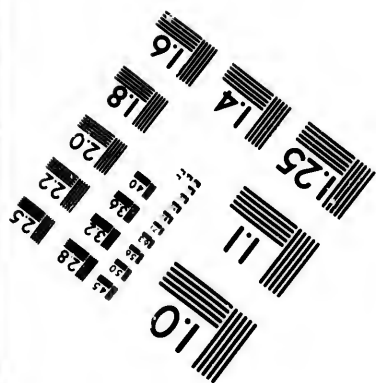
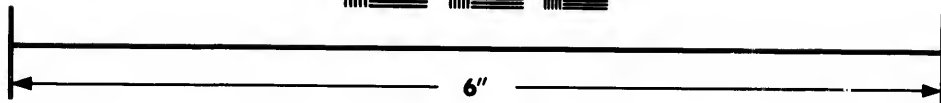
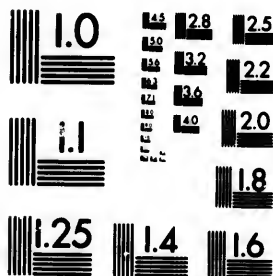


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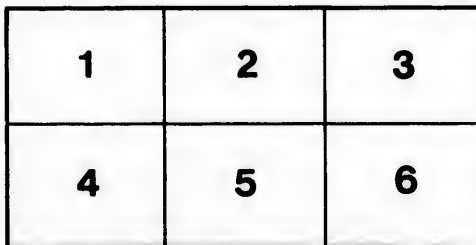
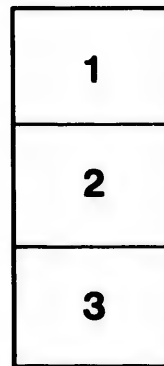
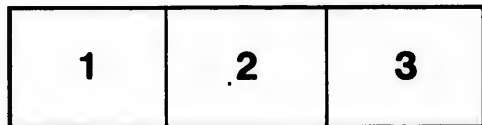
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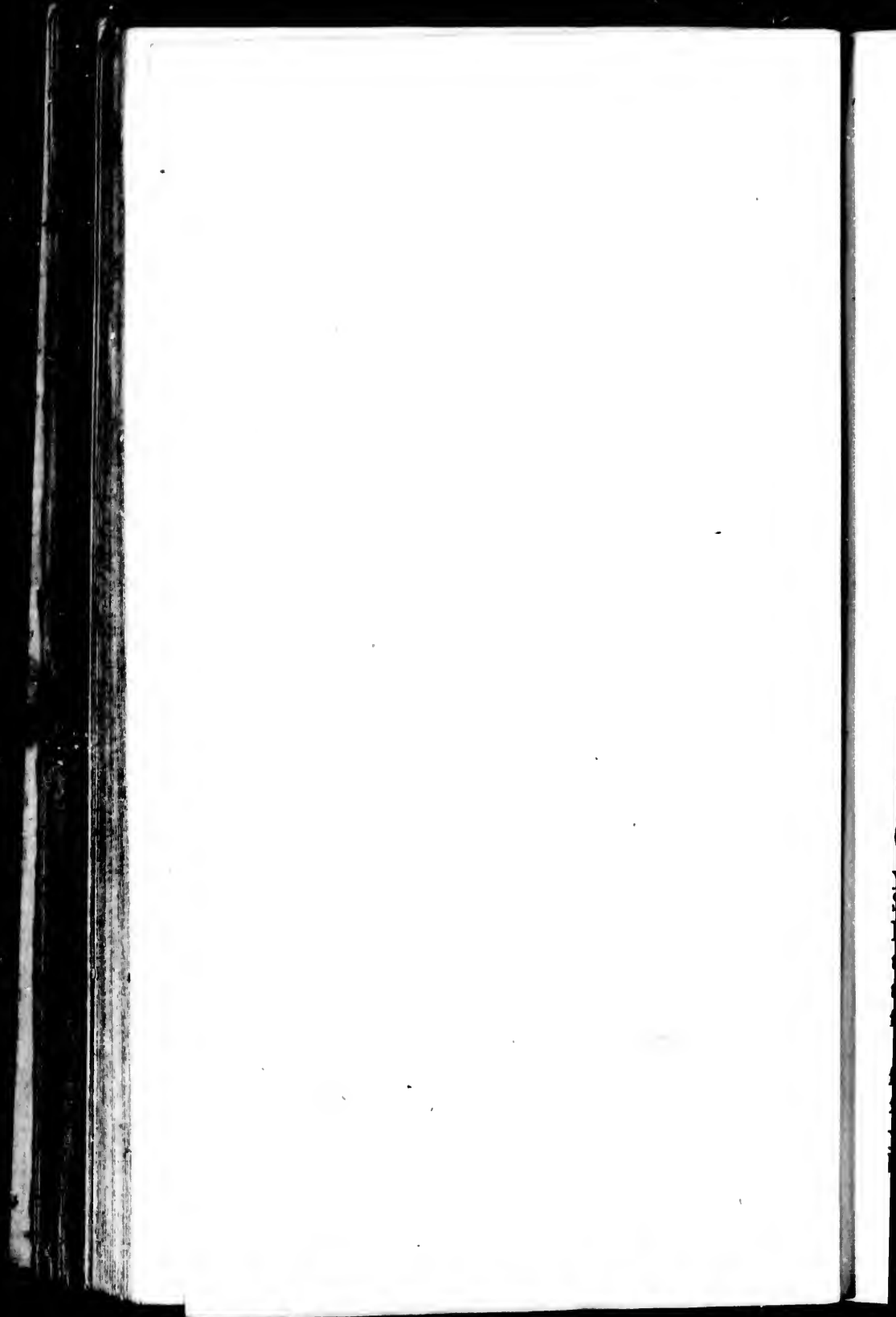
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T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F
EMILY MONTAGUE.

L E T T E R C L X X I X .

To Colonel RIVERS, at Bellfield, Rutland.

Rose-hill, Sept. 17.

