

sent the virtues and simplicity of the author's character.

It is probable the world would have been gratified with many other of St. Pierre's productions, had he not, at rather a late day, sacrificed his additional fame to marriage, and the tame enticements of domestic life. This sin against science he attempted to extenuate to his friends, by the proverb "Better late than never;" to which with much greater propriety they might have replied, "Better never than late." Or early either, say I. For what has a being dedicated to academic shades, and attenuated with study, to do with the everlasting distractions of a family? There are no more insurmountable barriers to literary attainments, than chubby children and a charming wife. Literary men are but indifferent propagators of any other species than letters; and Madame Dacier herself would be no better than a hindrance in the pursuit of learning. The emperor showed his usual good sense in permitting the marriage of priests; because it not only renders their lives both happier and more exemplary, but serves also to replenish population. But as the interest of letters is one of the nearest his imperial heart, would he not, in return for this dispensation to the priesthood, have done well by enjoining celibacy on all academicians and philosophers?

The reign of Louis XIV. is called the Augustan age of France. Yet all the pensions given by that monarch to men of letters, amounted to no more than

* Line crossed out.