; mais il ne faut pas passer du silence, à un babil intarissable. Seulement si je connois le Comte de Cagliostro, cet homme extraordinaire, &c. Savez vous le Latin? oui, sans doute; mais faites, comme si je ne le savois point. Quand retournez vous à Laufanne vous même? Je pense que vous y trouverez une petite bête bien aimable, mais tant soit peu méchante, qui se nomme Milady Elizabeth Foster; parlez lui de moi, mais parlez en avec discrétion; elle a des correspondances partout. Vale.

N° CLV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honourable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

July 10th, 1783.

YOU will read the following lines with more patience and attention than you would probably give to a hasty conference, perpetually interrupted by the opening of the door, and perhaps by the quickness of our own tempers. I neither expect nor desire an answer on a subject of extreme importance to myself, but which friendship alone can render interesting to you. We shall soon meet at Sheffield.

It is needless to repeat the reflections which we have sometimes debated together, and which I have often seriously weighed in my silent solitary walks. Notwithstanding your active and ardent spirit, you must allow that there is some perplexity in my present situation, and that my future prospects are distant and cloudy. I have lived too long in the world to entertain a very sanguine idea of the friendship or zeal of ministerial patrons; and we are all sensible how much the powers of patronage are reduced.

* * * * *

At the end of the Parliament, or rather long before that time, (for their lives are not worth a year's purchase,) our Ministers are kicked down stairs, and I am left their disinterested friend, to fight through another opposition, and to expect the fruits of another revolution. But I will take a more favorable supposition, and conceive myself in six months firmly seated at the board of customs; before the end of the next six months I should infallibly hang myself. Instead of regretting my disappointment, I rejoice in my escape; as I am satisfied that no salary could pay me for the irksomeness of attendance, and the drudgery of business so repugnant to my taste, (and I will dare to say,) so unworthy of my character. Without looking forwards to the possibility, still more remote, of exchanging that laborious office for a smaller annuity, there is surely another plan, more simple, and more pleasant; a temporary retreat to a quiet and less expensive scene. In a four years residence at Laufanne, I should live within my income, save, and even

accumulate, my ready money ; finish my History, an object of profit, as well as fame, expect the contingencies of elderly lives, and return to England at the age of fifty, to form a lasting independent establishment, without courting the smiles of a Minister, or apprehending the downfall of a party. Such have been my serious sober reflections. Yet I much question, whether I should have found courage to follow my reason and my inclination, if a friend had not stretched his hand to draw me out of the dirt. The twentieth of last May I wrote to my friend Deyverdun, after a long interval of silence, to expose my situation, and to consult in what manner I might best arrange myself at Lausanne. From his answer, which I received about a fortnight ago, I have the pleasure to learn, that his heart and his house are both open for my reception ; that a family which he had lodged for some years is about to leave him, and that at no other time my company could have been so acceptable and convenient. I shall step, at my arrival, into an excellent apartment and a delightful situation ; the fair division of our expenses will render them very moderate, and I shall pass my time with the companion of my youth, whose temper and studies have always been congenial to my own. I have given him my word of honor to be at Lausanne in the beginning of October, and no power or persuasion can divert me from this IRREVOCABLE resolution, which I am every day proceeding to execute.

I wish, but I scarcely hope, to convince you of the propriety of my scheme ; but at least you will allow, that when we are not able to prevent the *follies*

of our friends, we should strive to render them as easy and harmless as possible. The arrangement of my house, furniture, and books will be left to meaner hands, but it is to your zeal and judgment alone that I can trust the more important disposal of Lenborough and * * * * *. On these subjects we may go into a committee at Sheffield Place, but you know it is the rule of a committee, not to hear any arguments against the *principle* of the bill. At present I shall only observe, that neither of these negotiations ought to detain me here; the former may be dispatched as well, the latter much better, in my absence. *Vale.*

N° CLVI.

Mr. GIBBON à M. DEYVERDUN.

SHEFFIELD-PLACE, le 31 Juillet 1783.

VOTRE papier s'est furieusement rappetisé; vous avez si bien retranché le superflu, que vous oubliez l'essentiel, & ce n'est que par des conjectures fines & savantes que je devine la date du temps & du lieu. Quant à moi je suis actuellement au château de Milord Sheffield, à quarante milles de Londres, ce qui ajoute deux jours pour l'arrivée & le départ du courier. Je reçois votre lettre (je ne fais du quantième) le 30 Juillet de l'an de grace 1783, je réponds du 31 du dit mois & de la dite année. Le zèle ne se ralentit point pour la conformation du grand œuvre. Je sens votre procédé délicat & généreux, & quoique je n'eusse pas été fâché de trouver dans votre fermeté, un appui à la mienne, mon inclination est si bien affermie sur la base inébranlable de l'inclination & de la raison, que j'en crains plus les obstacles extérieurs ni intérieurs. Dèsque

j'ai osé fixer mon départ, les nuages qui le couvroient, se sont évanouis; les montagnes s'aplanissoient devant moi, & les dragons qui s'étoient présentés sur ma route, se sont apprivoisés. La semaine passée, je frappai le grand coup par la cassation du bail de ma maison de *Bentinck-street*; & après le mois de Septembre, si je ne couche pas à Lausanne, je coucherai dans la rue. Mes différens bonnets de nuit s'arrangent tous les jours, avec beaucoup d'ordre & de facilité. Lord Sheffield lui même, ce terrible St. George, vrai champion de l'Angleterre, s'est rendu à mes raisons, ou plutôt aux vôtres. Il est charmé du tableau de votre première lettre, & malgré l'activité de son ame, au lieu de me condamner, il me porte envie; & nous disputons (un peu en l'air) sur le projet d'une visite que lui, son aimable compagne & sa fille aînée, se proposent de nous faire dans deux ans aux bords du Lac Léman. Bien loin de combattre mon dessein, il me conseille, il me seconde dans l'exécution, & je n'aurai pas besoin de recourir aux lumières de votre ami Louis Teissier, d'autant plus que pour les menus détails de la correspondance étrangère, je trouve dans le libraire Elmsly un conseiller sage, instruit & discret.

* * * * *

* * * * *. Votre calcul de la dépense de la maison surpasse, non pas absolument mes moyens, mais un peu mes espérances & mes conjectures. La consommation en Suisse n'est point chargée d'impôts; le vin y coule comme l'eau de fontaine; votre jardin produit des fruits & des légumes. Se peut-il que vingt ou trente louis se dépensent tous les mois pour le pain, la viande,

le bois, la chandelle, quelque peu de vin étranger, les domestiques de la cuisine, &c ? Je me flatte que dans l'incertitude, vous avez cavé au plus fort; mais enfin tout ce détail se réglera suivant nos goûts & nos facultés; & un mois d'expérience fera plus instructif que cent pages de raisonnemens. La comparaison que vous me demandez de mon ménage de Londres, ne meneroit à rien. A la rigueur je ne tiens pas maison; je ne donne presque jamais à manger: en hiver je dine assez rarement chez moi; je ne soupe jamais; & une partie assez considérable de la dépense (celle des clubs & des tavernes) n'entre point dans le compte de la maison. Ma nourriture domestique n'excede pas toutefois votre calcul Lausannois; mais je sens la différence entre le petit couvert triste & mesquin d'un garçon, & la table honnête & hospitalière de deux amis, qui auront d'autres amis, &c.

Votre idée de masquer mes grands opérations est de la plus profonde politique; mais les déclarations, & même les démarches qui seront nécessaires pour me retirer de la Chambre des Communes, déclareront un peu trop tôt l'étendue de mes projets. Cependant on peut tirer quelque parti de cette honnête dissimulation, pour calmer un peu les scrupules, & les regrets des dames âgées que vous connoissez, & que vous ne connoissez pas. Mais le moyen le plus efficace pour arrêter, ou pour ne pas écouter les mauvais discours, c'est de s'y dérober par une prompte fuite, & depuis que ma résolution a été prise, je compte les jours & les momens. Le 10 du mois prochain je retournerai à Londres, où je travaillerai vivement à préparer ce grand changement

d'état. J'attends tous les jours la réponse de Madame Gibbon, à qui j'ai tâché de persuader qu'une entrevue de trois ou quatre jours à Bath, seroit moins douce qu'amère à tous les deux. Si elle se rend, ou fait semblant de se rendre à mes raisons, je compte que tout sera fini la première, ou du moins la seconde semaine de Septembre, & comme je couperai droit par la Champagne, & la Franche Comté, je pourrois fort bien me trouver à Laufanne vers le 20 ou le 25 de ce mois là, supposé toujours que cette promptitude vous convienne, que votre maison sera libre, & que vous y ferez rendu vous même. J'avois quelque idée de me détourner par Strasbourg, de vous prendre à Basse, & de passer avec vous par Berne, &c. mais, tout bien considéré, j'aime mieux abréger le grand voyage & réserver cette promenade (si nous avions envie de la faire) pour une saison plus tranquille. J'attends votre réponse dans une trentaine de jours; mais sans l'attendre je vous écrirai de Londres, pour continuer le fil de l'histoire, & peut être pour vous charger de quelques achats de livres, qui se feront plus commodément à Basse qu'à Laufanne. Vous ne me donnez point de commissions. Cependant ce pays n'est pas sans industrie. Milord & Milady Sheffield vous embrassent très amicalement. Ce sera pour moi la perte la plus sensible.

N° CLVII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

Monday, August 18th, 1783.

IN the preparation of my journey I have not felt any circumstance more deeply than the kind concern of Lady Sheffield and the silent grief of Mrs. Porten. Yet the age of my friends makes a very essential difference. I can scarcely hope ever to see my aunt again; but I flatter myself, that in less than two years, my *sister* will make me a visit, and that in less than four, I shall return it with a cheerful heart at Sheffield-Place. Business advances; this morning my books were shipped for Rouen, and will reach Lausanne almost as soon as myself. On Thursday morning the bulk of the library moves from Bentinck-street to Downing-street. I shall escape from the noise to Hampton Court, and spend three or four days in taking leave. I want to know your precise motions, what day you arrive in town, whether you visit Lord * * * * * before the races, &c. I am now impatient to be gone, and shall only wait for a last interview with you. Your medley of judges, advocates, politicians, &c. is rather *useful* than pleasant. Town is a vast solitude. Adieu.

N° CLVIII.

The Same to the Same.

BENTINCK-STREET, August 20th, 1783.

I AM now concluding one of the most unpleasing days of my life. Will the day of our meeting again be accompanied with proportionable satisfaction? The business of preparation will serve to agitate and divert *my* thoughts; but I do not like your brooding over melancholy ideas in your solitude, and I heartily wish that both you and my dear Lady S. would immediately go over and pass a week at Brighton. Such is our imperfect nature, that dissipation is a far more efficacious remedy than reflection. At all events, let me hear from you soon. I have passed the evening at home, without gaining any intelligence.

N° CLIX.

M. DEYVERDUN à M. GIBBON.

DE NEUCHÂTEL le 20 Août 1783.

IL y long tems que je n'ai été aussi mécontent de moi que je le suis dans ce moment; j'ai fait par l'événement une grande étourderie; j'ai manqué à ceux qui me quittent, & à celui qui vient me joindre; enfin je me suis très mal conduit. M. * * * * *, qui loge chez moi, me paroïssoit si disposé à quitter ma maison, quand je partis au printemps, que ne doutant pas qu'il ne trouvât à s'arranger pendant tout l'été, je la regardois déjà d'avance comme vacante. Le plaisir extrême que j'avois à vous l'offrir, n'a pas peu contribué à soutenir cette illusion; enfin
n'entendant

n'entendant parler cependant de rien , je lui ai écrit; après avoir reçu il y a six jours votre dernière, & il vient de me répondre qu'il n'a rien trouvé encore, mais qu'il n'épargnera ni soins ni dépenses, pour déloger, je ne lui ai au reste point marqué de quoi il étoit question; mais je l'ai prié de me dire à quelle époque il croyoit que ma maison pourroit être vacante. Je lui récrirai demain, car il me paroît qu'il est piqué, & quel je le connois, malgré ce que je pourrai lui marquer, il fera fort empressé à décamper; mais malgré cela, il ne faut plus compter sur la maison entière pour votre arrivée.

Je vous demande mille pardons, mon cher ami, je me mets à votre merci; & en vérité si vous me voyiez en ce moment, vous auriez pitié de moi. Que nous reste-t-il à faire? car enfin il ne faut pas perdre la tête. J'ai un appartement de deux chambres sans lit, & deux petits cabinets, où vous pourriez être passablement, en attendant que la maison fût tout à fait libre; le tout est à plein pied de la terrasse, je me procurerois un logement au bout de mon jardin, & nous pourrions nous faire apporter à manger, chose pratiquée par nombre de Grands Seigneurs, entr'autres par Monseigneur le Margrave d'Anspach. 2. Ou bien louer un appartement garni que nous occuperons ensemble. Ou enfin 3. passer l'hiver dans quelle autre ville du Continent qu'il vous plaira choisir, ou j'irai vous joindre & vous porter mes excuses. Une réflexion que je fais dans ce moment ci, & qui me console un peu, c'est que dans votre première lettre, votre résolution ne tenoit point à ma maison, ni même à l'idée de loger

& vivre avec moi. Ce second article aura toujours lieu, s'il vous convient, & le premier ne fera que différé; ainsi appeaisez vous, mon cher ami, pardonnez moi, & écrivez moi tout de suite, lequel de ces partis vous convient le mieux, pour que je m'y conforme; ou si vous en imaginez un nouveau, annoncez le moi. Une réflexion qui contribue encore à me consoler, c'est que pendant le temps que nous camperons ainsi en quelque manière, nous aurons le temps de bien voir autour de nous, & de nous arranger à notre aise, d'une manière stable & commode pour notre établissement. Encore une fois cependant, mon cher ami, mille pardons.

Milord Sheffield s'est montré plus raisonnable que je ne l'aurais cru; diantre! n'allez pas dire cela à sa seigneurie; mais dites-lui, je vous prie, combien me plait l'espoir d'avoir l'honneur de le connoître; je vois encore d'ici son beau parc & le charmant ruisseau. Son suffrage dans des circonstances qui doivent sans doute le prévenir contre moi, me fait le plus grand plaisir, parceque je le regarde comme une bien forte preuve que vous prenez un parti convenable à votre bonheur. Des commissions, je ne saurais trop que vous dire dans ce moment; comme vous avez une maison montée, voyez s'il n'y auroit pas des choses Anglaises auxquelles vous êtes accoutumé, & qui vous feroient plaisir, on en pourroit remplir une caisse. Un service de cette porcelaine de Bath, par exemple, nous conviendrait, ce me semble, assez.

Une de mes craintes maintenant, c'est que cette lettre ne vous parvienne peut être point avant votre

départ, cela ferait très fâcheux. Toujours aurai-je soin de me trouver à Lausanne, au moins vers le milieu du mois prochain. Des couriers, comme celui que vous amenez, sont ordinairement de vrais domestiques de Grands Seigneurs, chers & importants; mais vous les connoîtrez en route. Ne foyez pas trop fâché contre moi, du contretemps que je vous annonce, & pensez qu'il y a enfin un appartement honnête de garçon, ma terrasse, mon jardin & votre ami, qui ne peuvent vous manquer —

Tout à vous,

D.

N^o CLX.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

Friday, August 22d, 1783.

I AM astonished with your apparition and flight, and am at a loss to conjecture the mighty and sudden business of * * * *, which could not be delayed till next week. Timeo * * * *, their selfish cunning, and your sanguine unsuspecting spirit. Not dreaming of your arrival, I thought it necessary to apprise you, that I delayed Hampton to this day; on Monday I shall return, and will expect you Tuesday evening, either in Bentinck or Downing-street, as you like best. You have seen the piles of learning accumulated in your parlour; the transportation will be achieved to-day, and Bentinck-street is already reduced to a light, ignorant habitation, which

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I shall inhabit till about the first of September four days must be allowed for clearing and packing; these I shall spend in Downing-street and after seeing you a moment on your return, I shall start about Saturday the sixth. London is a desert, and life, without books, business, or society, will be somewhat tedious. From this state, you will judge that your plan coincides very well, only I think you should give me the whole of Wednesday in Bentinck-street. With regard to Bushy, perhaps as a compliment to Lord L. you had better defer it till your return. I admire Gregory Way, and should envy him, if I did not possess a disposition somewhat similar to his own. My Lady will be reposed, and restored at Brighton; the torrent of Lords, Judges, &c. a proper remedy for you, was a medicine ill-suited to her constitution. I *tenderly* embrace her.

N^o CLXI.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lady SHEFFIELD.

MY DEAR FRIEND, BENTINCK-STREET, Aug. 30th, 1783.

F^{OR}the names of Sheffalina, &c. are too playful for the serious temper of my mind. In the whole period of my life I do not recollect a day in which I felt more unpleasant sensations, than that on which I took my leave of Sheffield-Place. I forgot my friend Deyverdun, and the fair prospect of quiet and happiness which awaits me at Lausanne. I lost

fight of our almost certain meeting at the end of a term, which, at our age, cannot appear very distant; nor could I amuse my uneasiness with the hopes, the more doubtful prospect, of your visit to Switzerland. The agitation of preparing every thing for my departure has, in some degree, diverted these melancholy thoughts; Yet I still look forwards to the decisive day (to-morrow se'nnight) with an anxiety of which yourself and Lord S. have the principal share.

Surely never any thing was so unlucky as the unseasonable death of Sir John Russel on his passage to his friend at Sheffield-Place, which so strongly reminded us of the instability of human life and human expectations. The inundation of the affizes must have distressed and overpowered you; but I hope and I wish to hear from yourself, that the air of your favorite Brighton, the bathing, and the quiet society of two or three friends have composed and revived your spirits. Present my love to Sarah, and compliments to Miss Carter, &c. Give me a speedy and satisfactory line. I am most truly yours.

N^o CLXII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

DOWNING-STREET, September 8th, 1783.

As we are not unconscious of each other's feelings, I shall only say, that I am glad you did not go alone into Suffex; an American rebel to dispute

with gives a diversion to uneasy spirits, and I heartily wished for such a friend or adversary during the remainder of the day. No letter from Deyverdun; the post is arrived, but two Flanders mails are due. Æolus does not seem to approve of my designs, and there is little merit in waiting till Friday. I should wait with more reluctance, did I think there was much chance of success. I dine with Craufurd, and if any thing is decided, will send an extraordinary gazette. You have obliged me beyond expression, by your kindness to aunt Kitty; she will drink her afternoon tea at Sheffield next Friday. For my sake Lady S. will be kind to the old lady, who will not be troublesome, and will vanish at the first idea of Brighton. Has not that salubrious air already produced some effects? Peace will be proclaimed to-morrow; odd! as war was never declared. The buyers of stock seem as indifferent as yourself about the definitive treaty. Tell Maria, that though you had forgotten the *Annales de la Vertu*, I have directed them to be sent, but know nothing of their plan or merit. Adieu. When you see my Lady, say every thing tender and friendly to her. I did not know how much I loved her. She may depend upon my keeping a separate, though not perhaps a very frequent account with her. *A propos*, I think aunt Kitty has a secret wish to sleep in my room; if it is not occupied, she might be indulged. Once more, adieu.

N° CLXIII.

M. GIBBON à M. DEYVERDUN.

DOWNING-STREET à LONDRES, le 9, Septembre 1783.

SELON ma diligence ordinaire je répondis le 31 Juillet à votre lettre sans date reçue le jour auparavant. Je voyois couler le mois d'Août, fortement persuadé qu'il ne s'acheveroit point, sans m'apporter votre *ultimatum*. Nous voici au 9 Septembre, quarante jours depuis ma missive, & je n'ai point encore de vos nouvelles! Il est vrai que des vents contraires nous retiennent deux malles de Flandres, & vos dépêches peuvent & doivent s'y trouver. Mais si elles ne m'apportent rien de votre part, je serai très étonné & pas moins embarrassé. Se peut-il que vos lettres, ou les miennes se soient égarées en chemin? êtes vous mort? êtes vous malade? avez vous changé d'avis? est-il survenu des difficultés? Je vous ai écrit de nouveau le 19 Août; mais l'incertitude de mes craintes me fait encore hazarder ce billet. Après des travaux inouis, j'ai enfin brisé tous mes liens, & depuis ma résolution, je n'ai pas eu un instant de regrets; ma vive impatience se fortifie tous les jours, & depuis que j'ai abandonné ma maison & ma bibliothèque, l'ennui a prêté des ailes à l'espérance & à l'amitié. Enfin j'avois fixé mon départ au commencement de la semaine; à cette heure il est renvoyé à Vendredi prochain, 12 de ce mois, dans la supposition toujours d'une lettre de votre part, car je ne saurois entreprendre ma course, sans être assuré

de la réception qui m'attend au bout. Je me ferai toujours précéder par un mot de billet ; mais la saison est tellement orageuse, qu'il me sera impossible d'arrêter le jour de mon arrivée à Lausanne jusqu'à ce que je me voye en sûreté au-delà de la mer. Adieu. Vous devez être de retour à Lausanne. Annoncez moi aux enfans des mes anciennes connoissances.