CAN you in earnest ask such a question? can you suppose I ever felt the least degree of love for Sir George? No, my Rivers, never did your Emily feel tenderness till she saw the loveliest, the most amiable of his sex, till those eyes spoke the sentiments of a soul, every idea of which was similar to her own.

Yes, my Rivers, our souls have the most perfect resemblance; I never heard you speak without finding the feelings of my own heart developed; your conversation conveyed your Emily's ideas, but cloathed in the language of angels.

I thought well of Sir George; I saw him as the

VOL. IV.

man

man destined to be my husband ; I fancied he loved me, and that gratitude obliged me to a return: carried away by the ardor of my friends for this marriage, I rather suffered than approved his addresses ; I had not courage to resist the torrent, I therefore gave way to it ; I loved no other, I fancied my want of affection a native coldness of temper. I felt a languid esteem, which I endeavoured to flatter myself was love ; but the moment I saw you, the delusion vanished.

Your eyes, my Rivers, in one moment convinced me I had a heart ; you staid some weeks with us in the country : with what transport do I recollect those pleasing moments ! how did my heart beat whenever you approached me ! what charms did I find in your conversation ! I heard you talk with a delight of which I was not mistress. I fancied every woman who saw you felt the same emotions : my tenderness increased imperceptibly without my perceiving the consequences of my indulging the dear pleasure of seeing you.

I found I loved, yet was doubtful of your sentiments ; my heart, however, flattered me yours was equally affected ; my situation prevented an explanation ; but love has a thousand ways of making himself understood.

How dear to me were those soft, those delicate attentions, which told me all you felt for me, without communicating it to others !

Do you remember that day, my Rivers, when, sitting in the little hawthorn grove, near the borders of the river, the rest of the company, of which Sir George was one, ran to look at a ship that was passing : I would have followed ; you asked me to stay, by a look which it was impossible to mistake ; nothing could be more imprudent than my stay, yet

yet I had not resolution to refuse what I saw gave you pleasure : I stayed ; you pressed my hand, you regarded me with a look of unutterable love.

My Rivers, from that dear moment your Emily vowed never to be another's : she vowed not to sacrifice all the happiness of her life to a romantic parade of fidelity to a man whom she had been betrayed into receiving as a lover ; she resolved, if necessary, to own to him the tenderness with which you had inspired her, to entreat from his esteem, from his compassion, a release from engagements which made her wretched.

My heart burns with the love of virtue, I am tremblingly alive to fame : what bitterness then must have been my portion had I first seen you when the wife of another !

Such is the powerful sympathy that unites us, that I fear, that virtue, that strong sense of honor and fame, so powerful in minds most turned to tenderness, would only have served to make more poignant the pangs of hopeless, despairing love.

How blest am I, that we met before my situation made it a crime to love : I shudder at the idea how wretched I might have been, had I seen you a few months later.

I am just returned from a visit at a few miles distance. I find a letter from my dear Bell that she will be here to-morrow : how do I long to see her, to talk to her of my Rivers.

I am interrupted.

Adieu ! Yours,

EMILY MONTAGUE.

L E T-

L E T T E R C L X X X .

To Mrs. T E M P L E .

Rose-hill, Sept. 18, Morning.

I HAVE this moment, my dear Mrs. Temple's letter : she will imagine my transports at the happy event she mentions : my dear Rivers has, in some degree, sacrificed even filial affection to his tenderness for me ; the consciousness of this has even cast a damp on the pleasure I should otherwise have felt, at the prospect of spending my life with with the most excellent of mankind : I shall now be his, without the painful reflection of having lessened the enjoyments of the best parent that ever existed.

I should be blest indeed, my amiable friend, if I did not suffer from my too anxious tenderness ; I dread the possibility of my becoming in time less dear to your brother ; I love him to such excess that I could not survive the loss of his affection.

There is no distress, no want, I could not bear with delight for him ; but if I lose his heart, I lose all for which life is worth keeping.

Could I bear to see those looks of ardent love converted into the cold glances of indifference.

You will, my dearest friend, pity a heart, whose too great sensibility wounds itself : why should I fear ? was ever tenderness equal to that of my Rivers ? can a heart like his change from caprice ? It shall be the business of my live to merit his tenderness.

I will not give way to fears which injure him, and, indulged, would destroy all my happiness.

I expect

EMILY MONTAGUE. 115

I expect Mr. and Mrs. Fitzgerald every moment.

Adieu !

Your affectionate

EMILY MONTAGUE.

L E T T E R CLXXXI.

To Captain FITZGERALD.

Bellfield, Sept. 17.

YOU say true, my dear Fitzgerald: friendship, like love, is more the child of sympathy than of reason; though inspired by qualities very opposite to those which give love, it strikes like that in a moment: like that, it is as free as air, and, when constrained, loses all its spirit.

In both, from some nameless cause, at least some cause to us incomprehensible, the affections take fire the instant two persons, whose minds are in union, observe each other, which, however, they may often meet without doing.

It is therefore as impossible for others to point out objects of our friendship as love: our choice must be uninfluenced, if we wish to find happiness in either.

Cold, lifeless esteem may grow from a long tasteless acquaintance; but real affection makes a sudden and lively impression.

This impression is improved, is strengthened by time, and more intimate knowledge of the merit of

of the person who makes it ; but it is, it must be spontaneous, or be nothing.

I felt this sympathy powerfully in regard to yourself ; I had the strongest partiality for you before I knew how very worthy you were of my esteem.

Your countenance and manner made an impression on me, which inclined me to take your virtues upon trust.

It is not always safe to depend on these preventive feelings ; but in general the face is a pretty faithful index of the mind.

I propose being in town in four or five days.

Twelve o'clock.

My mother has this moment a second letter from her relation, who is coming home, and proposes a marriage between me and his daughter, to whom he will give twenty thousand pounds now, and the rest of his fortune at his death.

As Emily's fault, if love can allow her one, is an excess of romantic generosity, the fault of most uncorrupted female minds, I am very anxious to marry her before she knows of this proposal, lest she should think it a proof of tenderness to aim at making me wretched, in order to make me rich.

I therefore entreat you and Mrs. Fitzgerald to stay at Rose-hill, and prevent her coming to town, till she is mine past the power of retreat.

Our relation may have mentioned his design to persons less prudent than our little party ; and she may hear of it, if she is in London.

But, independently of my fear of her spirit of romance, I feel that it would be an indelicacy to
let

let her know of this proposal at present, and look like attempting to make a merit of my refusal.

It is not to you, my dear friend, I need say the gifts of fortune are nothing to me without her for whose sake alone I wish to possess them: you know my heart, and you also know this is the sentiment of every man who loves.

But I can with truth say much more; I do not even wish an increase of fortune, considering it abstractly from its being incompatible with my marriage with the loveliest of women; I am indifferent to all but independence, wealth would not make me happier; on the contrary, it might break into my present little plan of enjoyment, by forcing me to give to common acquaintance, of whom wealth will always attract a crowd, those precious hours devoted to friendship and domestic pleasure.

I think my present income just what a wise man would wish, and very sincerely join in the philosophical prayer of the royal prophet, "Give me neither poverty nor riches."

I love the vale, and had always an aversion to very extensive prospects.

I will hasten my coming as much as possible, and hope to be at Rose-hill on Monday next: I shall be a prey to anxiety till Emily is irrevocably mine.

Tell Mrs. Fitzgerald, I am all impatience to kiss her hand.

Your affectionate

ED. RIVERS.

L E T-

L E T T E R CLXXXII.

To Captain F E R M O R.

Richmond, Sept. 18.

I AM this moment returned to Richmond from a journey: I am rejoiced at your arrival, and impatient to see you; for I am so happy as not to have out-lived my impatience.

How is my little Bell? I am as much in love with her as ever; this you will conceal from Captain Fitzgerald, lest he should be alarmed, for I am as formidable a rival as a man of fourscore can be supposed to be.

I am extremely obliged to you, my dear Fermor, for having introduced me to a very amiable man, in your friend Colonel Rivers.

I begin to be so sensible I am an old fellow, that I feel a very lively degree of gratitude to the young ones who visit me; and look on every agreeable new acquaintance under thirty as an acquisition I had no right to expect.

You know I have always thought personal advantages of much more real value than accidental ones; and that those who possessed the former had much the greatest right to be proud.

Youth, health, beauty, understanding are substantial goods; wealth and title comparatively ideal ones; I therefore think a young man who condescends to visit an old one, the healthy who visit the sick, the man of sense who spends his time with a fool, and even a handsome young fellow with an ugly one, are the persons who confer the favor,

favour, whatever difference there may be in rank or fortune.

Colonel Rivers did me the honor to spend a day with me here, and I have not often lately passed a pleasanter one: the desire I had not to discredit your partial recommendation, and my very strong inclinations to seduce him to come again, made me intirely discard the old man; and I believe your friend will tell you the hours did not pass on leaden wings.

I expect you, with Mr. and Mrs. Fitzgerald, to pass some time with me at Richmond.

I have the best claret in the universe, and as lively a relish for it as at five and twenty. Adieu!

Your affectionate

H—

L E T T E R CLXXXIII.

To Colonel RIVERS, at Bellfield, Rutland.

Rose-hill, Sept, 18.

SINCE I sent away my letter, I have your last.

You tell me, my dear Rivers, the strong emotion I betrayed at seeing Sir George, when you came together to Montreal, made you fear I loved him; that you were jealous of the blush which glowed on my cheek, when he entered the room: that you still remember it with regret; that you still fancy I had once some degree of tenderness for him, and beg me to account for the apparent confusion I betrayed at his sight.

I own

I own that emotion ; my confusion was indeed too great to be concealed : but was he alone, my Rivers ? can you forget that he had with him the most lovely of mankind ?

Sir George was handsome ; I have often regarded his person with admiration, but it was the admiration we give to a statue.

I listened coldly to his love, I felt no emotion at his sight ; but when you appeared, my heart beat, I blushed, I turned pale by turns, my eyes assumed a new softness, I trembled, and every pulse confessed the master of my soul.

My friends are come ; I am called down. Adieu ! Be assured your Emily never breathed a sigh but for Rivers ! Adieu !

Yours,

EMILY MONTAGUE.

L E T T E R CLXXXIV.

To Colonel RIVERS, at Bellfield, Rutland.

London, Sept. 18.

I HAVE this moment your letter, we are setting out in ten minutes for Rose-hill, where I will finish this, and hope to give you a pleasing account of your Emily.

You are certainly right in keeping this proposal a secret at present ; depend on our silence ; I could, however, wish you the fortune, were it possible to have it without the lady.

Were I to praise your delicacy on this occasion, I should injure you ; it was not in your power to
act

act differently ; you are only consistent with yourself.

I am pleased with your idea of a situation : a house embosomed in the grove, where all the view is what the eye can take in, speaks a happy master, content at home ; a wide-extended prospect, one who is looking abroad for happiness.

I love the country : the taste for rural scenes is the taste born with us. After seeking pleasure in vain among the works of art, we are forced to come back to the point from whence we set out, and find our enjoyment in the lovely simplicity of nature.

Rose-hill, Evening.

I am afraid Emily knows your secret ; she has been in tears almost ever since we came ; the servant is going to the post-office, and I have but a moment to tell you we will stay here till your arrival, which you will hasten as much as possible.

Adieu !

Your affectionate

J. FITZGERALD.

L E T T E R CLXXXV.

To Colonel RIVERS, at Bellfield, Rutland.

Rose-hill, Sept. 18.

IF I was not certain of your esteem and friendship, my dear Rivers, I should tremble at the request I am going to make you.

It is to suspend our marriage for some time, and not ask me the reason of this delay.