N° CLXIV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

Thursday, September 11th, 1783.

THE scheme (which you may impart to my Lady) is completely vanished, and I support the disappointment with heroic patience. * * * * * goes down to Chatsworth to-morrow, and * * * does not recommend my waiting for the event ; yet the appointment is not yet declared, and I am ignorant of the name and merits of my successful competitor. Is it not wonderful that I am still in suspense, without a letter from Deyverdun ? No, it is not wonderful, since no Flanders mail is arrived : to-morrow three will be due. I am therefore in a miserable state of doubt and anxiety ; in a much better house indeed than my own, but without books, or business, or society. I send or call two or three times each day to Elmsly's, and can only say that I shall fly the next day, Saturday, Sunday, &c. after I have got my *quietus*. Aunt Kitty was delighted with my Lady's letter ; at her age, and in her situation, every kind

attention is pleasant. I took my leave this morning; as I did not wish to repeat the scene, and thought she would be better at Sheffield, I suffer her to go to-morrow. Your discretion will communicate or with-hold any tidings of my departure or delay as you judge most expedient. Christie writes to you this post; he talks, in his rhetorical way, of many purchasers. Do you approve of his fixing a day for the auction? To us he talked of an indefinite advertisement. No news, except that we keep Negapatnam. The other day the French Ambassador mentioned that the Empress of Russia, a precious —, had proposed to ratify the principles of the armed neutrality, by a definitive treaty; but that the French, obliging creatures! had declared, that they would neither propose nor accept an article so disagreeable to England. Grey Elliot was pleased with your attention, and says you are a perfect master of the subject²². Adieu. If I could be sure that no mail would arrive to-morrow, I would run down with my aunt. My heart is not light. I embrace my Lady with true affection, but I need not repeat it.

N^o CLXV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

DOWNING-STREET, Friday, September 12th, 1783.

SINCE my departure is near, and inevitable, you and Lady S. will be rather sorry than glad to hear that I am detained, day after day, by the caprice of the winds. *Three Flanders* mails are now

due. I know not how to move without the final letter from Deyverdun, which I expected a fortnight ago, and my fancy (perfectly unreasonable) begins to create strange fancies. A state of suspense is painful, but it will be alleviated by the short notes which I mean to write, and hope to receive every post. A separation has some advantages, though they are purchased with bitter pangs; among them is the pleasure of knowing how dear we are to our friends, and how dear they are to us. It will be a kind office to sooth aunt Kitty's sorrows, and "to rock the cradle of declining age." She will be vexed to hear that I am not yet gone; but she is reasonable and cheerful. Adieu. Most truly yours.

N^o CLXVI.

The Same to the Same.

DOWNING-STREET, Saturday, September 13th, 1783.

ENFIN la bombe a crevé. — The three Flanders mails are arrived this day, but without any letters from Deyverdun. Most incomprehensible! After many adverse reflections, I have finally resolved to begin my journey on Monday; a heavy journey, with much apprehension, and much regret. Yet I consider, first, That if he is alive and well, (an unpleasant if,) scarcely any event can have happened to disappoint our mutual wishes; and, 2dly, That, supposing the very worst, even that worst would not overthrow my general plan of living abroad, though it would derange my hopes of a quiet and delightful

establishment with my friend. Upon the whole, without giving way to melancholy fears, my reason conjectures that his indolence thought it superfluous to write any more, that it was my business to act and move, and his duty to sit still and receive me with open arms. At least he is well informed of my operations, as I wrote to him (since his last) July thirty-first, from Sheffield-Place; August nineteenth; and this week, September ninth. The two first have already reached him.

As I shall not arrive at, or depart from, Dover till Tuesday night, (alas! I may be confined there a week,) you will have an opportunity, by dispatching a parcel *per* post to Elmsly's, to catch the Monday's post. Let us improve these last short moments: I want to hear how poor Kitty behaves. I am really impatient to be gone. It is provoking to be so near, yet so far from, certain persons. London is a desert. I dine to-morrow with the Paynes, who pass through. Lord Loughborough was not returned from Buxton yesterday. Sir Henry Clinton found me out this morning: he talks with rapture of visits to be made at Sheffield, and returned to Brighton. I envy him those visits more than the red ribbon. Adieu.

N^o CLXVII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

DOVER, Wednesday, 17th September, 1783,
ten o'clock in the morning.

THE best laws are useless without proper guardians. Your letter *per* Sunday's post is not arrived

(as its fate is uncertain and irrevocable, you must repeat any material article,) but that *per* Monday's post reached me last night. Oliver is more insolent than his great-grandfather; but you will cope with one, and would not be much afraid of the other. Last night the wind was so high, that the vessel could not stir from the harbour; this day it is brisk and fair. We are flattered with the hope of making Calais harbour by the same tide, in three hours and a half; but any delay will leave the disagreeable option of a tottering boat or a tossing night. What a cursed thing to live in an island, this step is more awkward than the whole journey! The triumvirate of this memorable embarkation will consist of the grand Gibbon, Henry Laurence Esquire, President of Congress, and Mr. Secretary, Colonel, Admiral, Philosopher, Thompson, attended by three horses, who are not the most agreeable fellow-passengers. If we survive, I will finish and seal my letter at Calais. Our salvation shall be ascribed to the prayers of my Lady and Aunt; for I do believe they both pray.

BOULOGNE, Thursday Morning, Ten o'clock.

Instead of Calais, the wind has driven us to Boulogne, where we landed in the evening without much noise and difficulty. The night is passed, the customhouse is dispatched, the post horses are ordered, and I shall start about eleven o'clock. I had not the least symptom of sea-sickness, while my companions were spewing round me. Laurence has read the pamphlet", and thinks it has done much mischief. A good sign! Adieu. The Captain is impatient. I shall reach Lausanne by the end of next week, but may probably write on the road.

N^o CLXVIII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

LANGRES, September 23d, 1783.

LET the geographical Maria place before you the map of France, and trace my progress as far as this place, through the following towns: Boulogne, (where I was forced to land,) St. Omer, (where I recovered my road) Aire, Bethune, Douay, Cambray, St. Quentin, La Fere, Laon, Rheims, Chalons, St. Dizier, and Langres, where I have just finished my supper. The inns, in general, are more agreeable to the palate, than to the sight or smell. But, with some short exceptions of time and place, I have enjoyed good weather and good roads, and at the end of the ninth day, I feel so little fatigued, that the journey appears no more than a pleasant airing. I have generally conversed with Homer and Lord Clarendon, often with Caplin and Muff^{ss}; sometimes with the French postillions, of the above-mentioned animals the least rational. To-morrow I lie at Befançon, and according to the arrangement of post or hired horses, shall either sup at Laufanne on Friday, or dine there Saturday. I feel some suspense and uneasiness with regard to Deyverdun; but in the scale both of reason and constitution, my hopes preponderate very much above my fears. From Laufanne I will immediately write. I embrace my lady. If aunt Kitty's gratitude and good-breed.

ing have not driven her away upon the first whisper of Brighton, she will share this intelligence; if she is gone, a line from you would be humane and attentive. *Monsieur, les Cheveux seront prêts à cinq heures.* Adieu. I am going into an excellent bed, about six feet high from the ground.

N° CLXIX.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

LAUSANNE, September 30th, 1783.

I ARRIVED safe in harbour last Saturday, the 27th instant, about ten o'clock in the morning; but as the post only goes out twice a week, it was not in my power to write before this day. Except one day, between Langres and Besançon, which was laborious enough, I finished my easy and gentle airing without any fatigue, either of mind or body. I found Deyverdun well and happy, but much more happy at the sight of a friend, and the accomplishment of a scheme which he had so long and impatiently desired. His garden, terrace, and *park*, have even exceeded the most sanguine of my expectations and remembrances; and you yourself cannot have forgotten the charming prospect of the lake, the mountains, and the declivity of the Pays de Vaud. But as human life is perpetually chequered with good and evil, I have found some disappointments on my arrival. The easy nature of Deyverdun, his indolence, and his impatience, had prompted

him to reckon too positively that this house would be vacant at Michaelmas; some unforeseen difficulties have arisen, or have been discovered when it was already too late, and the consummation of our hopes (I am much afraid) postponed to next spring. At first I was knocked down by the unexpected thunder-bolt, but I have gradually been reconciled to my fate, and have granted a free and gracious pardon to my friend. As his own apartment, which afforded me a temporary shelter is much too narrow for a settled residence, we hired for the winter, a convenient ready furnished apartment in the nearest part of the Rue de Bourg, whose back-door leads in three steps to the terrace and garden, as often as a tolerable day shall tempt us to enjoy their beauties; and this arrangement has even its advantage, of giving us time to deliberate and provide before we venture on a larger and more regular establishment. But this is not the sum of my misfortunes; hear, and pity! The day after my arrival (Sunday) we had just finished a very temperate dinner, and intended to begin a round of visits on foot, *chapeau sous le bras*, when, most unfortunately, Deyverdun proposed to show me something in the court; we boldly and successfully ascended a flight of stone-steps, but in the descent I missed my footing, and strained, or sprained my, ancle in a painful manner. My old latent enemy, (I do not mean the Devil,) who is always on the watch, has made an ungenerous use of his advantage, and I much fear that my arrival at Lausanne will be marked with a fit of the gout though it is quite unnecessary that the in-

telligence or suspicion should find its way to Bath. Yesterday afternoon I lay, or at least sat, in state to receive visits, and at the same moment my room was filled with four different nations. The loudest of these nations was the single voice of the Abbé Raynal, who, like your friend, has chosen this place for the asylum of freedom and history. His conversation, which might be very agreeable, is intolerably loud, peremptory, and insolent; and you would imagine that he alone was the monarch and legislator of the world. Adieu. I embrace my Lady, and the infants. With regard to the important transactions for which you are constituted plenipotentiary, I expect with some impatience, but with perfect confidence, the result of your labors. You may remember what I mentioned of my conversation with * * * * * about the place of Minister at Bern: I have talked it over with Deyverdun, who does not dislike the idea, provided this place was allowed to be my villa, during at least two-thirds of the year; but for my part, I am sure that * * * * * are worth more than ministerial friendship and gratitude; so I am inclined to think, that they are preferable to an office which would be procured with difficulty, enjoyed with constraint and expense, and lost, perhaps, next April, in the annual revolutions of our domestic Government. Again adieu.

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N° CLXX.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable Lady*
SHEFFIELD.

LAUSANNE, October, 28th, 1783.

THE progress of my gout is in general so regular, and there is so much uniformity in the History of its Decline and Fall, that I have hitherto indulged my laziness, without much shame or remorse, without supposing that you would be very anxious for my safety, which has been sufficiently provided for by the triple care of my friend Deyverdun, my humbler friend Caplin, and a very conversable physician, (not the famous Tissot,) whose ordinary fee is ten batz, about fifteen pence English. After the usual increase and decrease of the member (for it has been confined to the injured part) the gout has retired in good order, and the remains of weakness, which obliged me to move on the rugged pavement of Lausanne with a stick, or rather small crutch, are to be ascribed to the sprain, which might have been a much more serious business. As I have now spent a month at Lausanne, you will inquire with much curiosity, more kindness, and mixture of spite and malignity, how far the place has answered my expectations, and whether I do not repent of a resolution which has appeared so rash and ridiculous to my ambitious friends? To this question, however natural and reasonable, I shall not return an immediate answer, for two reasons: 1. *I have not yet made a fair trial.* The disappointment and delay with regard to Deyverdun's house, will confine us this winter to lodgings,

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rather convenient than spacious or pleasant. I am only beginning to recover my strength and liberty, and to look about on persons and things; the greatest part of those persons are in the country taken up with their vintage; my books are not yet arrived, and, in short, I cannot look upon myself as settled in that comfortable way which you and I understand and relish. Yet the weather has been heavenly, and till this time, the end of October, we enjoy the brightness of the sun, and somewhat gently complain of its immoderate heat. 2. If I should be too sanguine in explaining my satisfaction in what I have done, you would ascribe that satisfaction to the novelty of the scene, and the inconstancy of man; and I deem it far more safe and prudent to postpone any positive declaration, till I am placed by experience beyond the danger of repentance and recantation. Yet of one thing I am sure, that I possess in this country, as well as in England, the best cordial of life, a sincere, tender, and sensible friend, adorned with the most valuable and pleasant qualities both of the heart and head. The inferior enjoyments of leisure and society are likewise in my power; and in the short excursions which I have hitherto made, I have commenced or renewed my acquaintance with a certain number of persons, more especially women, (who, at least in France and this country, are undoubtedly superior to our prouder sex,) of rational minds and elegant manners. I breakfast alone, and have declared that I receive no visits in a morning, which you will easily suppose is devoted to study. I find it impossible, without inconvenience, to defer my dinner beyond

two o'clock. We have got a very good woman cook. Deyverdun, who is somewhat of an Epicurean philosopher, understands the management of a table, and we frequently invite a guest or two to share our luxurious, but not extravagant repasts. The afternoons are (and will be much more so hereafter) devoted to society, and I shall find it necessary to play at cards much oftener than in London: but I do not dislike that way of passing a couple of hours, and I shall not be ruined at shilling whist. As yet I have not supped, but in the course of winter I must sometimes sacrifice an evening abroad, and in exchange I hope sometimes to steal a day at home, without going into company * * * *

I have all this time been talking to Lord Sheffield; I hope that he has dispatched my affairs, and it would give me pleasure to hear that I am no longer member for Lymington, nor Lord of *Lenborough*. Adieu. I feel every day that the distance serves only to make me think with more tenderness of the persons whom I love.

N° CLXXI.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable Lord SHEFFIELD.*

LAUSANNE, November 14th, 1783.

LAST Tuesday, November eleventh, after plaguing and vexing yourself all the morning, about some business of your fertile creation, you went to the House of Commons, and passed the afternoon, the

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evening, and perhaps the night, without sleep or food, stifled in a close room by the heated respiration of six hundred politicians, inflamed by party and passion, and tired of the repetition of dull nonsense, which, in that illustrious assembly, so far outweighs the proportion of reason and eloquence. On the same day, after a studious morning, a friendly dinner, and a cheerful assembly of both sexes, I retired to rest at eleven o'clock, satisfied with the past day, and certain that the next would afford me the return of the same quiet and rational enjoyments. *Which has the better bargain?* Seriously, I am every hour more grateful to my own judgment and resolution, and only regret that I so long delayed the execution of a favorite plan, which I am convinced is the best adapted to my character and inclinations. Your conjecture of the revolutions of my face, when I heard that the house was for this winter inaccessible, is probable, but false. I bore my disappointment with the temper of a sage, and only use it to render the prospect of next year still more pleasing to my imagination. You are likewise mistaken, in imputing my fall to the awkwardness of my limbs. The same accident might have happened to Slingsby himself, or to any *hero* of the age, the most distinguished for his *bodily activity*. I have now resumed my entire strength, and walk with caution, yet with speed and safety, through the streets of this mountainous city. After a month of the finest autumn I ever saw, the *bise* " made me feel my old acquaintance; the weather is now milder, and this present day is dark and rainy, not much better than what you probably enjoy in England. The town is com-

paratively empty, but the Noblesse are returning every day from their châteaux, and I already perceive that I shall have more reason to complain of dissipation than of dulness. As I told Lady S. I am afraid of being too rash and hasty in expressing my satisfaction; but I must again repeat, that appearances are extremely favorable. I am sensible that general praise conveys no distinct ideas, but it is very difficult to enter into particulars where the individuals are unknown, or indifferent to our correspondent. You have forgotten the *old* generation, and in twenty years a new one is grown up. Death has swept many from the world, and chance or choice has brought many to this place. If you inquire after your old acquaintance Catherine, you must be told, that she is solitary, ugly, blind, and universally forgotten. Your later flame, and our common goddess, the Eliza, passed a month at the inn. She came to consult Tissot, and was acquainted with Cerjat. And now to business. * * * *

* * * *

With regard to meaner cases, these are two, which you can and will undertake. 1. As I have not renounced my country, I should be glad to hear of your parliamentary squabbles, which may be done with small trouble and expence. After an interesting debate, my Lady in due time may cut the speeches from Woodfall. You will write or dictate any curious anecdote, and the whole, inclosed in a letter, may be dispatched to Laufanne. 2. A set of Wedgewood china, which we talked of in London, and which would be most acceptable here. As you have a *fore*

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of a taste. I leave to your own choice the color and the pattern; but as I have the inclination and means to live very handsomely *here*, I desire that the size and number of things may be adequate to a plentiful table. If you see Lord North, assure him of my gratitude; had he been a more successful friend, I should now be drudging at the Board of Customs, or vexed with business in the amiable society of—. To Lord Loughborough present an affectionate sentiment; I am satisfied of his intention to serve me, if I had not been in such a fidget. I am sure you will not fail, while you are in town, to visit and comfort poor aunt Kitty. I wrote to her on my first arrival, and she may be assured that I will not neglect her. To my Lady I say nothing; we have now our private correspondence, into which the eye of a husband should not be permitted to intrude. I am really satisfied with the success of the pamphlet²²; not only because I have a sneaking kindness for the author, but as it shows me that plain sense, full information, and warm spirit, are still acceptable in the world. You talk of Lausanne as a place of retirement, yet, from the situation and freedom of the Pays de Vaud, all nations, and all extraordinary characters, are astonished to meet each other. The Abbé Raynal, the grand Gibbon, and Mercier, author of the *Tableau de Paris*, have been in the same room. The other day the Prince and Princess de Ligne, the Duke and Duchesse d'Ursel, &c. came from Brussels on purpose (literally true) to act a comedy at * * * * *, in the country. He was dying, and could not appear; but we had comedy, ball, and supper. The event seems to have

revived him; for that great man is fallen from his ancient glory, and his nearest relations refuse to see him. I told you of poor Catherine's deplorable state; but Madame de Mesery, at the age of sixty-nine, is still handsome. Adieu.

N^o CXXLII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

LAUSANNE, December 20th, 1783.

I HAVE received both your epistles; and as any excuse will serve a man who is at the same time very busy and very idle, I patiently expected the second, before I entertained any thoughts of answering the first. * * * * *

* * * * *

I therefore conclude, that on every principle of common sense, before this moment your active zeal has already expelled me from the house, to which, without regret, I bid an everlasting farewell. The agreeable hour of five o'clock in the morning, at which you commonly retire, does not tend to revive my attachment; but if you add the soft hours of your morning Committee ²⁷, in the discussion of taxes, customs, frauds, smugglers, &c. I think I should beg to be released and quietly sent to the galleys, as a place of leisure and freedom. Yet I do not depart from my general principles of toleration. Some animals are made to live in the water, others on the earth, many in the air, and some, as it is now believed, even in fire. Your present hurry of Parliament I perfectly understand; when opposition make the attack.

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—*Horæ**Memento cita mors venit, aut victoria leta:*

But when the Minister brings forward any strong and decisive measure, he at length prevails; but his progress is retarded at every step, and in every stage of the bill, by a pertinacious, though unsuccessful, minority. I am not sorry to hear of the splendor of Fox; I am proud, in a foreign country, of his fame and abilities, and our little animosities are extinguished by my retreat from the English stage. With regard to the substance of the business, I scarcely know what to think: the vices of the Company, both in their persons and their constitution, were manifold and manifest; the danger was imminent, and such an empire, with thirty millions of subjects, was not to be lost for trifles. Yet, on the other hand, the faith of charters, the rights of property! I hesitate and tremble. Such an innovation would at least require that the remedy should be as certain as the evil, and the proprietors may perhaps insinuate, that *they* were as competent guardians of their own affairs, as either * * * * * or * * * * *. Their acting without a salary, seems childish, and their not being removable by the Crown, is a strange and dangerous precedent. But enough of politics, which I now begin to view through a thin, cold, distant cloud, yet not without a reasonable degree of curiosity and patriotism. From the papers (especially when you add an occasional slice of the Chronicle) I shall be amply informed of facts and debates. From you I expect the causes, rather than the events, the true springs of action, and those interesting anecdotes

which seldom ascend the garret of a Fleet-street editor. You say that many friends (alias acquaintance) have expressed curiosity and concern; I should not wish to be immediately forgotten. That others (you once mentioned Gerard Hamilton) condemn Government, for suffering the departure of a man who might have done them some credit and some service, perhaps as much as * * * * himself. To you, in the confidence of friendship, and without either pride or resentment, I will fairly own that I am somewhat of Gerard's opinion; and if I did not compare it with the rest of his character, I should be astonished that * * * * suffered me to depart, without even a civil answer to my letter. Were I capable of hating a man, whom it is not easy to hate, I should find myself amply revenged by * * * *. But the happy souls in Paradise are susceptible only of love and pity, and though Laufanne is not a Paradise, more especially in winter, I do assure you, in sober prose, that it has hitherto fulfilled, and even surpassed, my warmest expectation. Yet I often cast a look toward Sheffield-Place, where you now repose, if you can repose, during the Christmas recess. Embrace my Lady, the young Baroness, and the gentle Louisa, and insinuate to your silent Consort, that separate letters require separate answers. Had I an air balloon, the great topic of modern conversation, I would call upon you till the meeting of Parliament. *Vale.*

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. PORTEN.*

DEAR MADAM, LAUSANNE, December 27th, 1783.