Be assured of my tenderness; be assured my whole soul is yours, that you are dearer to me than life, that I love you as never woman loved, that I live, I breathe but for you; that I would die to make you happy.

In what words shall I convey to the most beloved of his sex, the ardent tenderness of my soul? how convince him of what I suffer from being forced to make a request so contrary to the dictates of my heart?

He cannot, will not, doubt his Emily's affection: I cannot support the idea that it is possible he should for one instant. What I suffer at this moment is inexpressible.

My heart is too much agitated to say more.

I will write again in a few days.

I know not what I would say; but indeed, my Rivers, I love you; you yourself can scarce form an idea to what excess! Adieu!

Your faithful

EMILY MONTAGUE.

L E T T E R CLXXXVI.

To Miss MONTAGUE, Rose-hill, Berkshire.

Bellfield, Sept. 20.

NO, Emily, you never loved; I have been long hurt by your tranquillity in regard to our marriage; your too scrupulous attention to decorum in leaving my sister's house might have alarmed me, if love had not placed a bandage before my eyes.

Cruel

Cruel girl! I repeat it! you never loved; I have your friendship, but you know nothing of that ardent passion, that dear enthusiasm, which makes us indifferent to all but itself: your-love is from the imagination, not the heart.

The very professions of tenderness in your last, are a proof of your consciousness of indifference; you repeat too often that you love me; you say too much; that anxiety to persuade me of your affection, shews too plainly you are sensible I have reason to doubt it.

You have placed me on the rack; a thousand fears, a thousand doubts, succeed each other in my soul. Has some happier man —

No, my Emily, distracted as I am, I will not be unjust: I do not suspect you of inconstancy; 'tis of your coldness only I complain: you never felt the lively impatience of love; or you would not condemn a man, whom you at least esteem, to suffer longer its unutterable tortures.

If there is a real cause for this delay, why conceal it from me? have I not a right to know what so nearly interests me? but what cause? are you not mistress of yourself?

My Emily, you blush to own to me the insensibility of your heart: you once fancied you loved; you are ashamed to say that you are mistaken.

You cannot surely have been influenced by any motive relative to our fortune; no idle tale can have made you retract a promise, which rendered me the happiest of mankind: if I have your heart, I am richer than an oriental monarch.

Short as life is, my dearest girl, is it of consequence what part we play in it? is wealth at all essential to happiness?

The tender affections are the only sources of true

true pleasure; the highest, the most respectable titles, in the eye of reason, are the tender ones of friend, of husband, and of father; it is from the dear soft ties of social love your Rivers expects his felicity.

You have but one way, my dear Emily, to convince me of your tenderness: I shall set off for Rose-hill in twelve hours; you must give me your hand the moment I arrive, or confess your Rivers was never dear to you.

Write and send a servant instantly to meet me at my mother's house in town: I cannot support the torment of suspense.

There is not on earth so wretched a being as I am at this moment; I never knew till now to what excess I loved: you must be mine, my Emily, or I must cease to live.

L E T T E R CLXXXVII.

To Captain FITZGERALD, Rose-hill, Berkshire.
Bellfield, Sept. 20.

ALL I feared has certainly happened; Emily has undoubtedly heard of this proposal, and, from a parade of generosity, a generosity however inconsistent with love, wishes to postpone our marriage till my relation arrives.

I am hurt beyond words, at the manner in which she has wrote to me on this subject; I have, in regard to Sir George, experienced that these are not the sentiments of a heart truly enamoured.

I therefore

I therefore fear this romantic step is the effect of a coldness of which I thought her incapable; and that her affection is only a more lively degree of friendship, with which, I will own to you, my heart will not be satisfied.

I would engross, I would employ, I would absorb, every faculty of that lovely mind.

I have too long suffered prudence to delay my happiness: I cannot longer live without her: if she loves me, I shall on Tuesday call her mine.

Adieu! I shall be with you almost as soon as this letter.

Your affectionate

ED. RIVERS.

L E T T E R C I . X X X V I I I .

To Colonel RIVERS, Clarges-street.

Rose-hill, Sept. 21.

IS it then possible? can my Rivers doubt his Emily's tenderness?

Do I only esteem you, my Rivers? can my eyes have so ill explained the feelings of my heart?

You accuse me of not sharing your impatience: do you then allow nothing to the modesty, the blushing delicacy of my sex?

Could you see into my soul, you would cease to call me cold and insensible.

Can

I therefore

Can you forget, my Rivers, those moments, when, doubtful of the sentiments of your heart, mine every instant betrayed its weakness, when every look spoke the restless fondness of my soul! when, lost in the delight of seeing you, I forgot I was almost the wife of another?

But I will say no more; my Rivers tells me I have already said too much: he is displeas'd with his Emily's tenderness; he complains that I tell him too often I love him.

You say I can give you one certain proof of my affection.

I will give you that proof: I will be yours whenever you please, though ruin should be the consequence to both; I despise every other consideration, when my Rivers's happiness is at stake: is there any request he is capable of making, which his Emily will refuse?

You are the arbiter of my fate: I have no will but yours; yet I entreat you to believe no common cause could have made me hazard giving a moment's pain to that dear bosom: you will one time know to what excess I have loved you.

Were the empire of the world or your affection offered me, I should not hesitate one moment on the choice, even were I certain never to see you more.

I cannot form an idea of happiness equal to that of being beloved by the most amiable of mankind.

Judge then, if I would lightly wish to defer an event, which is to give me the transport of passing my life in the dear employment of making him happy.

I only entreat that you will decline asking me, till I judge proper to tell you, why I first begged
our

our marriage might be deferred: let it be till then
 forgot I ever made such a request.

You will not, my dear Rivers, refuse this proof
 of complaisance to her who too plainly shews she
 can refuse you nothing.

Adieu! Yours,

EMILY MONTAGUE.

L E T T E R CLXXXIX.

To Miss MONTAGUE, Rose-hill, Berkshire.

Clarges-street, Sept. 21, Two o'clock.