THE unfortunate are loud and loquacious in their complaints, but real happiness is content with its own silent enjoyment; and if that happiness is of a quiet, uniform kind, we suffer days and weeks to elapse without communicating our sensations to a distant friend. By you, therefore, whose temper and understanding have extracted from human life on every occasion the best and most comfortable ingredients, my silence will always be interpreted as an evidence of content, and you would only be alarmed (the danger is not at hand) by the too frequent repetition of my letters. Perhaps I should have continued to slumber, I don't know how long, had I not been awakened by the anxiety which you express in your last letter. * * * * *

From this base subject I ascend to one which more seriously and strongly engages your thoughts, the consideration of my health and happiness. And you will give me credit when I assure you with sincerity, that I have not repented a single moment of the step which I have taken, and that I only regret the not having executed the same design two, or five, or even ten years ago. By this time I might have returned independent and rich to my native country; I should have escaped many disagreeable events that have happened in the meanwhile, and I should have avoided the parliamentary life, which experience

has proved to be neither suitable to my temper, nor conducive to my fortune. In speaking of the happiness which I enjoy, you will agree with me, in giving the preference to a sincere and sensible friend; and though you cannot discern the full extent of his merit, you will easily believe that Deyverdun is the man. Perhaps two persons so perfectly fitted to live together, were never formed by Nature and education. We have both read and seen a great variety of objects; the lights and shades of our different characters are happily blended, and a friendship of thirty years has taught us to enjoy our mutual advantages, and to support our unavoidable imperfections. In love and marriage, some harsh sounds will sometimes interrupt the harmony, and in the course of time, like our neighbours, we must expect some disagreeable moments; but confidence and freedom are the two pillars of our union, and I am much mistaken, if the building be not solid and comfortable. One disappointment I have indeed experienced, and patiently supported. The family who were settled in Deyverdun's house started some unexpected difficulties, and will not leave it till the spring; so that you must not yet expect any poetical, or even historical, description of the beauties of my habitation. During the dull months of winter we are satisfied with a very comfortable apartment in the middle of the town, and even derive some advantage from this delay; as it gives us time to arrange some plans of alteration and furniture, which will embellish our future and more elegant dwelling. In this season I rise (not at four in the morning) but a little before eight; at nine, I

am called from my study to breakfast, which I always perform alone, in the English style, and, with the aid of Caplin, I perceive no difference between Laufanne and Bentinck-street. Our mornings are usually passed in separate studies; we never approach each other's door without a previous message, or thrice knocking, and my apartment is already sacred and formidable to strangers. I dress at half past one, and at two (an early hour, to which I am not perfectly reconciled,) we sit down to dinner. We have hired a female cook, well-skilled in her profession, and accustomed to the taste of every nation; as for instance, we had excellent mince-pies yesterday. After dinner, and the departure of our company, one, two, or three friends, we read together some amusing book, or play at chess, or retire to our rooms, or make visits, or go to the coffee-house. Between six and seven the assemblies begin, and I am oppressed only with their number and variety. Whist, at shillings or half-crowns, is the game I generally play, and I play three rubbers with pleasure. Between nine and ten we withdraw to our bread and cheese, and friendly converse, which sends us to bed at eleven; but these sober hours are too often interrupted by private or numerous suppers, which I have not the courage to resist, though I practise a laudable abstinence at the best furnished tables. Such is the skeleton of my life; it is impossible to communicate a perfect idea of the vital and substantial parts, the characters of the men and women with whom I have very easily connected myself in looser and closer bonds, according to their inclination and my own. If I do not

deceive myself and if Deyverdun does not flatter me, I am already a general favorite; and as our likings and dislikes are commonly mutual, I am equally satisfied with the freedom and elegance of manners, and (after proper allowances and exceptions) with the worthy and amiable qualities of many individuals. The autumn has been beautiful, and the winter hitherto mild, but in January we must expect some severe frost. Instead of rolling in a coach, I walk the streets, wrapped up in a fur cloak; but this exercise is wholesome, and except an accidental fit of the gout of a few days, I never enjoyed better health. I am no longer in Pavilliard's house, where I was almost starved with cold and hunger, and you may be assured that I now enjoy every benefit of comfort, plenty, and even decent luxury. You wish me happy; acknowledge that such a life is more conducive to happiness, than five nights in the week passed in the House of Commons, or five mornings spent at the Custom-house. Send me, in return, a fair account of your own situation in mind and body. I am satisfied your own good sense would have reconciled you to inevitable separation; but there never was a more suitable diversion than your visit to Sheffield-Place. Among the innumerable proofs of friendship which I have received from that family, there are none which affect me more sensibly than their kind civilities to you, though I am persuaded that they are at least as much on your account as on mine. At length Madame de * * * * * is delivered by her tyrant's death; her daughter, a valuable woman of this place, has made some inquiries, and though her own

circumstances are narrow, she will not suffer her father's widow to be left totally destitute. I am glad you derived so much melancholy pleasure from the letters, yet had I known it, I should have withheld

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N^o CLXXIV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable Lord SHEFFIELD.*

LAUSANNE, January 24th, 1784.

WITHIN two or three days after your last *gracious* epistle, your complaints were silenced, and your inquiries were satisfied, by an ample dispatch of four pages, which overflowed the inside of the cover, and in which I exposed my opinions of things in general, public as well as private, as they existed in my mind, in my state of ignorance and error, about the eighteenth or twentieth of last month. Within a week after that date I epistolized, in the same rich and copious strain, the two venerable females of Newman-street and Bath, whose murmurings must now be changed into songs of gratitude and applause. My correspondence with the holy matron of Northamptonshire has been less lively and loquacious. You have not forgotten the author's vindication of himself from the foul calumnies of pretended Christians. Within a fortnight after his arrival at Lausanne, he communicated the joyful event to Mrs. Esther Gibbon. She answered, *per* return of post, both letters at the same time, and in very dutiful language, almost excusing her advice,

which was intended for my spiritual, as well as temporal good, and assuring me, that *nobody should be able to injure me with her*. Unless the saint is a hypocrite, such an expression must convey a favorable and important meaning. At all events, it is worth giving *ourselves* some trouble about her, without indulging any sanguine expectations of inheritance. So much for my females; with regard to my male correspondents, you are the only one to whom I have given any signs of my existence, though I have formed many a generous resolution. Yet I am not insensible of the kind and friendly manner in which Lord Loughborough has distinguished me. He could have no inducements of interest, and now that I view the distant picture with impartial eyes, I am convinced that (for a statesman) he was sincere in his wishes to serve me. When you see *him*, the Paynes, Eden, Craufurd, &c. tell them that I am well, happy, and ashamed. On your side, the zeal and diligence of your pen has surprised and delighted me, and your letters, at this interesting moment, are exactly such as I wished them to be — authentic anecdotes, and rational speculations, worthy of a man who acts a part in the great theatre, and who fills a seat, not only in the general Pandæmonium, but in the private council of the Princes of the infernal regions. With regard to the detail of parliamentary operations, I must repeat my request to you, or rather to my Lady, who will now be on the spot, that she will write, not with her pen, but with her scissars, and that after every debate which deserves to pass the sea and the mountains, she will dissect the faithful narrative

of Woodfall, and send it off by the next post, as an agreeable supplement to the meagre accounts of our weekly papers. The wonderful revolutions of last month have sounded to my ear more like the shifting scenes of a comedy, or comic-opera, than like the sober events of real and modern history; and the irregularity of our winter - posts, which sometimes retarded, and sometimes hastened, the arrival of the dispatches, has increased the confusion of our ideas. Surely the Lord has blinded the eyes of Pharoah and of his servants; the obstinacy of last spring was nothing compared to the headstrong and headlong madness of this winter. I expect with much impatience the first days of your meeting; the purity and integrity of the coalition will suffer a fiery trial; but if they are true to themselves and to each other, a majority of the House of Commons must prevail; the rebellion of the young gentlemen will be crushed, and the masters will resume the government of the school. After the address and answer, I have no conception that Parliament can be dissolved during the session; but if the present Ministry can out-live the storm, I think the death-warrant will infallibly be signed in the summer. *Here* I blush for my country, without confessing her shame. Fox acted like a man of honor, yet surely his union with Pitt affords the only hope of salvation. How miserably are we wasting the season of peace!

I have written three pages before I come to my own business and feelings. In the first place, I most sincerely rejoice that I left the ship, and swam ashore on a plank: the daily and hourly agitation in which
I must

I must have lived would have made me truly miserable; and if I had obtained a place during pleasure, * * * *, for instance? On the first news of the dissolution, I considered my seat as so totally and irrecoverably gone, that I have been less afflicted with * * * *'s obstinacy. * * * *

On this occasion remember you are acting for a *poor* friend; dismiss a little of the spirit of faction and patriotism, and stoop to a prudential line of conduct, which in your own case you might possibly disdain. * * * *

Perhaps you will abuse my prudence and patriotism, when I inform you, that I have already vested a part (thirty thousand livres, about one thousand three hundred pounds) in the new loan of the King of France. I get eight *per cent.* on the joint lives of Deyverdun and myself, besides thirty tickets in a very advantageous lottery, of which the highest prize is an annuity of forty thousand livres (one thousand seven hundred pounds) a year. At this moment, the beginning of a peace, and probably a long peace, I think (and the world seems to think) the French funds at least as solid as our own, I have empowered my agent, M. de Lessart, a capital banker at Paris, to draw upon Gosling for the money two months hence; and to avoid all accidents that may result from untoward delays, and mercantile churlishness, I expect that you will support my credit in Fleet-street with your own more respectable name. * * * *

What say you now? Am I not a wise man? My

letter is enormous, and the post on the wing. In a few days I will write to my Lady herself, and enter something more into the details of domestic life. Suffice it to say, that the scene becomes each day more pleasant and comfortable, and that I complain only of the dissipation of Lausanne. In the course of March or April we shall take possession of Deyverdun's house. My books, which, by some strange neglect, did not leave Paris till the third of this month, will arrive in a few weeks; and I shall soon resume the continuation of my History, which I shall prosecute with the more vigor, as the completion affords me a distant prospect of a visit to England. Adieu. Ever yours.

N^o. CLXXV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

BARON!

LAUSANNE, February 2d, 1784.

AFTER my last enormous dispatch, nothing can remain, except some small gleanings, or occasional hints; and thus in order: I am not conscious that any of your valuable MSS. have miscarried, or that I have omitted to answer any essential particulars. They stand in my bureau carefully arranged, and docketed under the following dates; September twenty-three, October twenty-three, November eighteen, December two, December fifteen, December nineteen, December twenty-three, December twenty-nine, January sixteen, which last I have received this day, February 2d. For greater per-

spicuity, it will not be amiss (on either side) to number our future epistles, by a conspicuous Roman character inscribed in the front, to which we may at any time refer. But instead of writing by Ostend, the shorter and surer way, especially on all occasions that deserve celerity, will be to inclose them to my banker, M. de Lessart at Paris, who will forward them to me. Through Germany the passage by sea is more uncertain, the roads worse, and the distance greater: we often complain of delay and irregularity at this interesting moment. By your last I find that you have boldly and generously opened a treaty with the enemy, which I proposed with fear and hesitation. I impatiently expect the result; and again repeat, that *whatever* you can obtain for * * * * *, I shall consider it as so much saved out of the fire, &c. &c. Do you remember Dunning's motion (in the year 1780) to address the Crown against a dissolution of Parliament; a simple address we rejected, as an infringement on the prerogative? yet how far short of these strong democratical measures, for which you have probably voted, as I should probably have done: such is the contagion of party. Fox drives most furiously, yet I should not be surprised if Pitt's moderation and character should insensibly win the nation, and even the House, to espouse his cause.

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Unless when I look back on England with a selfish or a tender regard, my hours roll away very pleasantly, and I can again repeat with truth, that I have not regretted one single moment the step which I have taken. We are now at the height of the winter dissi-

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pation, and I am peculiarly happy when I can steal away from great assemblies, and suppers of twenty or thirty people, to a more private party of some of those persons whom I begin to call my friends. Till we are fettled in our house little can be expected on our side; yet I have already given two or three handsome dinners; and though every thing is grown dearer, I am not alarmed at the general view of my expense. Deyverdun salutes you; and we are agreed that few married couples are better entitled to the flitch of bacon than we shall be at the end of the year. When I had written about half this epistle my books arrived: at our first meeting all was rapture and confusion, and two or three posts, from the second to this day, the fourteenth, have been suffered to depart unnoticed. Your letter of the twenty-seventh of January, which was not received till yesterday, has again awakened me, and I thought the surest way would be to send off this single sheet without any farther delay.

I sincerely rejoice in the stability of Parliament[”]; and the first faint dawn of reconciliation, which must however be effected by the equal balance of parties, rather than by the wisdom of the country gentlemen[”].

My Lady!—But it would be highly incongruous to begin my letter at the bottom of the page. Adieu, therefore, till next post.

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N° CLXXVI.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

LAUSANNE, May 11th, 1784.

ALAS! alas! alas! We may now exchange our mutual condolence. Last Christmas, on the change of administration, I was struck with the thunderbolt of the unexpected event, and in the approaching dissolution I foresaw the loss of * * * * *
* * *. The long continuance and various changes of the tempest rendered me by degrees callous and insensible; when the art of the mariners was exhausted I felt that we were sinking, I expected the ship to founder, and when the fatal moment arrived, I was even pleased to be delivered from hope and fear, to the calmness of despair. I now turn my eyes, not on the past, but on the present and the future; what is lost I try to consider as if it never had existed; and every day I congratulate my own good fortune, let me say my prudence and resolution, in migrating from your noisy stage to a scene of repose and content. But even in this separate state, I was still anxious for my friend upon English earth, and at first was much delighted with your hint, that you were setting off for Coventry, without any prospect of an opposition. Every post, Wednesdays and Saturdays, I eagerly looked for the intelligence of your victory; and in spite of my misbehaviour, which I do not deny, I must abuse my Lady, rather than you, for leaving me in so painful a situation. Each day raised and increased my apprehension; the *Courier de l'Europe* first announced

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the contest, the English papers proclaimed your defeat, and your last letter, which I received four days ago, showed me that you exerted first the spirit, and at last the temper of a hero. I am not much surprised that you should have been swept away in the general unpopularity, since even in this quiet place your friends are considered as a factious crew, acting in direct opposition both to the King and people. For yourself I am at a loss what to say. If this repulse should teach you to renounce all connexion with Kings and Ministers, and Patriots and Parties, and Parliaments; for all of which you are by many degrees too honest; I should exclaim, with Teague of respectable memory, "By my shoul, dear joy, you " have *gained* a loss." Private life, whether contemplative or active, has surely more solid and independent charms; you have *some* domestic comforts; Sheffield-Place is still susceptible of useful and ornamental improvements, (alas! how much better might even the last * * * * have been laid out!) and if these cares are not sufficient to occupy your leisure, I can trust your restless and enterprising spirit to find new metholds to preserve you from the insipidity of repose. But I much fear your discontent and regret at being excluded from that Pandæmonium which we have so often cursed, as long as you were obliged to attend it. The leaders of the party will flatter you with the opinion of their friendship and your own importance; the warmth of your temper makes you credulous and unsuspicious; and, like the rest of our species, male and female, you are not absolutely deaf to the voice of praise. Some other place will be sug-

gested, easy, honorable, certain, where nothing is wanted but a man of character and spirit to head a superior interest; the opposition, if any, is contemptible; and the expense cannot be large. You will go down, find almost every circumstance falsely stated, repent that you had engaged yourself, but you cannot desert those friends who are firmly attached to your cause; besides, the money you have already spent would have been thrown away; another thousand will complete the business: deeper and deeper will you plunge, and the last evil will be worse than the first. You see I am a free spoken counsellor; may I not be a true prophet! Did I consult my own wishes, I should observe to you, that as you are no longer a slave, you might soon be transported, as you seem to desire, to one of the Alpine hills. The purity and calmness of the air is the best calculated to allay the heat of a political fever; the education of the two Princesses might be successfully conducted under your eye and that of my Lady; and if you had resolution to determine on a residence, not a visit, at Lausanne, your worldly affairs might repose themselves after their late fatigues. But you know that I am a friend to toleration, and am always disposed to make the largest allowance for the different natures of animals; a lion and a lamb, an eagle and a worm. I am afraid we are too quiet for you; here it would not be easy for you to create any business; you have for some time neglected books, and I doubt whether you would not think our suppers and assemblies somewhat trifling and insipid. You are far more difficult than I am; you are in search of knowledge, and you are not

content with your company, unless you can derive from them information or extraordinary amusement. For my part, I like to draw information from books, and I am satisfied with polite attention and easy manners. Finally, I am happy to tell, and you will be happy to hear, that this place has in every respect exceeded my best and most sanguine hopes. How often have you said, as often as I expressed any ill-humor against the hurry, the expense, and the precarious condition of my London-life, "Ay, that is a nonsensical scheme of retiring to Lausanne that you have got into your head, a pretty fancy; you remember how much you liked it in your youth, but you have now seen more of the world, and if you were to try it again, you would find yourself woefully disappointed?" I had it in my head, in my heart, I have tried it, I have not been disappointed, and my knowledge of the world has served only to convince me, that a capital and a crowd may contain much less real society, than the small circle of this gentle retirement. The winter has been longer, but, as far as I can learn, less rigorous than in the rest of Europe. The spring is now bursting upon us, and in our own garden it is displayed in all its glory. I already occupy a temporary apartment, and we live in the lower part of the house; before you receive this we shall be in full possession. We have much to enjoy and something to do, which I take to be the happiest condition of human life. Now for business, the kind of subject which I always undertake with the most reluctance, and leave with the most pleasure. * * *

* * * * *
Adieu.

And now, my Lady,

LET me approach your gentle, not grimalkin, presence, with deep remorse. You have indirectly been informed of my state of mind and body; (the whole winter I have not had the slightest return of the gout, or any other complaint whatsoever;) you have been apprized, and are now apprized, of my motions, or rather of my perfect and agreeable repose; yet I must confess (and I *feel*) that something of a direct and personal exchange of sentiment has been neglected on my side, though I still *persuade* myself that when I am settled in my new house I shall have more subject, as well as leisure, to write. Such tricks of laziness your active spirit is a stranger to, though Mrs. *** complains that she has never had an answer to her last letters. Poor Lady Pembroke! *you* will feel for her; after a cruel alternative of hope and fear, her only daughter, Lady Charlotte, died at *Aix en Provence*; they have persuaded her to come to this place, where she is intimately connected with the Cerjat family. She has taken an agreeable house, about three miles from the town, and lives retired. I have seen her; her behaviour is calm, but her affliction——. I accept with gratitude your friendly proposal of Wedgewood's ware, and should be glad to have it bought and packed, and sent without delay through Germany; and I shall only say, that I wish to have a very complete service for two courses and a desert, and that our suppers are numerous, frequently fifteen or twenty persons: Adieu. I do not mean this as your letter. You are very good to poor Kitty. With you I do not condole about Coventry.

N° CLXXVII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON*, Bath.

DEAR MADAM,

LAUSANNE, May 28th, 1784.

I BEGIN without preface or apology, as if I had received your letter by the last post. In my own defence I know not what to say; but if I were disposed to recriminate, I might observe that you yourself are not perfectly free from the sin of laziness and procrastination. I have often wondered why we are not fonder of letter-writing. We all delight to talk of ourselves, and it is only in letters, in writing to a friend, that we can enjoy that conversation, not only without reproach or interruption, but with the highest propriety and mutual satisfaction; sure that the person whom we address feels an equal, or at least a strong and lively interest in the consideration of the pleasing subject. On the subject therefore of *self* I will entertain a friend, to whom none of my thoughts or actions, none of my pains or pleasures, can ever be indifferent. When I first cherished the design of retiring to Lausanne, I was much more apprehensive of wounding your tender attachment, than of offending Lord Sheffield's manly and vehement friendship. In the abolition of the Board of Trade the motives for my retreat became more urgent and forcible; I wished to break loose, yet I delayed above a year before I could take my final resolution; and the letter in which I disclosed it to you cost me one of the most painful struggles of my life. As soon as I had conquered that difficulty, all meaner obstacles fell before me, and in a few weeks I found myself at Lausanne,

astonished at my firmness and my success. Perhaps you still blame or still lament the step which I have taken. If on your own account, I can only sympathize with your feelings, the recollection of which often costs me a sigh: if on mine, let me fairly state what I have escaped in England, and what I have found at Lausanne. Recollect the tempests of this winter, how many anxious days I should have passed, how many noisy, turbulent, hot, unwholesome nights, while my political existence, and that of my friends, was at stake; yet these feeble efforts would have been unavailing; I should have lost my seat in parliament, and after the extraordinary expense of another year, I must still have pursued the road of Switzerland, unless I had been tempted by some selfish patron, or by Lord S.'s aspiring spirit, to incur a most inconvenient expense for a new seat; and once more, at the beginning of an opposition, to engage in new scenes of business. As to the immediate prospect of any thing like a quiet and profitable retreat, I should not know where to look; my friends are no longer in power. With **** and his party I have no connexion; and were he disposed to favor a man of letters, it is difficult to say what he could give, or what I would accept; the reign of pensions and sinecures is at an end, and a commission in the Excise or Customs, the summit of my hopes, would give me income at the expense of leisure and liberty. When I revolve these circumstances in my mind, my only regret, I repeat it again and again, is, that I did not embrace this salutary measure three, five, ten years ago. Thus much I thought it necessary to say, and shall

now dismiss this unpleasing part of the subject. For my situation here, health is the first consideration; and on that head your tenderness had conceived some degree of anxiety. I know not whether it has reached you that I had a fit of the gout the day after my arrival. The deed is true, but the cause was accidental; carelessly stepping down a flight of stairs, I sprained my ankle; and my ungenerous enemy instantly took advantage of my weakness. But since my breaking that double chain, I have enjoyed a winter of the most perfect health that I have perhaps ever known, without any mixture of the little flying incommodities which in my best days have sometimes disturbed the tranquillity of my English life. You are not ignorant of Dr. Tissot's reputation, and his merit is even above his reputation. He assures me, that in his opinion, the moisture of England and Holland is most pernicious; the dry pure air of Switzerland most favorable to a gouty constitution: that experience justifies the theory; and that there are fewer martyrs of that disorder in this, than in any other country in Europe. This winter has every where been most uncommonly severe: and you seem in England to have had your full share of the general hardship: but in this corner, surrounded by the Alps, it has rather been long than rigorous; and its duration stole away our spring, and left us no interval between furs and silks. We now enjoy the genial influence of the climate and the season; and no station was ever more calculated to enjoy them than Deyverdun's house and garden, which are now become my own. You will not expect that the pen should

describe, what the pencil would imperfectly delineate. A few circumstances may, however, be mentioned. My library is about the same size with that in Bentinck street, with this difference, however, that instead of looking on a paved court, twelve feet square, I command a boundless prospect of vale, mountain, and water, from my three windows. My apartment is completed by a spacious light closet, or store-room, with a bed-chamber and dressing-room. Deyverdun's habitation is pleasant and convenient, though less extensive: for our common use we have a very handsome winter-apartment of four rooms; and on the ground-floor, two cool saloons for the summer, with a sufficiency, or rather superfluity, of offices, &c. A terrace, one hundred yards long, extends beyond the front of the house, and leads to a close impenetrable shrubbery; and from thence the circuit of a long and various walk carries me round a meadow and vineyard. The intervals afford abundant supply of fruit, and every sort of vegetables; and if you add, that this villa (which has been much ornamented by my friend) touches the best and most sociable part of the town, you will agree with me, that few persons, either princes or philosophers, enjoy a more desirable residence. Deyverdun, who is proud of his own works, often walks me round, pointing out, with acknowledgment and enthusiasm, the beauties that change with every step and with every variation of light. I share, or at least I sympathize with his pleasure. He appears contented with my progress, and has already told several people, that he does not despair of making me a gardener. Be that as it may, you

will be glad to hear that I am, by my own choice, infinitely more in motion, and in the open air, than I ever have been formerly; yet my perfect liberty and leisure leave me many studious hours; and as the circle of our acquaintance retire into the country, I shall be much less engaged in company and diversion. I have seriously resumed the prosecution of my History; each day and each month adds something to the completion of the great work. The progress is slow, the labor continual, and the end remote and uncertain; yet every day brings its amusement, as well as labor; and though I dare not fix a term, even in my own fancy, I advance, with the pleasing reflection, that the business of publication (should I be detained here so long) must enforce my return to England, and restore me to the best of mothers and friends. In the mean while, with health and competence, a full independence of mind and action, a delightful habitation, a true friend, and many pleasant acquaintance; you will allow, that I am rather an object of envy than of pity; and if you were more conversant with the use of the French language, I would seriously propose to you to repose yourself with us in this fine country. My indirect intelligence (on which I sometimes depend with more implicit faith than on the kind dissimulation of your friendship) gives me reason to hope that the last winter has been more favorable to your health than the preceding one. Assure me of it yourself honestly and truly, and you will afford me one of the most lively pleasures.

N^o CLXXVIII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

LAUSANNE, June 19th, 1784.

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In this glorious season I frequently give tea and supper to a dozen men and women with ease and reputation, and heartily wish you and my Lady were among them. In this corner of Europe we enjoy, or shall speedily enjoy, (besides threescore English, with Lady Pembroke, and forty French, with the Dukes de Sivrac at their head,) M. and Madame Necker, the Abbé Raynal, the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick, Prince Henry of Prussia, perhaps the Duke of Cumberland; yet I am still more content with the humble natives, than with *most* of these illustrious names. Adieu. The post is on the wing, and you owe me a long epistle. I am, as usual, in the firm intention of writing next week to my Lady.

N^o CLXXIX.

The Same to the Same.

LAUSANNE, October 18th, 1784.

SINCE my retreat to Lausanne our correspondence has never received so long an interruption; and as I have been equally taciturn with the rest of the English world, it may now be a problem among that sceptical nation, whether the Historian of the Decline and Fall be a living substance or an empty name. So tremendous is the sleepy power of laziness and habit,

that the silence of each post operated still more strongly to benumb the hand, and to freeze the *epistolary* ink. How or when I should have naturally awakened, I cannot tell; but the pressure of my affairs, and the arrival of your last letter, compel me to remember that you are intrusted with the final amputation of the best limb of my property. The subject is in itself so painful, that I have postponed it, like a child's phycic, from day to day; and losing whole mornings, as I walked about my library, in useless regret and impotent resolution, you will be amazed to hear that (after peeping to see if you are all well, and returned from Ireland) I have not yet had the courage to peruse your letter, for fear of meeting with some gloomy intelligence; and I will now finish what I have to say of pecuniary matters, before I know whether its contents will fortify or overthrow my unbiassed sentiments. * * * *

To what purpose (will you say) are these tardy and useless repinings? To arraign your manager? No, I am satisfied with the skill and firmness of the pilot, and complain only of the untoward violence of the tempest. To repent of your retreat into Switzerland? No, surely, every subsequent event has tended to make it as necessary as it has proved agreeable. Why then these lamentations? Hear and attend — It is to interest (if possible more strongly) your zeal and friendship, to justify a sort of avarice, a love of money, very foreign to my character, but with which I cling to these last fragments of my fortune. * * *

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As far as I can judge from the experience of a year, though I find Lausanne much more expensive than I imagined, yet my style of living (and a very handsome style it is) will be brought *nearly* within my ordinary revenues. I wish our poor country could say as much! But it was always my favorite and rational wish, that at the winding up of my affairs I might possess a sum, from one to two thousand pounds, neither buried in land, or locked up in the funds, but free, light, and ready to obey any call of interest, or pleasure, or virtue; to defray any extraordinary expense, support any delay, or remove any obstacle. For the attainment of this object, I trust in your assistance. * * * *

Thus much for this money-transaction; to you I need add no other stimulative, than to say that my ease and comfort very much depend on the success of this plan.

As I thought every man of sense and fortune in Ireland must be satisfied, I did not conceive the cloud so dark as you represent it. I will seriously peruse the 8vo. and in due time the 4to. edition¹; it would become a classic book, if you could find leisure (will you ever find it?) to introduce order and ornament. You must negotiate *directly* with Deyverdun; but the state will not hear of parting with their only Reynolds². I embrace my Lady; let her be angry, provided she be well. Adieu. Yours.

P. S. The care of Ireland may have amused you in the summer; but how do you mean to employ the winter? Do you not cast a longing, lingering look at St. Stephen's chapel? With your fiery spirit, and firm judgment, I almost wish you there; not for your

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benefit, but for the public. If you resolve to recover your seat, do not listen to any fallacious and infinite projects of interest, contest, return, petition, &c. but limit your expense.

N° CLXXX.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lady SHEFFIELD.

LAUSANNE, October 22d, 1784

A FEW weeks ago, as I was walking on our terrace with M. Tissot, the celebrated physician; M. Mercier, the author of the *Tableau de Paris*; the Abbé Raynal; Monsieur, Madame, and Mademoiselle Necker; the Abbé de Bourbon, a natural son of Lewis the Fifteenth, the Hereditary Prince of Brunswick, Prince Henry of Prussia, and a dozen Counts, Barons, and extraordinary persons, among whom was a natural son of the Empress of Russia—Are you satisfied with this list? which I could enlarge and embellish, without departing from truth; and was not the Baron of Sheffield (profound as he is on the subject of the American trade) doubly mistaken with regard to Gibbon and Lausanne? Whenever I used to hint my design of retiring, that illustrious Baron, after a proper effusion of d——d fools, condescended to observe, that such an obscure nook in Switzerland might please me in the ignorance of youth, but that after tasting for so many years the various society of Paris and London, I should soon be tired with the dull and uniform round of a provincial town. In the winter, Lausanne is indeed reduced to its native

powers; but during the summer, it is possibly, after Spa, one of the most favorite places of general resort. The tour of Switzerland, the Alps, and the Glaciers, is become a fashion. Tissot attracts the invalids, especially from France; and a colony of English have taken up the habit of spending their winters as Nice, and their summers in the Pays de Vaud. Such are the splendor and variety of our summer visitors; and *you* will agree with me more readily than the Baron, when I say that this variety, instead of being a merit, is, in my opinion, one of the very few objections to the residence of Lausanne. After the dissipation of the winter I expected to have enjoyed, with more freedom and solitude, myself, my friend, my books, and this delicious paradise; but my position and character make me here a sort of a public character, and oblige me to see and be seen. However, it is my firm resolution for next summer to assume the independence of a philosopher, and to be visible only to the persons whom I like. On that principle I should not, most assuredly, have avoided the Neckers and Prince Henry. The former have purchased the barony of Copet near Geneva; and as the buildings were very much out of repair, they passed this summer at a country-house at the gates of Lausanne. They afford a new example, that persons who have tasted of greatness can seldom return with pleasure to a private station. In the moments when we were alone he conversed with me freely, and I believe truly, on the subject of his administration and fall; and has opened several passages of modern history, which would make a very good figure in *the American book*". If they spent the sum-

mers at the castle of Copet, about nine leagues from hence, a fortnight or three weeks visit would be a pleasant and healthful excursion; but, alas! I fear there is little appearance of its being executed. *Her* health is impaired by the agitation of her mind: instead of returning to Paris, she is ordered to pass the winter in the southern provinces of France, and our last parting was solemn; as I very much doubt whether I shall ever see her again. They have now a very troublesome charge, which you will experience in a few years, the disposal of a Baroness; Mademoiselle "Necker, one of the greatest heiresses in Europe, is now about eighteen, wild, vain, but good-natured, and with a much larger provision of wit than of beauty: what increases their difficulties is their religious obstinacy of marrying her only to a protestant. It would be an excellent opportunity for a young Englishman of a great name and a fair reputation. Prince Henry must be a man of sense; for he took more notice, and expressed more esteem for me, than any body else. He is certainly (without touching his military character) a very lively and entertaining companion. He talked with freedom, and generally with contempt, of most of the princes of Europe; with respect of the Empress of Russia, but never mentioned the name of his brother, except once, when he hinted that it was *he himself* that won the battle of Rossbach. His nephew, and our nephew, the hereditary Prince of Brunswick is here for his education. Of the English, who live very much as a national colony, you will like to hear of Mrs. Fraser and *one* more. Donna Catherina "pleases every body, by the perfect simplicity

of her state of nature. You know she has had the resolution to return from England (where she told me she saw you) to Laufanne, for the sake of Miss Bristow, who is in bad health, and in a few days they set off for Nice. *The other* is the Eliza; she passed through Laufanne, in her road from Italy to England; poorly in health, but still adorable, (nay, do not frown!) and I enjoyed some delightful hours by her bed-side. She wrote me a line from Paris, but has not executed her promise of visiting Laufanne in the month of October. My pen has run much faster, and much farther, than I intended on the subject of others; yet, in describing them, I have thrown some light over myself and my situation. A year, a very short one, has now elapsed since my arrival at Laufanne; and after a cool review of my sentiments, I can sincerely declare, that I have never, during a single moment, repented of having executed my *absurd* project of retiring to Laufanne. It is needless to dwell on the fatigue, the hurry, the vexation which I must have felt in the narrow and dirty circle of English politics. My present life wants no foil, and shines by its own native light. The chosen part of my library is now arrived, and arranged in a room full as good as that in Bentinck-street, with this difference indeed, that instead of looking on a stone-court, twelve feet square, I command, from three windows of plate-glass, an unbounded prospect of many a league of vineyard, of fields, of wood, of lake, and of mountains; a scene which Lord Sheffield will tell you is superior to all you can imagine. The climate, though severe in winter, has perfectly agreed with my constitution, dan

the year is accomplished without any return of the gout. An excellent house, a good table, a pleasant garden, are no contemptible ingredients in human happiness. The general style of society hits my fancy; I have cultivated a large and agreeable circle of acquaintance, and I am much deceived if I have not laid the foundations of two or three more intimate and valuable connexions; but their names would be indifferent, and it would require pages, or rather volumes, to describe their persons and characters. With regard to my standing dish, my domestic friend, I could not be much disappointed, after an intimacy of eight-and-twenty years. His heart and his head are excellent; he has the warmest attachment for me, he is satisfied that I have the same for him: some slight imperfections must be mutually supported; two bachelors, who have lived so long alone and independent, have their peculiar fancies and humors, and when the mask of form and ceremony is laid aside, every moment in a family-life has not the sweetness of the honey-moon, even between the husbands and wives who have the truest and most tender regard for each other. Should you be very much surpris'd to hear of my being married? Amazing as it may seem, I do assure you that the event is less improbable than it would have appeared to myself a twelvemonth ago. Deyverdun and I have often agreed, in jest and in earnest, that a house like ours would be regulated, and graced, and enlivened, by an agreeable female companion; but each of us seems desirous that his friend should sacrifice himself for the public good. Since my residence here I have lived much in women's

company; and, to your credit be it spoken, I like you the better the more I see of you. Not that I am in love with any particular person. I have discovered about half-a-dozen *wives* who would please me in different ways, and by various merits: one as a mistress (a widow, vastly like *the Eliza*; if she returns I am to bring them together); a second, a lively entertaining acquaintance; a third, a sincere good-natured friend; a fourth, who would represent with grace and dignity at the head of my table and family; a fifth, an excellent economist and housekeeper; and a sixth, a very useful nurse. Could I find all these qualities united in a single person, I should dare to make my addresses, and should deserve to be refused. You hint in some of your letters, or rather postscripts, that you consider me as having renounced England, and having fixed myself for the rest of my life in Switzerland, and that you suspect the sincerity of my vague or insidious schemes of purchase or return. To remove, as far as I can, your doubts and suspicions, I will tell you, on that interesting subject, fairly and simply as much as I know of my own intentions. There is little appearance that I shall be suddenly recalled by the offer of a place or pension. I have no claim to the friendship of your young minister, and should he propose a Commissioner of the Customs, or Secretary at Paris, the supposed objects of my low ambition, Adam in Paradise would refuse them with contempt. *Here* therefore I shall certainly live till I have finished the remainder of my History; an arduous work, which does not proceed so fast as I expected, amidst the avocations of society, and miscel-

laneous study. As soon as it is completed, most probably in three or *four* years, I shall infallibly return to England, about the month of May or June; and the necessary labor of printing with care two or three quarto volumes, will detain me till their publication, in the ensuing spring. Lord Sheffield and yourself will be the loadstone that most forcibly attracts me; and as I shall be a vagabond on the face of the earth, I shall be the better qualified to domesticate myself with you, both in town and country. Here then, at no very extravagant distance, we have the certainty (if we live) of spending a year together, the peace and freedom of a friendly intercourse; and a year is no very contemptible portion of this mortal existence. Beyond that period all is dark, but not gloomy. Whether, after the final completion of my History, I shall return to Lausanne, or settle in England, must depend on a thousand events which lie beyond the reach of human foresight, the state of public and private affairs, my own health, the health and life of Deyverdun, the various changes which may have rendered Lausanne more dear, or less agreeable, to me than at present. But without losing ourselves in this distant futurity, which perhaps we may never see, and without giving any positive answer to Maria's parting question, whether I shall be buried in England or Switzerland, let me seriously and earnestly ask you, whether you do not mean to visit me next summer? The defeat at Coventry would, I should think, facilitate the project; since the Baron is no longer detained the whole winter from his domestic affairs, nor is there any attendance on the House that keeps him till Mid-

summer in dust and dispute. I can send you a pleasant route, through Normandy, Paris, and Lyons, a visit to the Glaciers, and your return down the Rhine, which would be commodiously executed in three or four months, at no very extravagant expense, and would be productive of health and spirits to you, of entertainment to you both, and of instruction to *the* Maria. Without the smallest inconvenience to myself, I am able to lodge yourselves and family, by arranging you in the winter-apartment, which in the summer season is not of any use to us. I think you will be satisfied with your habitation, and already see you in your dressing-room; a small pleasant room, with a delightful prospect to the west and south. If poor aunt Kitty (you oblige me beyond expression by your tender care of that excellent woman) if she were only ten years younger, I would desire you to take her with you, but I much fear we shall never meet again. You will not complain of the brevity of this epistle; I expect, in return, a full and fair account of yourself, your thoughts and actions, soul and body, present and future, in the safe, though unreserved, confidence of friendship. The Baron in two words hinted but an indifferent account of your health; you are a fine machine; but as he was absent in Ireland, I hope I understand the cause and the remedy. Next to yourself, I want to hear of the two Baronesses. You must give me a faithful picture (and though a mother you can give it) of their present external and internal forms; for a year has now elapsed, and in *their* lives a year is an age. Adieu. Ever yours.

N^o CLXXXI.EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

LAUSANNE, March 13th, 1785.

My long silence (and it has been long) must not, on this occasion, be imputed to laziness, though that little devil may likewise have been busy. But you cannot forget how many weeks I remained in suspense, expecting every post the final sentence, and not knowing what to say in that passive uncertainty. It is now something more than a fortnight since your last letter, and that of Gosling informed me of the event. I have intended every day to write, and every day I have started back with reluctance and disgust, from the consideration of the wretched subject. Lenborough irrecoverably gone, for three-fourths of its real, at least of its ancient, value; my seat in parliament sunk in the abyss of your cursed politics, and a balance neatly ciphered and summed by Gosling, which shows me a very shallow purse, in which others have a clearer right to dip than myself.

March 21st.

Another week is now elapsed, and though nothing is changed in this too faithful state of my affairs, I feel myself able to encounter them with more spirit and resolution; to look on the future, rather than the past, on the fair, rather than on the foul side of the prospect. I shall speak in the confidence of friendship, and while you listen to the more doleful tale of my wants and wishes, you will have the satisfaction of hearing some circumstances in my present situation of a less unplea-

ing nature. 1. In the first place, I most heartily rejoice in the sale, however unfavorable, of the Bucksestate. Considering the dullness of the times, and the high interest of money, it is not a little to obtain even a tolerable price, and I am sensible how much your patience and industry have been exercised to extort the payment. 2. Your resistance to my Swiss expedition was more friendly than wise. Had I yielded, after eighteen months of suspense and anxiety, I should now, a still poorer man, be driven to embrace the same resource, which has succeeded according to, or even beyond, my most sanguine expectations. I do not pretend to have discovered the terrestrial paradise, which has not been known in this world since the fall of Adam; but I can truly declare, (now the charms of novelty are long since faded,) that I have found the plan of life the best adapted to my temper and my situation. I am now writing to you in a room as good as that in Bentinck-street, which commands the country, the lake, and the mountains, and the opening prospect of the spring. The aforefaid room is furnished without magnificence, but with every conveniency for warmth, ease, and study, and the walls are already covered with more than two thousand volumes, the choice of a chosen library. I have health, friends, an amusing society, and perfect freedom. A Commissioner of the Excise! the idea makes me sick. If you ask me what I have saved by my retreat to Lausanne? I will fairly tell you (in the two great articles of a carriage and a house in town, both which were indispensable, and are now annihilated, with the difference of clubs, public places, servants wages, &c.) about

four hundred pounds, or guineas, a year; no inconsiderable sum, when it must be annually found as addition to an expence which is somewhat larger than my present revenue. 3. *What is then, you will ask, my present establishment?* This is not by any means a cheap country; and, except in the article of wine, I could give a dinner, or make a coat, perhaps for the same price in London as at Lausanne. My chief advantage arises from the things which I do not want; and in some respects my style of living is enlarged by the increase of my relative importance, an obscure bachelor in England, the master of a considerable house at Lausanne. Here I am expected to return entertainments, to receive ladies, &c. and to perform many duties of society, which though agreeable enough in themselves, contribute to inflame the house-keeper's bills. From the disbursements of the first year I cannot form any just estimate; the extraordinary expences of the journey, carriage of heavy goods from England, the acquisition of many books, which it was not expedient to transport, the purchase of furniture, wine, fitting up my library, and the irregularity of a new menage, have consumed a pretty large sum. But in a quiet, prudent, regular course of life, I think I can support myself with comfort and honor for six or seven hundred pounds a year, instead of a thousand or eleven hundred in England.