CAN you, my angel, forgive my insolent
 impatience, and attribute it to the true cause, ex-
 cess of love?

Could I be such a monster as to blame my
 sweet Emily's dear expressions of tenderness; I hate
 myself for being capable of writing such a
 letter.

Be assured, I will strictly comply with all she
 desires: what condition is there to which I would
 not consent, to make the loveliest of women mine?

I will follow the servant in two hours; I shall
 be at Rose-hill by eight o'clock.

Adieu! my dearest Emily!

Your faithful

ED. RIVERS.

L E T-

L E T T E R C X C .

To JOHN TEMPLE, Esq. Temple-house,
Rutland.

Sept. 21, Nine at night.

THE loveliest of women has consented to make me happy : she remonstrated, she doubted ; but her tenderness conquered all her reluctance. Tomorrow I shall call her mine.

We shall set out immediately for your house, where we hope to be the next day to dinner : you will therefore postpone your journey to town a week, at the end of which we intend going to Bellfield. Captain Fermor and Mrs. Fitzgerald accompany us down. Emily's relation, Mrs. H——, has business which prevents her ; and Fitzgerald is obliged to stay another month in town, to transact the affair of his majority.

Never did Emily look so lovely as this evening : there is a sweet confusion mixed with tenderness, in her whole look and manner, which is charming beyond all expression.

Adieu ! I have not a moment to spare : even this absence from her is treason to love. Say every thing for me to my mother and Lucy.

Yours,

ED. RIVERS.

L E T -

L E T T E R CXCI.

To JOHN TEMPLE, Esq. Temple-house,
Rutland.

Rose-hill, Sept. 22, Ten o'clock.

SH E is mine, my dear Temple; and I am happy almost above mortality.

I cannot paint to you her loveliness; the graces, the dignity, the mild majesty of her air, is softened by a smile like that of angels: her eyes have a tender sweetness, her cheeks a blush of refined affection, which must be seen to be imagined.

I envy Captain Fermor the happiness of being in the same chaise with her; I shall be very bad company to Bell, who insists on my being her companion for the journey.

Adieu! the chaises are at the door.

Your affectionate

ED. RIVERS.

RIVERS.

L E T-

G 5

L E T-

To Captain FITZGERALD.

Temple-house, Sept. 29.

IREGRET your not being with us more than I can express.

I would have every friend I love a witness of my happiness.

I thought my tenderness for Emily as great as man could feel, yet find it every moment increase; every moment she is more dear to my soul.

The angel delicacy of that lovely mind is inconceivable; had she no other charm, I should adore her; what a lustre does modesty throw round beauty!

We remove to-morrow to Bellfield: I am impatient to see my sweet girl in her little empire: I am tired of the continual crowd in which we live at Temple's: I would not pass the life he does for all his fortune; I sigh for the power of spending my time as I please, for the dear shades of retirement and friendship.

How little do mankind know their own happiness! every pleasure worth a wish is in the power of all mankind.

Blind to true joy, ever engaged in a wild pursuit of what is always in our power, anxious for that wealth which we falsely imagine necessary to our enjoyments, we suffer our best hours to pass tasteless away; we neglect the pleasures which are suited to our natures; and, intent on ideal schemes of establishments at which we never arrive, let the dear hours of social delight escape us.

Hasten

Hasten to us, my dear Fitzgerald; we want only you, to fill our little circle of friends.

Your affectionate

ED. RIVERS.

L E T T E R CXCIII.

To Captain FITZGERALD.

Bellfield, Oct. 3.

WHAT delight is there in obliging those we love!

My heart dilated with joy at seeing Emily pleased with the little embellishments of her apartment, which I had made as gay and smiling as the morn; it looked, indeed, as if the hand of love had adorned it: she has a dressing room and closet of books; into which I shall never intrude: there is a pleasure in having some place which we can say is peculiarly our own, some *sanctum sanctorum*, whither we can retire even from those most dear to us.

This is a pleasure in which I have been indulged almost from infancy, and therefore one of the first I thought of procuring for my sweet Emily.

I told her I should, however, sometimes expect to be amongst her guests in this little retirement.

Her look, her tender smile, the speaking glance of grateful love, gave me a transport, which only minds turned to affection can conceive. I never, my dear Fitzgerald, was happy before: the attach-

ment

Hasten

ment I once mentioned was pleasing; but I felt a regret, at knowing the object of my tenderness had forfeited the good opinion of the world, which embittered all my happiness.

She possessed my esteem, because I knew her heart; but I wanted to see her esteemed by others.

With Emily I enjoy this pleasure in its utmost extent: she is the adoration of all who see her; she is equally admired, esteemed, respected.

She seems to value the admiration she excites, only as it appears to gratify the pride of her lover; what transport, when all eyes are fixed on her, to see her searching around for mine, and attentive to no other object, as if insensible, to all other approbation!

I enjoy the pleasures of friendship as well as those of love: were you here, my dear Fitzgerald, we should be the happiest groupe on the globe; but all Bell's sprightliness cannot preserve her from an air of chagrin in your absence.

Come as soon as possible, my dear friend, and leave us nothing to wish for.

Adieu! Your affectionate

ED. RIVERS.

L E T T E R CXCIV.

To Colonel RIVERS, at Bellfield, Rutland.

London, Oct. 8.

YO U are very cruel, my dear Rivers, to tantalize me with your pictures of happiness.

Notwith-

Notwithstanding this spite, I am sorry I must break in on your groupe of friends ; but it is absolutely necessary for Bell and my father to return immediately to town, in order to settle some family business, previous to my purchase of the majority.

Indeed, I am not very fond of letting Bell stay long amongst you ; for she gives me such an account of your attention and complaisance to Mrs. Rivers, that I am afraid she will think me a careless fellow when we meet again.

You seem in the high road not only to spoil your own wife, but mine too ; which is certainly my affair to prevent.

Say every thing for me to the ladies of your family.

Adieu ! Your affectionate

J. FITZGERALD.

L E T T E R C X C V .