Besides these uncertainties, (uncertain at least as to the time,) I have a sure and honorable supply from my own pen. I continue my History with pleasure and assiduity; the way is long and laborious, yet I see the end, and I can almost promise to land in England next

September twelvemonth, with a manuscript of the current value of about four thousand pounds, which will afford either a small income or a large capital. 5. It is in the meanwhile that my situation is somewhat difficult. * * * *

Such are the services and revenues of the year; proceed we now, in style of the budget, to the ways and means of extraordinary supplies. * * * *

I will not affront your friendship, by observing that you will incur little or no risk on this occasion. Read, consider, act, and write.

It is the privilege of friendship to make our friend a patient hearer, and active associate in our own affairs; and I have now written five pages on my private affairs, without saying a word either of the public, or of yourself. Of the public I have little to say; I never was a very warm patriot, and I grow every day a citizen of the world. The scramble for power or profit at Westminster or St. James's, and the names of Pitt and Fox, become less interesting to me than those of Cæsar and Pompey. You are not a friend of the young Minister, but he is a great favorite on the continent, as he appears to be still; and you must own that the fairness of his character, his eloquence, his application to business, and even his youth, must prepossess at least the ignorant in his favor. Of the merit or defects of his administration I cannot pretend to speak; but I find, from the complaints of some interested persons, that his restraints on the smuggling of tea have already ruined the East

India Companies of Antwerp and Sweden, and that even the Dutch will scarcely find it worth their while to send any ships to China. Your Irish friends appear to be more quiet, at least the volunteers and national congress seem to subside. How far that tranquillity must be purchased on our side, by any pernicious sacrifices, you will best decide; and from some hint in your last letters, I am inclined to think that you are less affected than might be supposed with national or local prejudice. Your introduction I have attentively read; the matter, though most important in itself, is out of the line of my studies and habits, and the subordinate beauties of style you disclaim. Yet I can say with truth, that I never met with more curious and diligent investigation, more strong sense, more liberal spirit, and more cool and impartial temper in the same number of pages. By this time you have probably read Necker's book on the finances. Perhaps for you there is too much French enthusiasm and paint; but in many respects you must have gained a knowledge of his country; and on the whole, you must have been pleased with the picture of a great and benevolent mind. In your attack on Deyverdun for my picture I cannot promise you much success; he seems resolved to maintain his right of possession, and your only chance would be a personal assault. The next summer (how time slips away!) was fixed for your visit to Lausanne. We are prepared at all points to receive *you*, my Lady, and a princess or two, with their train; and if you have a proper contempt for St. Stephen's chapel, you are perfectly free, and at leisure (can you ever

be at leisure?) for the summer season. As you are now in a great measure disengaged from any affairs, you may find time to inform me of your proceedings and your projects. At present I do not even know whether you pass the winter at Sheffield-Place or in Downing-street. My Lady revenges herself of my long silence; yet I embrace her and the infants. Adieu. You have deranged the Decline and Fall this morning. I have finished my epistle since dinner, and am now going to a pleasant party and good supper.

N° CLXXXII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

LAUSANNE, September 5th, 1785.

EXTRACT from a weekly English Paper, September 5th, 1785. "It is reported, but we hope without foundation, that the celebrated Mr. Gibbon, who had retired to Lausanne in Switzerland to finish his valuable History, lately died in that city."

The hope of the Newspaper-writer is very handsome and obliging to the Historian; yet there are several weighty reasons which would incline me to believe that the intelligence may be true. *Primo*, It must one day be true; and therefore may very probably be so at present. *Secundo*, We may always depend on the impartiality, accuracy, and veracity of an English Newspaper. *Tertio*, which is indeed the strongest argument, We are credibly informed that for a long time past the said celebrated Historian has not written to any of his friends in England; and

as that respectable personage had always the reputation of a most exact and regular correspondent, it may be fairly concluded from his silence, that he either is, or ought to be dead. The only objection that I can foresee, is the assurance that Mr. G — himself read the article as he was eating his breakfast, and laughed very heartily at the mistake of his brother Historian; but as he might be desirous of concealing that unpleasant event, we shall not insist on his apparent health and spirits, which might be affected by that subtle politician. He affirms, however, not only that he is alive, and was so on the fifth of September, but that his head, his heart, his stomach, are in the most perfect state, and that the climate of Lausanne has been congenial both to his mind and body. He confesses indeed, that after the last severe winter, the gout, his old enemy, from whom he hoped to have escaped, pursued him to his retreat among the mountains of Helvetia, and that the siege was long, though more languid than in his precedent attacks; after some exercise of patience he began to creep, and gradually to walk; and though he can neither run, nor fly, nor dance, he supports himself with firmness on his two legs, and would willingly kick the impertinent Gazetteer; impertinent enough, though more easily to be forgiven than the insolent *Courier du Bas Rhin*, who about three years ago amused himself and his readers with a fictitious epistle from Mr. Gibbon to Dr. Robertson.

Perhaps now you think, Baron, that I shall apologize in humble style for my silence and neglect. But, on the contrary, I do assure you that I am truly provoked

voked at your Lordship's not condescending to be in a passion. I might really have been dead, I might have been sick, if I were neither dead nor sick, I deserved a volley of curses and reproaches for my infernal laziness, and you have defrauded me of my just dues. Had I been silent till Christmas, till doomsday, you would never have thought it worth your while to abuse me. Why then (let me ask in your name) did you not write before? That is indeed a very curious question of natural and moral philosophy. Certainly I am not lazy; elaborate quartos have proved, and will abundantly prove my diligence. I *can* write; spare my modesty on that subject. I like to converse with my friends by pen or tongue, and as soon as I can set myself a going, I know no moments that run off more pleasantly. I am so well convinced of that truth, and so much ashamed of forcing people that I love to forget me, that I have now resolved to set apart the first hour of each day for the discharge of my obligations; beginning, *comme de raison*, with yourself, and regularly proceeding to Lord Loughborough and the rest. May Heaven give me strength and grace to accomplish this laudable intention! Amen. Certainly (yet I do not know whether it be so certain) I should write much oftener to you if we were not linked in business, and if my business had not always been of the unpleasant and mortifying kind. Even now I shove the ugly monster to the end of this epistle, and will confine him to a page by himself, that he may not infect the purer air of our correspondence. Of my situation here I have little new to say, except a very

comfortable and singular truth, that my passion for my wife or mistress (Fanny Lausanne) is not pallied by satiety and possession of two years. I have seen her in all seasons, and in all humors, and though she is not without faults, they are infinitely overbalanced by her good qualities. Her face is not handsome, but her person, and every thing about her, has admirable grace and beauty: she is of a very cheerful sociable temper; without much learning, she is endowed with taste and good sense; and though not rich, the simplicity of her education makes her a very good economist; she is forbid by her parents to wear any expensive finery; and though her limbs are not much calculated for walking, she has not yet asked me to keep her a coach. Last spring (not to wear the metaphor to rags) I saw Lausanne in a new light, during my long fit of the gout, and must boldly declare, that either in health or sickness I find it far more comfortable than your huge metropolis. In London my confinement was sad and solitary; the many forgot my existence when they saw me no longer at Brookes's; and the few, who sometimes cast a thought or an eye on their friend, were detained by business or pleasure, the distance of the way, or the hours of the House of Commons, and I was proud and happy if I could prevail on Elmsly to enliven the dulness of the evening. Here the objects are nearer, and much more distinct, and I myself am an object of much larger magnitude. People are not kinder, but they are more idle, and it must be confessed that, of all nations on the globe, the English are the least attentive to the old and infirm; I do not

mean in acts of charity, but in the offices of civil life. During three months I have had round my chair a succession of agreeable men and women, who came with a smile, and vanished at a nod; and as soon as it was agreeable I had a constant party at cards, which was sometimes dismissed to their respective homes, and sometimes detained by Deyverdun to supper, without the least trouble or inconvenience to myself. In a word, my plan has most completely answered; and I solemnly protest, after two years trial, that I have never in a single moment repented of my transmigration. The only disagreeable circumstance is the increase of a race of animals with which this country has been long infested, and who are said to come from an island in the Northern Ocean. I am told, but it seems incredible, that upwards of forty thousand English, masters and servants, are now absent on the continent; and I am sure we have our full proportion, both in town and country, from the month of June to that of October. The occupations of the closet, indifferent health, want of horses, in some measure plead my excuse; yet I do too much to please myself, and probably too little to satisfy my countrymen. What is still more unlucky is, that a part of the colony of this present year are really good company, people one knows, &c; the Astons, Hales, Hampdens, Trevors, Lady Clarges and Miss Carter, Lord Northington, &c. I have seen Trevor several times, who talks of you, and seems to be a more exact correspondent than myself. *His wife* is much improved by her diplomatic life, and shines in every company, as a woman of fashion and elegance.

But those who have repaid me for the rest, were Lord and Lady Spencer. I saw them almost every day, at my house or their own, during their stay of a month; for they were hastening to Italy, that they might return to London next February. He is a valuable man, and where he is familiar, a pleasant companion; she a charming woman, who, with sense and spirit, has the simplicity and playfulness of a child. You are not ignorant of her talents, of which she has left me an agreeable specimen, a drawing of the Historic Muse, sitting in a thoughtful posture to compose. So much of self and Co. let us now talk a little of your house and your two countries. Does my Lady ever join in the abuse which I have merited from you? Is she satisfied with her own behaviour, her unpardonable silence, to one of the prettiest, most obliging, most entertaining, most, &c. epistles that ever was penned since the epistles of * * * * *? Will she not *mew* one word of reply? I want some account of her spirits, health, amusements, of the elegant accomplishments of Maria, and the opening graces of Louisa: of yourself I wish to have some of those details which she is most likely to transmit. Are you patient in your exclusion from the House? Are you satisfied with legislating with your pen? Do you pass the whole winter in town? Have you resumed the pursuits of farming, &c.? What new connexions, public or private, have you formed? A tour to the continent would be the best medicine for the shattered nerves of a soldier and politician. By this expression you will perceive that your letter to Deyverdun is received; it landed last

post, after I had already written the two first pages of this composition. On the whole my friend was pleased and flattered; but instead of surrendering, or capitulating, he seems to be making preparations for an obstinate defence. He already talks of the right of possession", of the duties of a good citizen, of a *writ ne exeat regnum*, and of a vote of the two hundred, that whomsoever shall, directly or indirectly, &c. is an enemy to his country. Between you be the strife, while I sit with my scales in my hand, like Jupiter on Mount Ida. I begin to view with the same indifference the combat of Achilles Pitt, and Hector Fox; for such, as it should now seem, must be the comparison of the two warriors. * * * * *

At this distance I am much less angry with bills, taxes, and propositions, than I am pleased with Pitt for making a friend and a deserving man happy, for releasing Batt from the shackles of the law, and for enhancing the gift of a secure and honorable competency, by the handsome manner in which it was conferred. This I understand to be the case, from the unsuspicious evidence of Lord Northington and Chief Baron Skinner; and if I can find time, (*resolution*;) I will send him a hearty congratulation; if I fail, you may at least communicate my intentions. Of Ireland I know nothing, and while I am writing the Decline of a great Empire, I have not leisure to attend to the affairs of a remote and petty province. I see that your friend Foster has been hooted by the mob, and unanimously chosen Speaker of the House of Commons. How could Pitt expose himself to the disgrace of withdrawing his propositions after a

public attempt? Have Ministers no way of computing before hand the sense or nonsense of an Irish Parliament? I am quite in the dark; your pamphlet, or book, would probably have opened my eyes; but, whatever may have been the reason, I give you *my word of honor*, that I have never seen nor heard of it. Here we are much more engaged with continental politics. In general we hate the Emperor, as the enemy of peace, without daring to make war. The old lion of Prussia acts a much more glorious part, as the champion of public tranquillity, and the independence of the German states.

And now for the bitter and nauseous pill of pecuniary business, upon which I shall be as concise as possible in the two articles of my discourse, land and money.

* * * * *

It is impossible to hate more than I do this odious necessity of owing, borrowing, anticipating, and I look forwards with impatience to the happy period when the supplies will always be raised within the year, with a decent and useful surplus in the treasury. I now trust to the conclusion of my History, and it will hasten and secure the principal comforts of my life. You will believe I am not lazy; yet I fear the term is somewhat more distant than I thought. My long gout lost me three months in the spring; in every great work unforeseen dangers, and difficulties, and delays will arise; and I should be rather sorry than surprised if next autumn was postponed to the ensuing spring. If my Lady (a good creature) should write to Mrs. Porten, she may convey news of my life

and health, without saying any thing of this *possible* delay. Adieu. I embrace, &c.

LAUSANNE, October 1st, 1785.

N^o CLXXXIII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

LAUSANNE, January 17th, 1786.

HEAR, all ye nations! An epistle from Sheffield-Place, received the seventeenth of January, is answered the same day; and to say the truth, this method, which is the best, is at the same time the most easy and pleasant. Yet I do not allow that on the last past silence and delay you have any more reason to swear than myself. Our letters crossed each other, our claims were equal, and if both had been stiffly maintained, our mutual silence must have continued till the day of judgment. The balance was doubtless in my favor, if you recollect the length, the fullness, the variety of pleasant and instructive matter of my last dispatch. Even at present, of myself, my occupations, my designs, I have little or nothing to add; and can only speak drily and briefly to very dry and disagreeable business. * * * * *

But we shall both agree, that the true criminal is my Lady; and though I do suppose that a letter is on the road, which will make some amends, her obstinate, contumacious, dilatory silence, so many months or years since my valuable letter, is worthy a royal tigreſs. * * * * *

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Notwithstanding your gloomy politicians, I do love the funds; and were the next war to reduce them to half, the remainder would be a better and pleasanter property, than a similar value in your dirty acres. We are now in the height of our winter amusements; balls, great suppers, comedies, &c. and, except St. Stephen's, I certainly lead a more gay and dissipated life here, among the Alps, (by the bye, a most extraordinary mild winter,) than in the midst of London. Yet my mornings, and sometimes an afternoon, are diligently employed. My work advances, but much remains, indeed much more than I imagined; but a great book, like a great house, was never yet finished at the given time. When I talk of the spring of eighty-seven, I suppose all my time well bestowed; and what do you think of a fit of the gout, that may disqualify me for two or three months? You may growl, but if you calmly reflect on my pecuniary and sentimental state, you will believe that I most earnestly desire to complete my labor, and *visit* England. Adieu.

N° CLXXXIV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

LAUSANNE, May 10th, 1786.

By the difference, I suppose, of the posts of France and Germany, Sir Stanier's letter, though first written, is still on the road, and your's, which I received yesterday morning, brought me the first account of poor Mrs. Porten's departure. There are few

events that could afflict me more deeply, and I have been ever since in a state of mind more deserving of your pity than of your reproaches. I certainly am not ignorant that we have nothing better to wish for ourselves than the fate of that best humored woman, as you very justly style her, a good understanding and an excellent heart, with health, spirits, and a competency, to live in the midst of her friends till the age of fourscore, and then to shut her eyes without pain or remorse. Death can have deprived her only of some years of weakness, perhaps of misery; and for myself, it is surely less painful to lose her at present, than to find her in my visit to England next year sinking under the weight of age and infirmities, and perhaps forgetful of herself and of the persons once the dearest to her. All this is perfectly true: but all these reflections will not dispel a thousand sad and tender remembrances that rush upon my mind. To her care I am indebted in earliest infancy for the preservation of my life and health. I was a puny child, neglected by my mother, starved by my nurse, and of whose being very little care or expectation was entertained; without her maternal vigilance I should either have been in my grave, or imperfectly lived a crooked rickety monster, a burden to myself and others. To her instructions I owe the first rudiments of knowledge, the first exercise of reason, and a taste for books, which is still the pleasure and glory of my life; and though she taught me neither language nor science, she was certainly the most useful preceptor I ever had. As I grew up,

an intercourse of thirty years endeared her to me, as the faithful friend and the agreeable companion. You have seen with what freedom and confidence we lived together, and have often admired her character and conversation, which could alike please the young and the old. All this is now lost, finally, irrecoverably lost! I will agree with my Lady, that the immortality of the soul is at some times a very comfortable doctrine. A thousand thanks to her for her constant kind attention to that poor woman who is no more. I wish I had as much to applaud, and as little to reproach, in my own behaviour towards Mrs. Porten since I left England; and when I reflect that my letters would have soothed and comforted her decline, I feel more deeply than I can express, the real neglect, and seeming indifference, of my silence. To delay a letter from the Wednesday to the Saturday, and then from the Saturday to the Wednesday, appears a very slight offence; yet in the repetition of such delay, weeks, months, and years will elapse, till the omission may become irretrievable, and the consequence mischievous or fatal. After a long lethargy, I had roused myself last week, and wrote to the three old Ladies; my letter for Mrs. Porten went away last post, Saturday night, and yours did not arrive till Monday morning. Sir Stanier will probably open it, read the true picture of my sentiments for a friend who, when I wrote, was already extinct. There is something sad and awful in the thought, yet, on the whole, I am not sorry that even this tardy epistle preceded my knowledge of her death: but

it did not precede (you will observe) the information of her dangerous and declining state, which I conveyed in my last letter, and her anxious concern that she should never see or *hear* from me again. This idea, and the hard thoughts which you must entertain of me, press so much on my mind, that I must frankly acknowledge a strange inexcusable supineness, on which I desire you would make no comment, and which in some measure may account for my delays in corresponding with you. The unpleasant nature of business, and the apprehension of finding something disagreeable, tempted me to postpone from day to day, not only the answering, but even the opening, your penultimate epistle; and when I received your last, yesterday morning, the seal of the former was still unbroken. Oblige me so far as to make no reflections; my own may be of service to me hereafter. Thus far (expect the last sentence) I have run on with a sort of melancholy pleasure, and find my heart much relieved by unfolding it to a friend. And the subject so strongly holds me, so much disqualifies me for other discourse, either serious or pleasant, that here I would willingly stop, and reserve all miscellaneous matter for a second volunteer epistle. But we both know how frail are promises, how dangerous are delays, and there are some pecuniary objects on which I think it necessary to give you an immediate, though now tardy, explanation.

I do not return you any formal thanks for *

* * * * *

I have really a hundred things to say of myself, of

you and Co. of your works, of mine, of my books in Downing-street, of Laufanne, of politics, &c. &c. After this, some epistolary debts must and SHALL be paid; and to proceed with order, I have fixed this day fortnight (May twenty-fifth) for the date and dispatch of your second epistle. Give me credit once more. Pray does my Lady think herself absolved from all obligation of writing to me? To her at least I am not in arrear. Adieu.

N^o CLXXXV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Sir STANIER PORTEN,*
Kensington - Palace.

MY DEAR SIR, LAUSANNE, May 12th, 1786.

THE melancholy event which you have communicated, in your last obliging letter of the twenty-fourth of April, might, indeed be too naturally feared and expected. If we consult our reason, we can wish nothing better for ourselves than the lot of that dear and valuable friend whom we have now lost". A warm heart, a strong and clear understanding, a most invaluable happiness of temper, which showed her the agreeable or comfortable side of every object, and every situation; an easy competency, the reward of her own attention; private friendship, general esteem, a mature age, and a placid decline. But these rational motives of consolation are insufficient to check a thousand soft and sad remembrances that rush into my mind; the intimacy of a whole life; of mine, at least, from the earliest dawn of my infancy; the maternal and affi-

duous care of my health, and afterwards of my mind; the freedom and frequency of our conversations; the regret which I felt in our last separation, and the hope, however faint and precarious, of seeing her again. Time alone can reconcile us to this irreparable loss, and to his healing power I must recommend your grief, as well as my own. I sincerely applaud her very proper and natural disposal of her effects, and am proud of the pre-eminence which she has allowed me in a list of dear and worthy relations.