To Captain FITZGERALD.

Bellfield, Sept. 10.

YOU are a malicious fellow, Fitzgerald, and I am half inclined to keep the sweet Bell by force ; take all the men away if you please, but I cannot bear the loss of a woman, especially of such a woman.

If I was not more a lover than a husband, I am not sure I should not wish to take my revenge.

To make me happy, you must place me in a circle of females, all as pleasing as those now with me,

me, and turn every male creature out of the house.

I am a most intolerable monopolizer of the sex ; in short, I have very little relish for any conversation but theirs : I love their sweet prattle beyond all the sense and learning in the world.

Not that I would insinuate they have less understanding than we, or are less capable of learning, or even that it less becomes them.

On the contrary, all such knowledge as tends to adorn and soften human life and manners, is, in my opinion, peculiarly becoming in women.

You don't deserve a longer letter.

Adieu! Yours,

ED. RIVERS.

L E T T E R CXCVI.

To Mrs. FITZGERALD.

Bellfield, Oct. 12.

I AM very conscious, my dear Bell, of not meriting the praises my Rivers lavishes on me, yet the pleasure I receive from them is not the less lively for that consideration ; on the contrary, the less I deserve, these praises the more flattering they are to me, as the strongest proofs of his love ; of that love which gives ideal charms, which adorns, which embellishes its object.

I had rather be lovely in his eyes, than in those of all mankind ; or, to speak more exactly, if I continue to please him, the admiration of all the world is indifferent to me ; it is for his sake alone I wish

with for beauty, to justify the dear preference he has given me.

How pleasing are these sweet shades ! were they less so, my Rivers's presence would give them every charm : every object has appeared to me more lovely since the dear moment when I first saw him ; I seem to have acquired a new existence from his tenderness.

You say true, my dear Bell ; heaven doubtless formed us to be happy, even in this world ; and we obey its dictates in being so, when we can without encroaching on the happiness of others.

This lesson is, I think, plain from the book Providence has spread before us : the whole universe smiles, the earth is clothed in lively colours, the animals are playful, the birds sing : in being chearful with innocence, we seem to conform to the order of nature, and the will of that beneficent Power to whom we owe our being.

If the Supreme Creator had meant us to be gloomy, he would, it seems to me, have cloathed the earth in black, not in that lively green, which is the livery of chearfulness and joy.

I am called away.

Adieu ! my dearest Bell,

Your faithful

EMILY RIVERS.

L E T.

L E T T E R CXCVII.

To Captain FITZGERALD.

Bellfield, Oct. 14.

YOU flatter me most agreeably, my dear Fitzgerald, by praising Emily; I want you to see her again; she is every hour more charming: I am astonished any man can behold her without love.

Yet, lovely as she is, her beauty is her least merit; the finest understanding, the most pleasing kind of knowledge; tenderness, sensibility, modesty, and truth, adorn her almost with rays of divinity.

She has, beyond all I ever saw in either sex, the polish of the world, without having lost that sweet simplicity of manner, that unaffected innocence, and integrity of heart, which are so very apt to evaporate in a crowd.

I ride out often alone, in order to have the pleasure of returning to her: these little absences give new spirit to our tenderness. Every care forsakes me at the sight of this temple of real love; my sweet Emily meets me with smiles; her eyes brighten when I approach: she receives my friends with the most lively pleasure, because they are my friends, I almost envy them her attention, though given for my sake.

Elegant in her dress and house, she is all transport when any little ornaments of either please me; but what charms me most, is her tenderness for my mother, in whose heart she rivals both me and Lucy.

My

My happiness, my friend, is beyond every idea I had formed; were I a little richer, I should not have a wish remaining.

Do not, however, imagine this wish takes from my felicity.

I have enough for myself, I have even enough for Emily: love makes us indifferent to the parade of life.

But I have not enough to entertain my friends as I wish, nor to enjoy the god-like pleasure of beneficence.

We shall be obliged, in order to support the little appearance necessary to our connections, to give an attention rather too strict to our affairs; even this, however, our affection for each other will make easy to us.

My whole soul is so taken up with this charming woman, I am afraid I shall become tedious even to you; I must learn to restrain my tenderness and write on common subjects.

I am more and more pleased with the way of life I have chose; and, were my fortune ever so large, would pass the greatest part of the year in the country: I would only enlarge my house, and fill it with friends.

My situation is a very fine one, though not like the magnificent scenes to which we have been accustomed in Canada: the house stands on the sunny side of a hill, at the foot of which, the garden intervening, runs a little trout stream, which to the right seems to be lost in an island of ozers, and over which is a rustic bridge into a very beautiful meadow, where at present graze a numerous flock of sheep.

Emily is planning a thousand embellishments for the garden, and will next year make it a wilderness of sweets, a paradise worthy its lovely inhabitant:

she

ſhe is already forming walks and flowery arbors in the wood, and giving the whole ſcene every charm which taſte, at little expence, can beſtow.

I, on my ſide, am ſelecting ſpots for plantations of trees; and mean, like a good citizen, to ſerve at once myſelf and the public, by raiſing oaks, which may hereafter bear the Britiſh thunder to diſtant lands.

I believe we country gentlemen, whiſt we have ſpirit to keep ourſelves independent, are the beſt citizens, as well as ſubjects, in the world.

Happy ourſelves, we wiſh not to deſtroy the tranquillity of others; intent on cares equally uſeful and pleaſing, with no views but to improve our fortunes by means equally profitable to ourſelves and to our country, we form no ſchemes of diſhoneſt ambition; and therefore diſturb no government to ſerve our private deſigns.

It is the profuſe, the vicious, the profligate, the needy, who are the Clodios and Catilines of this world.

That love of order, of moral harmony, ſo natural to virtuous minds, to minds at eaſe, is the ſtrongeſt tie of rational obedience.

The man who feels himſelf prosperous and happy, will not eaſily be perſuaded by factious declamation that he is undone.