I am too full of a single idea to expatiate, as I should otherwise do, on indifferent matters; yet not totally indifferent to my friends, since they relate to my present situation. My health is in general perfectly good, and the only drawbacks some occasional visits of the gout, which abate, however, in strength, and are grown, I think less frequent and lasting. The life which I lead is temperate and tranquil, and the distemper itself is not common in the purity and driness of the climate. After a long trial, I can now approve my own choice of retiring to Switzerland. My delightful habitation, at once in town and country; my library, and the society of agreeable men and women, compose a very eligible plan of life, which is shaded with very few, and very slight exceptions. I prosecute with ease, and regular diligence, the conclusion of my History; and, as far as I can judge, I may hope to deliver it to the press in the course of next year. That important business will recal me to England, and detain me there some months; and

I shall rejoice in the opportunity of revisiting my country and my friends; among them those of Kensington-Palace hold a high and distinguished place.

I truly sympathize, my dear Sir, in your paternal feeling, in the health and progress of your very promising children. May that, and every other blessing, attend both yourself and Lady Porten. My friend, M. Deyverdun, desires to assure you of his respect and good wishes. I am, dear Sir, most affectionately yours.

N° CLXXXVI.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

LAUSANNE, July 22d, 1786.

* * * * *

Since I have another page, and some leisure-moments, we may as well employ it in friendly converse; the more so, as the great letter to which I alluded is wonderfully precarious and uncertain: the more so likewise, as our correspondence for some time past has been of an abrupt and disagreeable cast. Let us first talk of Sheffield's works: they are of two sorts: *Primo*, Two nymphs, whom I much desire to see; the sprightly Maria and the gentle Louisa. I perfectly represent them both in the eye of fancy; each of them accomplished according to her age and character, yet totally different in their external and internal forms. *Secundo*, Three pamphlets; pamphlets! I cry you mercy; three weighty treatises, almost as useful as an inquiry into the state of the primitive church. And here let me justify, if I have not

before, my silence on a subject which we authors do not easily forgive. The first, whose first editions had seen the light before I left England, followed me here in a more complete condition; and that Treatise on the American Trade has been read, judged, approved, and reported. The second, on Ireland, I have seen by accident the copy you sent to Mr. Trevor, who passed last summer (eighty-five) here. The third, and in my present situation the most interesting, on the French Commerce", I have not yet seen by any means whatsoever, and you who know what orders you have given to Elmsly or others, will best discern on whom should be laid the fault and the blame. By the bye, Mrs. Trevor is now here, without her husband, and I am just going to see her, about a mile out of town: she is judged elegant and amiable. But to return to your books, all that I have seen must do you honor, and might do the public service; you are above the trifling decorations of style; but your sense is strong, your views impartial, and your industry laudable. I find that your American Tract is just translated into German. Do you still correspond with * * * *? If he could establish a beneficial intercourse between the two first nations in the world, I would excuse him some little political tergiversation. At some distance of time and place, those domestic squabbles lose much of their importance; and though I should not forgive him any breach of private friendship or confidence, I cannot much blame him if he chose rather to serve his family and his country, than to persevere in a hopeless and, as I suspect, an unpopular opposition.

You have never told me clearly and correctly how you support your inactive retreat from the House of Commons; whether you have resumed your long forgotten taste for rural and domestic pleasures, and whether you have never cast a look towards Coventry, or some other borough equally pure and respectable. In the short space that is left I will only repeat more distinctly, that in the present contemplation of my work, June or July of next year is the earliest term at which I can hope to see England; and if I have a fit of the gout? I have indeed been free from the monster this last twelvemonth; but he is most arbitrary and capricious. Of my own situation let me say with truth that it is tranquil, easy, and well adapted to my character. All enthusiasm is now at an end, I see things in their true light, and I applaud the judgment and choice of my retirement. I am well, happy, and diligent; but your kind hint of the London-house is perfectly superfluous; as instead of the *spring*, we must already read the *summer* of next year. Do not be childish or passionate; trust me, I wish to appear in England; but it must be with my book in my hand; and a book takes more time in making than a pudding. Adieu. Will my Lady never write?

You see why I have left a blank in the first page; and when I begun I had no design of going beyond it; and now, unless I have some extraordinary fit of diligence and zeal, shall probably wait till the return of your epistle. A word before we part, about the least unpleasant of my business; my library in Downing-street. Excuse the accidental derangement;

ment; I shall send for no more books, and only beg you to give them shelter in your uninhabited parlour till my arrival. Two or three mornings will suffice for personal review, and the subsequent steps of sale or travel will most properly be executed under my own eye. Once more adieu.

N^o CLXXXVII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mr. CADELL, Bookseller,*
London.

DEAR SIR,

LAUSANNE, December 16th, 1786.

I RECEIVED your letter this morning (the 16th instant), and answer it the same day. I am a sad correspondent, but it has been my constant endeavour that my negligence should never affect the interest or happiness of my friends.

The report you so kindly mention is somewhat incorrect. I never could fix a particular day for dining with Lord Sheffield, or should I think of performing the journey in the winter-month of February. The last autumn was the term which I had fixed in my hopes, and long since in my letters to him. It has been changed to next spring, and by the spring I must now understand the middle of the summer, which I can at present ascertain with some confidence, from a nearer prospect of the end of my work, which I shall bring over for the press. It will consist of three more quarto volumes, somewhat thinner, perhaps, than their predecessors; but as that difference cannot be enough to affect the price, it

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will be so much saved on the author's pains, and the printer's expenses. I am happy to understand the public entertain the same opinion of the past, and the same impatience for the remainder; and, unless I am strangely deceived, their expectation will not be disappointed. The three last volumes are labored at least with equal diligence; they contain a longer period of time, and a far greater variety of events; and the whole will comprise a general series of history, from the reign of Trajan and the Antonines, to the taking of Constantinople by Mahomet the Second; with a review of Mahomet and his successors, the Crusades and the Turks, as far as in their utmost latitude they are connected with the fate of the Eastern or Western Empire. With regard to our pecuniary arrangements, I persuade myself that we shall have no more difficulties now than heretofore; that you will cheerfully assign the same value to the three younger as to the three elder brothers; and that so important a transaction will have been concluded in the first instance by three minutes of conversation, and in the second by three lines of a letter; a memorable example in the annals of authors and booksellers. If you agree with me on this subject, you may provide paper, &c. as soon as you please in the spring, in the full confidence of seeing me with my book in the summer; and I should not be sorry to learn what time (in using the utmost expedition) would be sufficient for printing; and how late you would consent to publish in the ensuing spring. At this moment, when I am straining every nerve to conclude my living la-

bors, I am ill-disposed to lose any time in the dull dead work of correcting a new edition. When I am in England, quiet in the country, there would be room and leisure for a complete revision; and I should have no objection to place at the end of the sixth volume a string of amendments and improvements, which hereafter might be inserted in their proper places. We shall likewise have occasion for a good and general index to the whole.

I sincerely condole with you in your various losses: Rose and Strahan were indeed valuable men. For myself, you will rejoice to hear that I am satisfied with my Swift's retirement; and that, except some mild and transient fits of the gout, I enjoy as much health and happiness as is compatible with the lot of man. I expect with much impatience Dr. Robertson's improved edition. There are three or four books which I should like to have without delay: that work, Pennant's Arctic Zoology, White's Sermons (the Arabic professor), the Annual Register since the year 1782. With Elmsley's assistance (he is a sad dog, but I will write to him soon) could you not inclose them in a small box, with any other recent publications of merit, and dispatch them instantly by some more costly and expeditious mode of conveyance? I am, most faithfully yours.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable
Lord SHEFFIELD.*

LAUSANNE, January 20th, 1787.

AFTER some fallies of wrath, you seem at length to have subsided in fullen silence, and and I must confess not totally without reason. Yet if your mind be still open to truth, you will confess that I am not so black as I appear. 1. Your Lordship has shown much less activity and eloquence than formerly, and your last letter was an answer to mine, which I had expected some time with impatience. Bad examples are dangerous to young people. 2. Formerly I have neglected answering your epistles on essential, though unpleasant business; and the *res-publica* or *privata* may have suffered by my neglect. Supposing therefore we had no transactions, why should I write so often? To exchange sentimental compliments, or to relate the various and important transactions of the republic of Lausanne. As long as I do not inform you of my death, you have good grounds to believe me alive and well. You have a general, and will soon have a more particular idea of my system and arrangement here. One day glides away after another in tranquil uniformity. Every object must have sides and moments less luminous than others; but, upon the whole, the life and the place which I have chosen are most happily adapted to my character and circumstances; and I can now repeat at the end of three years, what I soon and sincerely affirmed, that never, in

a single instant, have I repented of my scheme of retirement to Lausanne; a retirement which was judged by my best and wisest friend a project little short of insanity. The place, the people, the climate, have answered or exceeded my warmest expectations. And though I truly rejoice in my approaching visit to England; Mr. Pitt, were he your friend and mine, would not find it an easy task to prevent my return.

3. And now let me add a third reason, which often diverted me from writing; namely, my impatience to see you this next summer. I am building a great book, which, besides the three stories already exposed to the public eye, will have three stories more before we reach the roof and battlements. You too have built or altered a great Gothic castle with baronial battlements. Did you finish it within the time you intended? As that time drew near, did you not find a thousand nameless and unexpected works that must be performed; each of them calling for a portion of time and labor? and had you not despised, nobly despised, the minute diligence of finishing, fitting up, and furnishing the apartments, you would have discovered a new train of indispensable business. Such at least, has been my case. A long while ago, when I contemplated the distant prospect of my work, I gave you and myself some hopes of landing in England last autumn; but, alas! when autumn grew near, hills began to rise on hills, Alps on Alps, and I found my journey far more tedious and toilsome than I had imagined. When I look back on the length of the undertaking, and the variety of materials, I cannot accuse, or suffer

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myself to be accused of idleness; yet it appeared that unless I doubled my diligence, another year, and perhaps more, would elapse before I could embark with my complete manuscript. Under these circumstances I took, and am still executing, a bold and meritorious resolution. The mornings in winter, and in a country of early dinners, are very concise; to them, my usual period of study, I now frequently add the evenings, renounce cards and society, refuse the most agreeable evenings, or perhaps make my appearance at a late supper. By this extraordinary industry, which I never practised before, and to which I hope never to be again reduced, I see the last part of my History growing apace under my hands; all my materials are collected and arranged; I can exactly compute, by the square foot, or the square page, all that remains to be done; and after concluding text and notes, after a general review of my time and my ground, I can now decisively ascertain the final period of the Decline and Fall, and can boldly promise that I will dine with you at Sheffield-Place in the month of August, or perhaps of July, in the present year; within less than a twelvemonth of the term which I had loosely and originally fixed; and perhaps it would not be easy to find a work of that size and importance in which the workman has so tolerably kept his word with himself and the public. But in this situation, oppressed with this particular object, and stealing every hour from amusement, to the fatigue of the pen, and the eyes, you will conceive, or you might conceive, how little stomach I have for the epistolary

style; and that instead of idle, though, friendly correspondence, I think it far more agreeable to employ my time in the effectual measures that may hasten and exhilarate our personal interview. About a month ago I had a voluntary, and not unpleasing, epistle from Cadell; he informs me that he is going to print a new octavo edition, the former being exhausted, and that the public expect with impatience the conclusion of that excellent work, whose reputation increases every day, &c. I answered him by the return of the post, to inform him of the period and extent of my labors, and to express a reasonable hope that he would set the same value on the three last as he had done on the three former volumes. Should we conclude in this easy manner a transaction so honorable to the author and book-feller, my way is clear and open before me; in pecuniary matters I think I am assured for the rest of my life of never troubling my friends, or being troubled myself; a state to which I aspire, and which I indeed deserve, if not by my management, at least by moderation.

In your last, you talk more of the French treaty than of yourself and your wife and family; a true English *quid nunc!* For my part, in this remote, inland, neutral country, you will suppose, that after a slight glance on the papers, I have neither had the means nor the inclination to think very deeply about it. As a citizen of the world, a character to which I am every day rising or sinking, I must rejoice in every agreement that diminishes the separation between neighbouring countries, which sof-

B b 4

tens their prejudices, unites their interest and industry, and renders their future hostilities less frequent and less implacable. With regard to the present treaty, I hope, both nations are gainers; since otherwise it cannot be lasting; and such double mutual gain is surely possible in fair trade, though it could not easily happen in the mischievous amusements of war and gaming. * * * * *

* * * * * What a delightful hand have these great statesmen made of it since my departure! without power, and, as far as I can see, without hope. When we meet I shall advise you to digest all your political and commercial knowledge, (England, Ireland, France, America,) and, with some attention to style and order, to make the whole a classic book, which may preserve your name and benefit your country. I know not whether you have seen Sir Henry Clinton since his return: he passed a day with me, and seemed pleased with my reception and place. We talked over you and the American war. I embrace the *silent my Lady* and the two honorable Misses, whom I sigh to behold and admire. Adieu. Ever yours.

Though I can part with land, you find I cannot part with books: the remainder of my library has so long embarrassed your room, that it may now await my presence and final judgment. Has my Lady read a novel entitled *Caroline de Litchfield*, of our home manufacture; I may say of ours, since Deyverdun and myself were the judges and patrons of the manuscript. The author, who is since married a second time, (Madame de Croufay, now Mon-

tolieu,) is a charming woman. I was in some danger. Once more, bar a long fit of the gout, and the Historian will land at Dover before the end of July. Adieu.

N^o CLXXXIX.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mr. CADELL, London.*

DEAR SIR,

LAUSANNE, February 24th, 1787.

I AM perfectly satisfied with your's and Mr. Strahan's cheerful and liberal assent to my proposal, and am glad to find that your partner has not degenerated from his worthy father, whose loss I sincerely lament. The sole remaining difficulty (of the volumes falling below the guinea price) it is unnecessary for the present to discuss, as I think it unlikely to happen. As I am resolved to finish and revise the work before I leave Lausanne, it will depend on yourself to arrange your preparations of paper, &c. in such a manner that we may loose no time, but go to press the first week after my arrival. But in the mean while I wish you to reflect and inquire; 1st, In how many months the impression of the three volumes may be completed, either with ordinary or extraordinary diligence. And, 2dly, How late in next year you would be desirous or willing to publish. On my revival I may find more alterations and improvements to make than I at present foresee; I may be disabled by a fit of the gout; and your speedy answer will inform me of the utmost latitude in which I may be indulged, without totally dis-

concerting our common interest. You probably agree with me in the necessity of a good general index for the six volumes. If you are possessed of an intelligent workman, he might without delay take in hand the three first volumes; but in that case I must desire him to send me as soon as possible a *short* specimen by the post. I have thought on the subject of index-making, and can give him some advice, which will abridge the size, without impairing the use and value of his alphabetical table. By a letter of the thirteenth instant, Elmsley informs me that he is on the point of sending the books; and I hope to have them here before the end of next month. I propose writing to him very soon; but as the events of life are uncertain, it may be safer to answer his question through your channel: "The
" author of Caroline (Madame de Croufaz) is now
" become Madame la Baronne de Montolieu by
" second marriage, and has other cares and pleasures
" besides those of writing. Her pen is not idle, but
" her new schemes of romance are not in any de-
" gree of forwardness or maturity. Perhaps a hand-
" some proposal from an English bookseller might
" stimulate her diligence." I am sincerely yours.

In our style of negotiation it is almost superfluous to say that I reserve about a score of copies for myself and my friends.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

LAUSANNE, June 2d, 1787.

I BEGIN to discover that if I wait till I could achieve a just and satisfactory epistle, equally pleasant and instructive, you would have a poor chance of hearing from me. I will therefore content myself with a simple answer to a question, which (I love to believe) you repeat with some impatience: "When may we expect you in England?" My great building is, as it were, completed, and some slight ornaments, the painting and glazing of the last finished rooms may be dispatched without inconvenience in the autumnal residence at Sheffield-Place. It is therefore my sincere and peremptory intention to depart from Lausanne about the twentieth of July, and to find myself (*me trouver*) in London on or before the glorious first of August. I know of nothing that can prevent it but a fit of the gout, the capricious tyrant, who obeys no laws either of time or place; and so unfortunately are we circumstanced, that such a fit, if it came late and lasted long, would effectually disable me from coming till next spring; since thereby I should lose the season, the monsoon, for the impression of three quarto volumes, which will require nine months (a regular parturition), and cannot advantageously appear after the beginning or middle of May. At the same time do not be apprehensive that I mean to play you a dog's trick.

From a thousand motives it is my wish to come over this year: the desire of seeing you, and the *silent fullen* my Lady; the family-arrangements, discharge of servants, which I have already made; the strong wish of settling my three youngest children in a manner honorable to them and beneficial to their parents. Much miscellaneous matter arises to my pen, but I will not be tempted to turn the leaf. Expect me therefore at Sheffield-Place, with a strong probability, about the fifteenth of August. Adieu. Yours.

N° CXCI.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable Lord SHEFFIELD.*

LAUSANNE, July 21st, 1787.

THE twentieth of July is past, and I am still at Lausanne; but the march of heavy bodies, such as armies and historians, can seldom be foreseen or fixed to a precise day. Some particular reasons have engaged me to allow myself another week; and the day of my departure is now (*I believe*) determined for Sunday the twenty-ninth instant. You know the road and the distance. I am no rapid English traveller, and my servant, is not accustomed to ride post. I was never fond of deeds of darkness, and if the weather be hot, we must repose in the middle of the day. Yet the roads are in general good: between sun and sun the interval is long; and barring the accidents of winds and waves, I think it possible to reach London in ten or twelve days; *viz.* on or before the ninth of August. With your active spirit, you

will scarce understand how I can look on this easy journey with some degree of reluctance and apprehension; but after a tranquil sedentary life of four years, (having lain but a single night out of my own bed,) I see mountains and monsters in the way; and so happy do I feel myself *at home*, that nothing but the strongest calls of friendship and interest could drag me from hence. You ingeniously propose that I should turn off at Sittingbourn, and seem to wonder what business I can find, or make, for an immediate residence in the capital. Have you totally forgot that I bring over three quarto volumes for the press? and are you ignorant that not a moment must be lost, if we are desirous of appearing at a proper season; and that I must set the machine in motion before I can secede to Sheffield-Place with an easy mind, and for a reasonable term? Of this be assured, that I shall not be less impatient than yourself, and that, of human two-legged animals, yourself and yours are the first whom I shall wish to see in England. For myself, I do not regret the occupancy of Downing-street; in my first visit to London, a lodging or hotel in the Adelphi will be more convenient; but I have some anxiety about my books, and must try whether I can approach those holy relics, without offending the delicacy of an amiable Duchess. Our interview is so near, that I have little more to add, except a caution about my own concerns, in which you will confess, that from —, and —, to —, I have been generally unlucky. If any thing remains, present or future, it must be agitated and decided; but all retrospects are useless and painful, and we have so many pleasant

subjects of conversation, that all such odious matters may be buried in oblivion. Adieu. I embrace my Lady and Louisa, but I no longer presume, even on paper, to embrace the blooming Maria. Ever yours.

N^o CXCI.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable Lord SHEFFIELD.*

ADELPHI HOTEL, August 8th, 1787.

INTELLIGENCE EXTRAORDINARY. This day (August the seventh) the celebrated E. G. arrived with a numerous retinue (one servant). We hear that he has brought over from Lausanne the remainder of his History for immediate publication. The post had left town before my arrival. I am pleased, but indeed astonished, to find myself in London, after a journey of six hundred miles, and hardly yet conceive how I had resolution to undertake it. I find myself not a little fatigued, and have devoted this hot day to privacy and repose, without having seen any body except Cadell and Elmsley, and my neighbour Batt, whose civility amounts to kindness and real friendship. But you may depend on it, that instead of fauntering in town, or giving way to every temptation, I will dispatch my necessary work, and hasten with impatience to the groves of Sheffield Place; a project somewhat more rational than the hasty turbulent visit which your vigor had imagined. If you come up to quicken my diligence we shall meet the sooner; but I see no appearance of my leaving town before the end of next week. I embrace, &c. Adieu.

N° CXCHIL.

The Same to the Same.

Monday Afternoon, 1787.

IPRECIPITATE, I inconvenience! Alas! alas! I am a poor miserable cripple, confined to my chair. Last Wednesday evening I felt some flying symptoms of the gout: for two succeeding days I struggled bravely, and went in a chair to dine with Batt and Lord Loughborough: but on Saturday I yielded to my conqueror. I have now passed three wearisome days without amusement, and three miserable nights without sleep. Yet my acquaintance are charitable; and as virtue should never be made too difficult, I feel that a man has more friends in Pall-mall than in Bentinck-street. This fit is remarkably painful; the enemy is possessed of the left foot and knee, and how far he may carry the war God only knows. Of futurity it is impossible to speak; but it will be fortunate if I am able to leave town by the end, not of this, but of the ensuing week. What may be the future progress, whether slow or rapid, fluctuating or steady, time alone will determine; and to that master of human knowledge I must leave our Bath journey. Pity me, magnanimous Baron; pity me, tender females; pity me, Swifts exile; and believe me, it is far better to be learning English at Uckfield. I write with difficulty, as the least motion or constraint in my attitude is repeated by all the nerves and sinews in my knee. But you shall find each day a note or bulletin of my health. To-morrow I must give pain to Mrs. G—. Adieu. Ever yours.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable Lady*
SHEFFIELD.