Convinced of the excellency of our conſtitution, in which liberty and prerogative are balanced with the ſteadieſt hand, he will not endeavour to remove the boundaries which ſecure both: he will not endeavour to root it up, whiſt he is pretending to give it nourishment: he will not ſtrive to cut down the lovely and venerable tree under whoſe ſhade he enjoys ſecurity and peace.

In ſhort, and I am ſure you will here be of my opinion,

opinion, the man who has competence, virtue, true liberty, and the woman he loves, will cheerfully obey the laws which secure him these blessings, and the prince under whose mild sway he enjoys them.

Adieu!

Your faithful

ED. P. VERS.

L E T T E R CXCVIII.

To Captain FITZGERALD.

O&. 17.

I EVERY hour see more strongly, my dear Fitzgerald, the wisdom, as to our own happiness, of not letting our hearts be worn out by a multitude of intrigues before marriage.

Temple loves my sister, he is happy with her; but his happiness is by no means of the same kind with yours and mine; she is beautiful, and he thinks her so; she is amiable, and he esteems her; he prefers her to all other women, but he feels nothing of that trembling delicacy of sentiment, that quick sensibility, which gives to love its most exquisite pleasures, and which I would not give up for the wealth of worlds.

His

His affection is meer passion, and therefore subject to change; ours is that heart-felt tenderness, which time renders every moment more pleasing.

The tumult of desire is the fever of the soul; its health, that delicious tranquillity where the heart is gently moved, not violently agitated; that tranquillity which is only to be found where friendship is the basis of love, and where we are happy without injuring the object beloved: in other words, in a marriage of choice.

In the voyage of life, passion is the tempest, love the gentle gale.

Dissipation, and a continued round of amusements at home, will probably secure my sister all of Temple's heart which remains; but his love would grow languid in that state of retirement, which would have a thousand charms for minds like ours.

I will own to you, I have fears for Lucy's happiness.

But let us drop so painful a subject. Adieu!

Your affectionate

ED. RIVERS.

L E T T E R CXCIX.

To Colonel RIVERS, Bellfield, Rutland.

Oct. 19.

NOTHING, my dear Rivers, shews the value of friendship more than the envy it excites.

The

The world will sooner pardon us any advantage, even wealth, genius, or beauty, than that of having a faithful friend; every selfish bosom swells with envy at the sight of those social connexions, which are the cordials of life, and of which our narrow prejudices alone prevent our enjoyment.

Those who have neither heart to feel this generous affection, nor merit to deserve it, hate all who are in this respect happier than themselves; they look on a friend as an invaluable blessing, and a blessing out of their reach; and abhor all who possess the treasure for which they sigh in vain.

For my own part, I had rather be the dupe of a thousand false professions of friendship, than, for fear of being deceived, give up the pursuit.

Dupes are happy at least for a time; but the cold, narrow, suspicious heart never knows the glow of social pleasure.

In the same proportion as we lose our confidence in the virtues of others, we lose our proper happiness.

The observation of this mean jealousy, so humiliating to human nature, has influenced Lord Halifax, in his advice to a daughter, the school of art, prudery and selfish morals, to caution her against all friendships, or as he calls them *dear-nesses*, as what will make the world envy and hate her.

After my sweet Bell's tenderness, I know no pleasure equal to your friendship; nor would I give it up for the revenue of an eastern monarch.

I esteem Temple, I love his conversation; he is gay and amusing; but I shall never have for him the affection I feel for you.

I think you are too apprehensive in regard to your sister's happiness: he loves her, and there is
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Adieu!

RIVERS.

IX.

Rutland.

Oct. 19.

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a certain variety in her manner, a kind of agreeable caprice, that I think will secure the heart of a man of his turn, much more than her merit, or even the loveliness of her person.

She is handsome, exquisitely so; handsomer than Bell, and, if you will allow me to say so, than Emily.

I mean, that she is so in the eye of a painter; for in that of a lover his mistress is the only beautiful object on earth.

I allow your sister to be very lovely, but I think Bell more desirable a thousand times; and, rationally speaking, she who has, *as to me*, the art of inspiring the most tenderness is, *as to me*, to all intents and purposes the most beautiful woman.

In which faith I chuse to live and die.

I have an idea, Rivers, that you and I shall continue to be happy: a real sympathy, a lively taste, mixed with esteem, led us to marry; the delicacy, tenderness, and virtue, of the two most charming of women, promise to keep our love alive.

We have both strong affections: both love the conversation of women; and neither of our hearts are depraved by ill chosen connexions with the sex.

I am broke in upon, and must bid you adieu.

Your affectionate

J. FITZGERALD.

Bell is writing to you. I shall be jealous.

L E T-

L E T T E R C C.

To Colonel RIVERS, Bellfield, Rutland.

London, Oct. 19.

I D I E to come to Bellfield again, my dear Rivers; I have a passion for your little wood; it is a mighty pretty wood for an English wood, but nothing to your Montmorencis the dear little Silleri too—

But to return to the shades of Bellfield: your little wood is charming indeed; not to particularize detached pieces of your scenery, the *tout ensemble* is very inviting; observe, however, I have no notion of paradise without an Adam, and therefore shall bring Fitzgerald with me next time.

What could induce you, with this sweet little retreat, to cross that vile ocean to Canada? I am astonished at the madness of mankind, who can expose themselves to pain, misery, and danger; and range the world from motives of avarice and ambition, when the rural cot, the fanning gale, the clear stream, and flowery bank, offer such delicious enjoyments at home.

You men are horrid, rapacious animals with your spirit of enterprize, and your nonsense: ever wanting more land than you can cultivate, and more money than you can spend.

That eternal pursuit of gain, that rage of accumulation,

mulation, in which you are educated, corrupts your hearts, and robs you of half the pleasures of life.

I should not, however, make free with the sex, if you and my *caro sposo* were not exceptions.

You two have really something of the sensibility and generosity of women.