BATH, Dec mber 18th, 1787.

ALAS! alas! alas! How vain and fallacious are all the designs of man. This is now the eighteenth of December, precisely one month since my departure from Sheffield-Place; and it was firmly my wish, my hope, my resolution, that after dispatching some needful business in London; and accomplishing a pious duty at Bath, I should by this day be restored to the tranquil leisure, and friendly society, of Sheffield-Place. A cruel tyrant has disconcerted all my plans; my business in town has been neglected, my attendance at Bath is just begun, and my return is yet distant. I was not a little edified to hear of some expressions of regret and discontent on my departure; and though I am not able to produce as good evidence, you will perhaps believe that in the solitude of a London lodging I often railed at the gout for maliciously delaying his attack till I was removed from a place where my sufferings would have been alleviated by every kind and comfortable attention. I grew at last so desperately impatient, as to resolve on immediate flight, without waiting till I had totally expelled the foe, and recovered my strength. I performed the journey with tolerable ease, but the motion has agitated the remains of the humor. I am very lame, and a second fit may possibly be the punishment of my rashness.

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As yet I have seen nothing of Bath except Mrs. G—; and weakness, as well as propriety, will confine me very closely to her. Lord Sheffield, with Mrs. Holroyd and Maria, dined with us yesterday. We begin to throw out hints of the shortness of our stay, and indispensable business; and, unless I should be confined by the gout, it is resolved in our cabinet to leave Bath on Thursday the twenty-sixth, and passing through Lord Loughborough's and town, to settle at Sheffield-Place, most assuredly, before the end of the year. For my own part I can say with truth, that did not the press loudly demand my presence, I could, without a sigh, allow the Dukes to reign in Downing-street the greatest part of the winter, and should be happy in the society of two persons (no common blessing) whom I love, and by whom I am beloved.

Adieu, dear Madam, and believe me, with the affection of a friend and a brother, ever yours.

N° CXCV.

Dr. WILLIAM ROBERTSON to Mr. GIBBON.

MY DEAR SIR, COLLEGE of EDINBURGH, Febr. 27th, 1788.

THOUGH you have now been some time in London, yet as I heard of your welfare by different channels, and as I know from experience how much a man has to do who is printing three quartos, even after he thinks they are altogether ready for the press, I have hitherto forborne to interrupt you by any letter or inquiry of mine. But there is such a general impatience to see your new publication among people of

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letters here; and, as your friend, I am so frequently interrogated about the length it has advanced and the time when it will appear, that I begin to be ashamed of knowing nothing more about it than other people. I must request of you then to furnish me with such information as may both preserve my credit, and gratify my own curiosity. My expectations from this part of your work are, indeed, very high. Your materials begin to improve, and are certainly much more copious than during a great part of the period you have gone through. You have three or four events as great, and splendid, and singular, as the heart of a historian could wish to delineate. The contemporary writers will furnish you with all the necessary facts. To adorn them as elegant writers, or to account for them as philosophers, never entered into their heads. This they have left to you.

Since you went to the continent I have not done so much as I wished. My health, until lately, has been more shattered; and as I advance in life, (I am now sixty-six,) though my faculties, I imagine, are still entire, yet I find my mind less active and ardent. I have, however, finished a very careful revise of all my works, and have given them the last polish they will receive from my hand. I have made some additions to each of them, and in the History of Scotland pretty considerable ones. I have desired Mr. Strahan to send to you a copy of them uniformly bound, and hope you will accept of them, as a memorial of my esteem and affection. You will see that I have got in Mr. Whitaker an adversary so bigotted and zealous, that though I have denied no article of faith, and am

at least as orthodox as he himself, yet he rails against me with all the asperity of theological hatred. I shall adhere to my fixed maxim of making no reply. May I hope that when you see Lord Loughborough you will remember me to him with kindness and respect. Our friend Mr. Smith, whom we were in great danger of losing, is now almost perfectly re-established. I have the honor to be, with great truth, your most faithful humble servant.

WILLIAM ROBERTSON.

N° CXCVI.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

DOWNING-STREET, June 21st, 1788.

INSTEAD of the Historian you receive a short letter, in your eyes an indispensable tribute. This day, at length, after long delay and frequent expostulation, I have received the writings, which I am now in the act of signing, sealing, and delivering, according to the lawyer's directions. * * * * *

* * * * * I long to be at Sheffield-Place. You see my departure is not postponed a moment by idleness or pleasure, but the precise day still hangs on contingencies, and we must all be patient, if our wishes should be thwarted. I say our wishes, for I sincerely desire to be with you. I have had many dinners, some splendid and memorable, with Hastings last Thursday, with the Prince of Wales next Tuesday at Craufurd's. But the town empties, Texier is silent, and in an evening, I *deside-*

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rate the resources of a family or a club. Caplin has finished the Herculean labor, and seven majestic boxes will abdicate on Monday your hall. Severy has likewise dispatched his affairs, and secured his companion Clarke, who is arrived in town; but his schemes are abridged by the inexorable rigor of Lord Howe, who has assured our great and fair intercessors, that by the King's order the dock-yards are shut against all strangers. We therefore give up Portsmouth, and content ourselves with two short trips; one to Stowe and Oxford, the other to Chatham; and if we can catch a launch and review, *encore vive on*. He (Severy, not Lord Howe,) salutes with me the family. Adieu. Yours.

N° CXCVII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
Lord SHEFFIELD.

DOWNING-STREET, Saturday.

ACCORDING to your imperious law I write a line, to postpone my arrival till Friday, or perhaps Saturday, but I hope Friday, and I promise you that not a moment shall be wasted. And now let me add a cool word as to my final departure, which is irrevocably fixed between the tenth and fifteenth of July. After a full and free enjoyment of each other's society, let us submit, without a struggle, to reason and fate. It would be idle to pretend business at Lausanne; but a complete year will elapse before my return. Severy and myself are now expected with some impatience.

I am thankful for your hospitable entertainment; but I wish you to remember Homer's admirable precept:

Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.

Spare me, therefore, spare yourself, the trouble of a fruitless contest, in which, according to a great author, I foresee a certain loss of time, and a probable loss of temper. I believe we shall have both Craufurd and Hugonin at Sheffield Place. Adieu.

N° CXCVIII.

The Same to the Same.

DOWNING-STREET, Saturday, June 1788.

I HAVE but a moment between my return home and my dressing, and heartily tired I am; for I am now involved in the horrors of shopping, packing, &c. yet I must write four lines, to prevent a growl, which might salute the arrival of an empty handed post on Sunday. I hope the whole caravan, Christians and Pagans, arrived in good health at the castle; that the turrets begin to rise to the third heaven; that each has found a proper occupation; and that Tuft enjoys the freedom and felicity of the lawn. Yesterday the august scene was closed for this year. Sheridan surpassed himself; and though I am far from considering him as a perfect orator, there were many beautiful passages in his speech, on justice, filial love, &c.; one of the closest chains of argument I ever heard, to prove that Hastings was responsible for the acts of Middleton; and a compliment, much admired, to a certain Historian of your acquaintance. Sheridan, in the close of his speech, sunk into Burke's

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arms; but I called this morning, he is perfectly well. I fear that I shall not be able to dine at home a single day. To-morrow Severy and myself go to Bushy. I hope to be with you by Sunday the twenty-second instant. The casing of my books is a prodigious operation. Adieu.

N° CXCIX.

Dr. WILLIAM ROBERTSON to Mr. GIBBON.

DEAR SIR, COLLEGE of EDINBURGH, July 30th, 1788:

LONG before this I should have acknowledged the receipt of your most acceptable present; but for several weeks I have been afflicted with a violent fit of deafness, and that unsocial malady is always accompanied with such a degree of languor, as renders even the writing of a letter an effort. During my solitude the perusal of your book has been my chief amusement and consolation. I have gone through it once with great attention, and am now advanced to the last volume in my second reading. I ventured to predict the superior excellence of the volumes lately published, and I have not been a false prophet. Indeed, when I consider the extent of your undertaking, and the immense labor of historical and philosophic research requisite towards executing every part of it, I am astonished that all this should have been accomplished by one man. I know no example, in any age or nation, of such a vast body of valuable and elegant information communicated by any individual. I feel, however, some degree of mortification mingled with my astonishment. Before you began

your historic career, I used to pride myself in being at least the most industrious historian of the age; but now, alas! I can pretend no longer even to that praise, and must say, as Pliny did of his uncle, *Si comparer illi sum desidiosissimus*. Your style appears to me improved in these new volumes; by the habit of writing, you write with greater ease. I am sorry to find that our ideas on the effects of the Crusades do not altogether coincide. I considered that point with great care, and cannot help thinking still that my opinion was well founded. I shall consult the authorities to which I refer; for when my sentiments differ from yours I have some reason to distrust them, and I may possibly trouble you with a letter on the subject. I am much flattered with the manner in which you have so often mentioned my name, *Letus sum laudari a te laudato viro*. I feel much satisfaction in having been distinguished by the two historians of my own times, whose favorable opinion I was most ambitious of obtaining.

I hope this letter may find you still in England. When you return to Lausanne, permit me to recommend to your good offices my youngest son, who is now at Yverdon on account of his health, and lives with M. Herman, a clergyman there. You will find the young man (if you can rely on the partial testimony of a father) sensible, modest, and well-bred, and though no great scholar, he has seen much; having returned from India, where he served last war, by Bassora, Bagdat, Moussul, and Aleppo. He is now a Captain in the twenty-third regiment. If you have any friend at Yverdon, be so good as to recommend

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him. It will do him credit to have your countenance. I have desired him to pay his respects to you at Laufanne; Farewel, my dear Sir. I ever am yours most faithfully,

WILLIAM ROBERTSON;

N° CC.

Dr. ADAM SMITH to Mr. GIBBON.

MY DEAR FRIEND, EDINBURGH, December, 10th 1788.

I HAVE ten thousand apologies to make, for not having long ago returned you my best thanks for the very agreeable present you made me of the three last volumes of your History. I cannot express to you the pleasure it gives me to find, that by the universal assent of every man of taste and learning, whom I either know or correspond with, it sets you at the very head of the whole literary tribe at present existing in Europe. I ever am, my dear friend, most affectionately yours,

ADAM SMITH.

N° CCL.

Mr. GIBBON to Mr. CADELL, Bookseller, London.

LAUSANNE, February 11th, 1789.

I SHOULD be much more ashamed of my silence, were I not satisfied that you have received a recent and favorable account of me from some of our friends who have visited this place since my return. But I should be inexcusable, did I not thank you for your kind and seasonable wishes, which I can return

with equal sincerity. I do not propose making any improvements or corrections in the octavo edition which you meditate: some slight alterations would give me more trouble than pleasure. A thorough revision of the whole work would be the labor of many months; it may be the amusement of my old age, and will be a valuable legacy, to renew your copy-right at the expiration of the last fourteen years. In the mean while, some expedition may be useful to guard your property from the unexpected invasion of *foreign* pirates. Eight volumes in octavo are already printed at Basil, and the remainder is expected every day. I am both glad and sorry to inform you, that the type is neat, the paper tolerable, and the text *wonderfully* correct. I hear of another English edition in Saxony, and of two French translations advancing with speed and emulation at Paris. Of the success of the work at home you are best qualified, and most interested, to judge; and I am happy to find that you express yourself, with some reserve, satisfied with the sale. From some reports of angry criticisms, and from the use and abuse of my name in the papers, I perceive that I am not forgotten. Before a year has elapsed from the time of publication, my History will have been perused by some thousand readers of various characters and understandings. Each will probably find something to blame, and I hope something to commend; and the balance of their private judgments will fix the public estimate of its merit and reputation. Since my return I have been, as I promise in the preface, very busy and very idle in my library: several ideal

works have been embraced and thrown aside; but if the warm weather should ripen any project to form and maturity, you may depend on the earliest intelligence. I have received a very friendly and flattering letter from Dr. Robertson, and have had the pleasure of showing some civilities to his son during his residence in this place. If you can, send me a good account of Adam Smith; there is no man more sincerely interested in his welfare than myself. I beg you will present my compliments to all our friends, particularly to Mr. Strahan and Dr. Gillies. Tell Elmsley, that I have received with due contrition his *third* letter: unless you are speedy, my answer will anticipate your information. I am most faithfully yours.

N^o CCII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Lady PORTEN*,
Kensington-palace.

DEAR MADAM,

LAUSANNE, June 27th, 1789.

I RECEIVED with more concern than surprise, your kind notification of my poor uncle's departure. My own knowledge of his many valuable qualities teaches me to sympathize in your loss; but his long infirmities and gradual decay must have prepared you for the melancholy event, and your own reason will suggest the best and strongest motives of consolation; among these is your regard for the amiable children whom he has left behind. Your labors for their future happiness will be assisted by all your friends, who are attached to his memory; and for

my own part, I beg leave to assure you, that on every occasion I shall consider them as my near and dear relations. When I had last the pleasure of seeing Charlotte at Kensington, I was delighted with her innocent cheerfulness, with her assiduous care of her poor father, and with an appearance of sense and discretion far beyond her years. How happy should I think myself, if I had a daughter of her age and disposition, who in a short time would be qualified to govern my family, and to be my companion and comfort in the decline of life!

You will, I am sure, be pleased to hear that my situation at Lausanne continues, almost in every respect, as agreeable as I could wish. The only circumstance which embitters my happiness, is the declining health of my friend Mons. Deyverdun. I cannot long flatter myself with the hope of possessing him. I am, dear Madam, &c.

N° CCIII.

Mr. GIBBON to Mr. CADELL.

DEAR SIR, LAUSANNE, November 17th, 1790.

I SHOULD indeed be inexcusable for my long neglect of your last obliging letter, had it not reached me in a moment of pain and weakness, in a fit of the gout, the longest and most severe that I have ever known. A letter with me is no trifling enterprise; and before I could find strength, and time, and resolution, the occasion on which you so handsomely consulted me was already past. I suppose

that the abridgment of my History is now freely circulated, either with or without your name; nor can I foresee any possible mischief, either for my reputation or your interest. A translation, an abridgment, or even a criticism, always proves the success, and consequently extends the sale, of any popular work.

As I am inclined to flatter myself that you have no reason to be displeased with your purchase, I now wish to ask you whether you feel yourself disposed to add a seventh, or supplemental volume to my History? The materials of which it will be composed will naturally be classed under the three following heads: 1. A series of fragments, disquisitions, digressions, &c. more or less connected with the principal subject, &c. 2. Several tables of geography, chronology, coins, weights and measures, &c.; nor should I despair of obtaining from a gentleman at Paris some accurate and well-adapted maps. 3. A critical review of all the authors whom I have used and quoted¹⁰¹. I am convinced such a supplement might be rendered entertaining, as well as useful; and that few purchasers would refuse to *complete* their Decline and Fall. But as the writer could not derive either fame or amusement from these obscure labors, he must be encouraged by other motives; and, in plain English, I should expect the same reward for the seventh, as for any of the preceding volumes. You think and act with too much liberality, to confound such a large original supplement with the occasional improvements of a new edition, which are already your property by the terms of our former covenant. But as I am jealous of standing

clear, not only in law and equity, but in your esteem and my own, I shall instantly renounce the undertaking, if it appears by your answer that you have the shadow of an objection. Should you tempt me to proceed, this supplement will be only the employment of my leisure hours; and I foresee that full two years will elapse before I can deliver it into the hands of the printer.

Our friend Elmsley, who possibly thinks me dead and buried, will be, or will not be, surprised when you inform him that I have now a letter of two pages in my bureau addressed to him, dated the twenty-sixth of May, and not yet finished. Hunger, literary hunger, will soon, however, compel me to write; as I have many questions to ask, and many commissions to give. In the mean while I thirst for Mr. Burke's Reflections on the Revolutions of France. Entreat Elmsley, in my name, to dispatch it to Lausanne with care and speed, by any mode of conveyance less expensive than the post. He may add to the parcel the new edition of Adam Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments. I heard of his death with more concern than surprise. What a loss to letters, philosophy, and mankind!

I beg you would remember me to Mr. Strahan and all our friends. In my happy exile, my public and private affections remind me that I am an Englishman. Pray thank Dr. Moore, in my name, for the pleasure which I have received from Zeluco, the best philosophical romance of the age. If he cultivates his talents by any similar publications, I only wish that he would place the scene at home;

we may describe the characters, but we can never paint the *manners* of foreigners; and the quarrel of the two Scotchmen is doubtless the best chapter in the book. I am, dear Sir, most faithfully yours.

N° CCIV.

Mr. GIBBON to Mr. CADELL.

DEAR SIR,

LAUSANNE, April 27th, 1791.

Too many posts have slipped away since my receipt of your last letter, without my assuring you that every shadow of misapprehension has vanished from my mind, and that I am perfectly satisfied with the liberality of your sentiments and conduct. But I am every day more inclined to believe that on the present occasion they will not be put to the trial. On a closer inspection, I discover more difficulty and less advantage than I had at first imagined in the plan of a supplement; and I feel the objection, which you so handsomely decline, against increasing the weight and price of so voluminous a work. Perhaps it would have been better if my crude idea had not been so hastily announced to the public; but even this venial indiscretion is a proof of your zeal and regard. The intelligence of any new designs shall be delayed till they are ripe for execution; but you may be assured that I am now awake.

I am very happy to hear that our respectable friend Dr. Robertson is not asleep; and much do I expect from the subject and the pen. I had once a design not totally unconnected with his own, but it is now in far abler hands. Boswell's book will be curious, or

at least whimsical: his hero, who can so long detain the public curiosity, must be no common animal. I see you now advertise an octavo edition of Dr. Henry's History of England. Is not the author dead? His plan is excellent, and I wish you could engage some diligent and sensible man to undertake the continuation. Alas! if Dr. Campbell were still alive! I have desired Elmsley to ask you for three octavo copies of my own work. Whenever he sends me a box of books, I should be glad if you would enrich it with any of your own valuable publications. Your name is a recommendation; but the chastity of that name cannot be too religiously preserved. My health and spirits are now remarkably good, and it will give me great pleasure to receive as favorable an account of yourself. I am most faithfully yours.

N° CCV.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON,*
Belvidere, Bath.

DEAR MADAM, LAUSANNE, May 18th, 1791.

As much as I am accustomed to my own sins, I am shocked, really shocked, when I think of my long and most inexcusable silence; nor do I dare to compute how many months I have suffered to elapse without sending a single line (Oh shame! shame!) to the best and dearest of my friends, who indeed has been very seldom out of my thoughts. I have sometimes imagined that if the opportunities of writing occurred less frequently, they would be seized with more diligence; but the unfortunate

departure of the post twice every week encourages procrastination, and each short successive delay is indulged without scruple, till the whole has swelled to a tremendous account. I will try, alas! to reform; and, although I am afraid that writing grows painful to you, I have the confidence to solicit a *speedy line*, to say that you love and forgive me. After a long experience of the unfeeling doubts and delays of the law, you will probably soon hear from Lord Sheffield that the Beriton transaction is at last concluded, and I hope that you will be satisfied with the full and firm security of your annuity. That you may long continue to enjoy it is the first and most sincere wish of my heart.

In the placid course of our lives, at Lausanne and Bath, we have few events to relate, and fewer changes to describe; but I indulge myself in the pleasing belief that we are both as well and as happy as the common order of nature will allow us to expect. I should be satisfied, had I received from time to time some indirect, but agreeable, information of your health. For myself, I have no complaint, except the gout; and though the visits of my old enemy are somewhat longer, and more enfeebling, they are confined to my feet and knees; the pain is moderate, and my imprisonment to my chamber, or my chair, is much alleviated by the daily kindness of my friends. I wish it were in my power to give you an adequate idea of the conveniency of my house, and the beauty of my garden; both of which I have improved at a considerable expense since the death of poor Deyverdun. But the loss of a friend is indeed irreparable.

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Were I ten years younger, I might possibly think of a female companion; but the choice is difficult, the success doubtful, the engagement perpetual, and at fifty-four a man should never think of altering the whole system of his life and habits. The disposal of Beriton, and the death of my aunt Hester, who has left me her estate in Sussex, makes me very easy in my worldly affairs: my income is equal to my expense, and my expense is adequate to my wishes. You may possibly have heard of literary projects which are ascribed to me by the public without my knowledge: but it is much more probable that I have closed the account; and though I shall never lay aside the pleasing occupations of study, you may be assured that I have no serious settled thoughts of a new work. Next year I shall meditate, and I trust shall execute, a visit to England, in which the Belvidere is one of my powerful loadstones. I often reflect with a painful emotion on the imperious circumstances which have thrown us at such a distance from each other.

In the moving picture of the world, you cannot be indifferent to the strange revolution which has humbled all that was high, and exalted all that was low, in France. The irregular and lively spirit of the nation has disgraced their liberty, and instead of building a free constitution, they have only exchanged despotism for anarchy. This town and country are crowded with noble exiles; and we sometimes count in an assembly a dozen Princesses and Duchesses. Burke, if I remember right, is no favorite of yours; but there is surely much eloquence and sense in his book. The prosperity of England forms

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a proud contrast with the disorders of France; but I hope we shall avoid the folly of a Russian war. Pitt, in this instance, seems too like his father. Mr. Helrard, a sensible man, and his pupil have left us. They found, as your friends will always find, the weight of your recommendation with me. I am, dearest Madam, ever most affectionately yours.

N° CCVI.

Dr. WILLIAM ROBERTSON to Mr. GIBBON.

DEAR SIR, LENNEL-HOUSE, August 25th 1791.

SOME time before the publication of my Historical Disquisition concerning India I desired our friend Mr. Cadell to send a copy of it to you in my name. I hope you received it long ago, and will allow it to remain in your library, as a memorial of my respect and friendship. No man had formed a more decided resolution of retreating early from public view, and of spending the eve of life in the tranquillity of professional and domestic occupations; but, directly in the face of that purpose, I step forth with a new work, when just on the brink of threescore and ten. The preface of the book gives a fair and simple account how this happened. Hitherto I have no cause to repent of a step which I took with hesitation and anxiety. My book has met with a reception beyond what the *spe lentus, pavidusque futuri*, dared to expect. I find, however, like other parents, that I have a partial fondness for this child of my old age; and cannot set my heart quite at ease, until I know your opinion of it. I need not say with what perfect confidence I rest upon your judgment, and how happy it will make me to find that this production

meets with your approbation. Nothing will add so much to that pleasure, as your communicating to me any remarks that occurred to you in perusing it. While I was engaged in composing the Disquisition it often occurred to me, that I was more upon your ground than in any of my former works; and I often wished that I had been so near to you as to profit by your advice and information. Next to that will be the benefit I may derive from your friendly strictures. Be so kind then as to mention to me any error or omission you have observed; every criticism of yours will be instructive.

Permit me to request another favor. You allowed me to hope, that as soon as you fixed upon a new subject you would let me know, and give me the satisfaction of indulging the hopes of living until you finished it. I trust that you are not idle still. I may now tell you with authority, that you are yet far from that period of life when you should lay down your pen. I can say from experience, that the busiest season of life is the most happy; and I have no doubt that you will concur with me in this sentiment. Let me know then, my dear Sir, how you are, what you are doing, and what progress you make. As for my part, I enjoy good health; and, except some fits of deafness, am little troubled with the infirmities of old age. I write this at my son-in-law's, Mr. Brydone, who, if he had not a wife and family, loves Switzerland so well, and has so many friends in Lausanne, that I believe he would gladly join you there. Believe me to be, with great respect, your most faithful and obedient servant,

WILLIAM ROBERTSON.

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N° CCVII.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to Mrs. GIBBON*, Bath.

MY DEAREST MADAM, LAUSANNE, August 1st, 1792.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the arts of our great enemy, the dæmon of procrastination, I should not have postponed for so many months a pleasing duty, which may at any time be performed in a single hour, had I not for some time past entertained a lively and probable hope of visiting you this autumn in person; had I not flattered myself, that the very next post I might be able to fix the day of my departure from Lausanne, and almost of my arrival at the Belvidere. That hope is now vanished, and my journey to England is unavoidably delayed till the spring or summer of next year. The extraordinary state of public affairs in France opposes an insuperable bar to my passage; and every prudent stranger will avoid that inhospitable land, in which a people of slaves is suddenly become a nation of tyrants and cannibals. The German road is indeed safe, but, independent of a great addition of fatigue and expense, the armies of Austria and Prussia now cover that frontier; and though the generals are polite, and the troops well disciplined, I am not desirous of passing through the clouds of hussars and pandours that attend their motions. These public reasons are fortified by some private motives, and to this delay I resign myself, with a sigh for the present, and a hope for the future.

What a strange wild world do we live in! You will allow me to be a tolerable historian, yet, on a fair review of ancient and modern times, I can find

none that bear any affinity with the present. My knowledge of your discerning mind, and my recollection of your political principles, assure me, that you are no more a *democrat* than myself. Had the French improved their glorious opportunity to erect a free constitutional monarchy on the ruins of arbitrary power and the Bastille, I should applaud their generous effort; but this total subversion of all rank, order, and government could be productive only of a popular monster, which, after devouring every thing else, must finally devour itself. I was once apprehensive that this monster would propagate some imps in our happy island, but they seem to have been crushed in their cradle; and I acknowledge with pleasure and pride the good sense of the English nation, who seem truly conscious of the blessings which they enjoy: and I am happy to find that the most respectable part of Opposition has cordially joined in the support of "things as they are." Even this country has been somewhat tainted with the democratical infection; the vigilance of government has been exerted, the malecontents have been awed, the misguided have been undeceived, the fever in the blood has gradually subsided, and I flatter myself that we have secured the tranquil enjoyment of obscure felicity, which we had been almost tempted to despise.

You have heard, most probably, from Mrs. Holroyd, of the long-expected though transient satisfaction which I received from the visit of Lord Sheffield's family. He appeared highly satisfied with my arrangements here, my house, garden, and situation, at

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once in town and country, which are indeed singular in their kind, and which have often made me regret the impossibility of showing them to my dearest friend of the Belvidere. Lord Sheffield is still, and will ever continue, the same active being; always employed for himself, his friends, and the public, and always persuading himself that he wishes for leisure and repose. There are various roads to happiness; but when I compare his situation with mine, I do not, upon the whole, repent that I have given the preference to a life of celibacy and retirement. Although I have been long a spectator of the great world, my unambitious temper has been content with the occupations and rewards of study; and although my library be still my favorite room, I am now no longer stimulated by the prosecution of any literary work. The society of Lausanne is adapted to my taste; my house is open to many agreeable acquaintance, and some real friends; the uniformity of the natives is enlivened by travellers of all nations; and this summer I am happy in a familiar intercourse with Lady Spencer, the Duchess of Devonshire, Lady Elizabeth Foster, and Lady Duncannon, who seems to be gradually recovering from her severe complaints. My health is remarkably good. I have now enjoyed a long interval from the gout; and I endeavour to use with moderation Dr. Cadogan's best remedies, temperance, exercise, and cheerfulness. Adieu, dear Madam; may every blessing that nature can allow be attendant on your latter season. Your age and my habits will not permit a very close correspondence; but I wish to hear, and I presume

to ask, a speedy *direct* account of your own situation. May it be such as I shall hear with pleasure! Once more adieu, I live in hopes of embracing you next summer at the Belvidere, but you may be assured that I bring over nothing for the press

Nº CCVIII.

EDWARD GIBBON Esquire to the Right Honorable
Lady * * * * * at Florence.

LAUSANNE, November 8th, 1792.

I REMEMBER it has been observed of Augustus and Cromwell, that they should never have been born, or never have died; and I am sometimes tempted to apply the same remark to certain beings of a foster nature, who, after a short residence on the banks of the Lemane Lake, are now flown far away over the Alps and the Appenines, and have abandoned their votaries to the insipidity of common life. The remark, however, would be unreasonable, and the sentiment ungrateful. The pleasures of the summer, the lighter and the graver moments of the society of *petty Ouchy*^{***}, are indeed past, perhaps never to return; but the remembrance of that delightful period is itself a pleasure, and I enjoy, I cherish the flattering persuasion that it is remembered with some satisfaction in the gallery of Florence, as well as in the library of Lausanne. Long before we were reduced to seek a refuge from the savages of Gaul, I had secretly indulged the thought, or at least the wish, of asking leave to attend *mes bonnes amies* over Mount

D d 4

Genis, of basking once more in an Italian sun, and of paying once more my devotions to the Apollo of the Vatican. But my aged and gouty limbs would have failed me in the bold attempt of scaling St. Bernard, and I wanted patience to undertake the tedious circumitineration of the Tirol. Your return to the Pays de Vaud next summer I hold to be extremely doubtful; but my anxiety on that head is somewhat diminished by the sure and certain hope of our all meeting in England the ensuing winter. I flatter myself that the Porter of Devonshire-house will not be inexorable; yet I am afraid of losing you amidst the smoke and tumult of fashionable London, in which the night is devoted to pleasure and the morning to sleep. My ambition may perhaps aspire to pass some hours in the palladian Chiswick, or even some days at Chatsworth; but these princely mansions will not recal the freedom, the ease, the *primitive* solitude of dear little Ouchy. Indeed! indeed! your fair friend was made for something better than a Duchefs.

Although you most magnanimously abandoned us in the crisis of our fate, yet as you seem to interest yourself in the hopes and fears of this little country, it is my duty to inform you, that we still hang in a state of suspense; inclining, however, to the side of hope, rather than of despair. The garrison, and even the bourgeoisie, of Geneva showed a vigorous resolution of defending the city; and our frontiers have been gradually covered with fifteen thousand intrepid Swifs. But the threats of a bombardment, the weight of expence, and, above all, the victorious ascendant of the French republic, have abated

much of the first heroic ardor. Monsieur de Montefquieu displayed a pacific, and even yielding, temper; and a treaty was signed, dismissing the Swiss garrison from Geneva, and removing the French troops to the distance of ten leagues. But this last condition which is indeed objectionable, displeased the convention, who refused to ratify the agreement. New conferences were held, new messengers have been dispatched; but unless they are determined to find or to make a subject of quarrel, it is probable that we shall purchase peace by submission. As Geneva has a very dangerous democratical party within her walls, and as the national guards are already allowed to enter the city, and to tamper with the inhabitants and the garrison, I will not ensure that poor little republic from one week to another. For ourselves, the approaches of danger must be more gradual. I think we are now safe for this winter, and I no longer run to the window to see whether the French are coming. But with so many enemies without, and so many within, the government of Berne, and the tranquillity of this happy country, will be suspended by a very slender twig; and I began to fear that Satan will drive me out of the possession of Paradise. My only comfort will be, that I have been expelled by the power, and not seduced by the arts of the blackest dæmon in hell, the dæmon of democracy. Where indeed will this tremendous inundation, this conspiracy of numbers against rank and property, be finally stopped. Europe seems to be universally tainted, and wherever the French can light a match, they may blow up a mine. Our only hope is now in their devouring one another;

they are furious and hungry monsters, and war is almost declared between the convention and the city of Paris, between the moderate republicans and the absolute levellers. A majority of the convention wishes to spare the royal victims, but they must yield to the rage of the people and to the thirst of popularity, and a few hours may produce a trial, a sentence, and a guillotine. Mr. Necker is publishing a pamphlet in defence of the August sufferers; but his feeble and tardy efforts will rather do credit to himself, than service to his clients. You kindly ask after the situation of poor Severy. Alas! it is now hopeless; all his complaints are increased, all his resources are exhausted; where nature cannot work, the effect of art is vain, and his best friends begin to wish him a quiet release. His wife, I had almost said his widow, is truly an object of compassion. The dragoon is returned for a few days; and if his domestic sorrows gave him leave, he would almost regret the want of an occasion to deserve his feather and cockade. Your note has been communicated to Madame de Montolieu; but as she is engaged with a dying aunt, I have not yet seen her. Madame Daguefseau has hastily left us; the last decrees seemed to give the *émigrés* only the option of starving a broad or hanging at home; yet she has ventured into France, on some faint glimpse of clemency for the women and children. Madame de Bouillon does not appear to move. Madame de Stael, whom I saw last week at Rolle, is still uncertain where she shall drop her burden; but she must soon resolve, for the young lady or gentleman is at the door;

Demanding life, impatient for the skies.

By this time you have joined the Ladies Spencer and Duncannon, whom I beg leave to salute with the proper shades of respect and tenderness. You may, if you please *be belle comme un ange*; but I do not like your comparison of the archangel. Those of Milton, with whom I am better acquainted at present than with Guido, are all masculine manly figures, with a great sword by their side and six wings folding round them. The heathen goddesses would please me as little. Your friend is less severe than Minerva, more decent than Venus, less cold than Diana, and not quite so great a vixen as the Ox-eyed Juno. To express that infallible mixture of grace, sweetness, and dignity, a new race of beings must be invented, and I am a mere prose narrator of matter of fact. Bess is much nearer the level of a mortal, but a mortal for whom the wisest man, historic or medical, would throw away two or three worlds, if he had them in his possession. From the aforesaid Bess I have received three marks of kind remembrance, from the foot of St. Bernard, with an exquisite monument of art and friendship, from Turin, and finally from Milan, with a most valuable inscription from the Dukes. At birds in the air it is difficult to take aim, and I fear or hope that I shall sustain some reproaches on your not finding this long epistle at Florence. I will mark it N^o 1.; and why would I despair of my future since I can say with truth, that since your departure I have not spent so agreeable a morning. To each of the dear little Caro's pray deliver nine kisses for me, which shall be repaid on demand. My best compliments to Mr. Pelham, if he is with you.

N^o CCIX.

EDWARD GIBBON *Esquire to the Right Honorable*
*Lady * * * * * at Florence.*

LAUSANNE, April 4th, 1793.

HAD I not given previous notice of my own unworthiness, the plea of being an old incorrigible offender would serve only to aggravate my guilt; it is still sufficiently black, and I can patiently bear every reproach, except the cruel and unjust imputation of having forgot my fair friends of the Arno and the Tyber. They would indeed have been less present to my thoughts, had I maintained a regular *weekly* correspondence; since, by the effect of my negligence, not a *day* has passed without a serious, though fruitless, resolution of writing by the very next post. What may have somewhat contributed, besides original sin, to this vile procrastination, is the course of events that has filled this abominable winter. As long as the poor King's fate was on suspense, one waited from post to post, between hope and fear, and when the blow was struck, even Shakspeare's language was inadequate to express our grief and indignation. I have never approved the execution of Charles the First; yet Charles had invaded, in many respects, the ancient constitution of England, and the question had been judged in the field of Naseby before it was tried in Westminster-hall. But Louis had given and suffered every thing. The cruelty of the French was aggravated by ingratitude, and a life of innocence was crowned by the death of a saint, or, what is far better, of a virtuous prince,

who deserves our pity and esteem. He might have lived and reigned, had he possessed as much active courage as he was endowed with patient fortitude. When I read the accounts from home, of the universal grief and indignation which that fatal event excited, I indeed gloried in the character of an Englishman. Our national fame is now pure and splendid; we have nobly stood forth in the common cause of mankind; and although our armaments are somewhat slow, I still persuade myself that we shall give the last deadly wound to the Gallic hydra. The King of Prussia is likewise slow, and your poor friend, the Duke of Brunswick, is now not censured but forgotten. We turn our eyes to the Prince of Coburg and his Austrians, and it must be confessed, that the deliverance of Holland and Brabant from such a dragon as Dumourier is a very tolerable employment for the month of March. These blossoms of the spring will be followed, it may be fairly hoped, by the fruits of summer; and in the mean while the troubles of Paris, and the revolt of the provinces, may promote by the increase of anarchy, the restoration of order. I see that restoration through a dark cloud; but if France be lost, the rest of Europe, I believe and trust, will be saved. But amidst the hurricane, I dare not fix my eyes on the *Temple*. So much for politics, which now engrosses the waking and sleeping thoughts of every feeling and thinking animal. In this country we are tranquil, and I believe safe, at least for this summer; though peace has been purchased at some expense of national honor, of the old reputation of Swiss courage, we have crouched before the tiger, and

stroked him till he has sheathed his claws, and ceased for a moment to roar. My journey to England this year must depend on the events of the campaign; as I am fully resolved rather to remain quiet another autumn and winter in my sweet habitation, than to encounter the dangers of the sea and land. I envy the pleasures which you and your companions have enjoyed at Florence and at Rome; nor can I decide which have tasted the most perfect delight, those to whom such beauties were new, or those to whom they were familiar. A fine eye, correct judgment, and elegant sensibility, are requisite to qualify the studious traveller; and these gifts have been liberally dispensed among the Ouchy caravan. But when you have been gratified, though not satiated, with the Hesperian prospect, to what fortunate clime will you direct your footsteps? Have we any hopes of meeting (for my journey, at all events, would be late) in the shades, or rather in the sunshine, of Ouchy? Should Mount Cenis be still impervious, you have trampled on St. Bernard in a more rigorous season; and whatsoever may be the state of the world, the Pays de Vaud will afford you a secure asylum, or a pleasant station. I rejoice to hear of Lady Besborough's improvement. Will that new title make any difference in the plan? Is the Duchess very impatient to revisit England? Except some trifling considerations of children, &c. all countries may be indifferent to her; as she is sure of being loved and admired in all. I am anxious and impatient to learn the result of your counsels; but I feel myself unworthy of a regular correspondence, and am not desirous of heaping fresh coals of fire on my head.

I am happy to find that you forgive and pity my friend Necker, against whom you all entertained some Versailles prejudices. As his heart has been always pure, he cannot feel remorse; but as his conduct has been unsuccessful he is penetrated with grief and regret. Madame de Stael has written to me from England; she likes the country, but means to fly over again in May.

N^o CCX.

*Mr. GIBBON to Lord * * * * **

MY LORD, ¹⁰³ROLLE, February 23d, 1793.

I do not merely congratulate your Lordship's promotion to an office which your abilities have long deserved. My satisfaction does not arise from an assurance of the wisdom and vigor which administration will derive from the support of so respectable an ally. But as a friend to government in general, I most sincerely rejoice that you are now armed in the common cause against the most dangerous fanatics that have ever invaded the peace of Europe; against the new barbarians, who labor to confound the order and happiness of society; and who, in the opinion of thinking men, are not less the enemies of subjects than of kings. The hopes of the wise and good are now fixed on the success of England; and I am persuaded that my personal attachment to your Lordship will be amply gratified by the important share which your counsels will assume in that success. I could wish that some of your former associates possessed sufficient strength of mind to extricate themselves from the toils of prejudice and party. But I grieve that a man, whom it is impossible for me not to love and admire,

should refuse to obey the voice of his country; and I begin to fear that the powerful genius of Mr. * * *, instead of being useful, will be adverse to the public service. At this momentous crisis we should insist our whole force of virtue, ability, and spirit; and without any view to his private advantage, I could wish that * * * * * might be properly stationed in some part of the line.

Mr. Necker, in whose house I am now residing on a visit of some days, wishes me to express the sentiments of esteem and consideration which he entertains for your Lordship's character. As a friend to the interest of mankind, he is warmly attached to the welfare of Great Britain, which he has long revered as the first, and perhaps as the last asylum of genuine liberty. His late eloquent work, *Du pouvoir exécutif*, which your Lordship has assuredly read, is a valuable testimony of his esteem for our constitution; and the testimony of a sagacious and impartial stranger may have taught some of our countrymen to value the political blessings which they have been tempted to despise.

I cherish a lively hope of being in England, and of paying my respects to your Lordship before the end of the summer: but the events of the year are so uncertain, and the sea and land are encompassed with so many difficulties and dangers, that I am doubtful whether it will be practicable for me to execute my purpose.

I am, my Lord, most respectfully, and your Lordship will permit me to add most affectionately, your most faithful humble servant.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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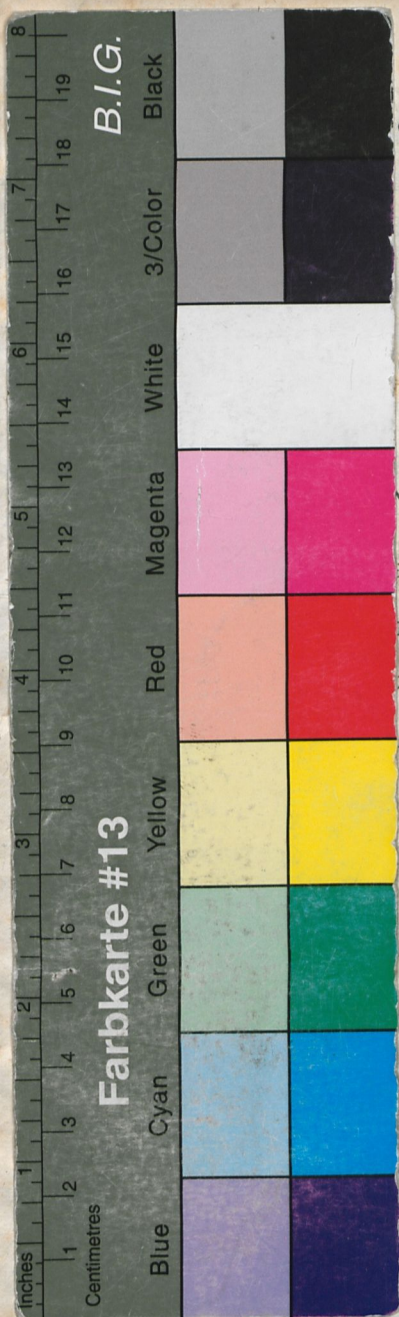
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