Do you know, Rivers, I have a fancy you and Fitzgerald will always be happy husbands? this is something owing to yourselves, and something to us; you have both that manly tenderness, and true generosity, which inclines you to love creatures who have paid you the compliment of making their happiness or misery depend entirely on you, and partly to the little circumstance of your being married to two of the most agreeable women breathing.

To speak *en philosophe*, my dear Rivers, you are not to be told, that the fire of love, like any other fire, is equally put out by too much or too little fuel.

Now Emily and I, without vanity, besides our being handsome and amazingly sensible, to say nothing of our pleasing kind of sensibility, have a certain just idea of causes and effects, with a natural blushing reserve, and bridal delicacy, which I am apt to flatter myself—

Do you understand me, Rivers? I am not quite clear I understand myself.

All that I would insinuate is, that Emily and I are, take us for all and all, the two most charming women in the world, and that, whoever leaves us, must change immensely for the worse.

I believe Lucy equally pleasing, but I think her charms have not so good a subject to work upon.

Temple

Temple is a handsome fellow, and loves her ; but he has not that tenderness of heart that I so much admire in two certain youths of my acquaintance.

He is rich indeed ; but who cares ?

Certainly, my dear Rivers, nothing can be more absurd, or more destructive to happiness than the very wrong turn we give our childrens imaginations about marriage.

If miss and master are good, she is promised a rich husband, and a coach and six, and he a wife with a monstrous great fortune.

Most of these fine promises must fail ; and where they do not, the poor things have only the consolation of finding, when too late to retreat, that the objects to which all their wishes were pointed have really nothing to do with happiness.

Is there a nabobess on earth half as happy as the two foolish little girls about whom I have been writing, though married to such poor devils as you and Fitzgerald ? *Certainement no.*

And so ends my sermon.

Adieu !

Your most obedient,

A. FITZGERALD.

L E T T E R C C I.

TO JOHN TEMPLE, Esq. Temple-house,
Rutland.

Bellfield, Oct. 21.

YOU ridicule my enthusiasm, my dear Temple, without considering there is no exertion of the human mind, no effort of the understanding, imagination, or heart, without a spark of this divine fire.

Without enthusiasm, genius, virtue, pleasure, even love itself languishes; all that refines, adorns, softens, exalts, ennobles life, has its source in this animating principle.

I glory in being an enthusiast in every thing; but in nothing so much as in my tenderness for this charming woman.

I am a perfect Quixote in love, and would storm enchanted castles, and fight giants, for my Emily.

Coldness of temper damps every spring that moves the human heart; it is equally an enemy to pleasure, riches, fame, to all which is worth living for.

I thank you for your wishes that I was rich, but am by no means anxious myself on the subject.

You sons of fortune, who possess your thousands a year, and find them too little for your desires, desires which grow from that very abundance, imagine every man miserable who wants them: in which you are greatly mistaken.

Every

Every real pleasure is within the reach of my little fortune, and I am very indifferent about those which borrow their charms, not from nature, but from caprice.

My house is indeed less than yours; but it is finely situated, and large enough for my fortune: that part of it which belongs peculiarly to Emily is elegant.

I have an equipage, not for parade but use; and the loveliest of women prefers it with me to all that luxury and magnificence could bestow with another.

The flowers in my garden bloom as fair, the peach glows as deep, as in yours: does a flower bluish more lovely, or smell more sweet; a peach look more tempting than its fellows, I select it for Emily, who receives it with delight, as the tender tribute of love.

In some respects, we are the more happy for being less rich: the little avocations, which our mediocrity of fortune makes necessary to both, are the best preventives of that languor, from being too constantly together, which is all that love founded on taste and friendship has to fear.

Had I my choice, I should wish for a very small addition only to my income, and that for the sake of others, not myself.

I love pleasure, and think it our duty to make life as agreeable as is consistent with what we owe to others: but a true pleasurable philosopher seeks his enjoyments where they are really to be found; not in the gratifications of a childish pride, but of those affections which are born with us, and which are the only rational sources of enjoyment.

When I am walking in these delicious shades with Emily; when I see those lovely eyes,

softened with artless fondness, and hear the music of that voice; when a thousand trifles, unobserved but by the prying sight of love, betray all the dear sensations of that bosom, where truth and delicate tenderness have fixed their seat, I know not the Epicurean of whom I do not deserve to be the envy.

Does your fortune, my dear Temple, make you more than happy? if not, why so very earnestly wish an addition to mine? believe me, there is nothing about which I am more indifferent. I am ten times more anxious to get the finest collection of flowers in the world for my Emily.

You observe justly, that there is nothing so insipid as women who have conversed with women only; let me add, nor so brutal as men who have lived only amongst men.

The desire of pleasing on each side, in an intercourse enlivened by taste, and governed by delicacy and honor, calls forth all the graces of the person and understanding; all the amiable sentiments of the heart: it also gives good-breeding, ease, and a certain awakened manner, which is not to be acquired but in mixed conversation.

Remember you and my dear Lucy dine with us to-morrow; it is to be a little family party, to indulge my mother in the delight of seeing her children about her, without interruption: I have saved all my best fruit for this day; we are to drink tea and sup in Emily's apartment.

Adieu! your affectionate

ED. RIVERS.

I will

I will to-morrow shew you better grapes than any you have at Temple-house: you rich men fancy nobody has any thing good but yourselves; but I hope next year to shew you that you are mistaken in a thousand instances. I will have such roses and jessamines, such bowers of intermingled sweets—you shall see what astonishing things Emily's taste, and my industry can do.

L E T T E R C C I I .

To Mrs. FITZGERALD.

Bellfield, Oct. 22.

F I N I S H your business, my dear girl, and let us see you again at Bellfield. I need not tell you the pleasure Mr. Fitzgerald's accompanying you will give us.

I die to see you, my dear Bell: it is not enough to be happy, unless I have somebody to tell every moment that I am so: I want a confidante of my tenderness, a friend like my Bell, indulgent to all my follies, to talk to of the loveliest and most beloved of mankind. I want to tell you a thousand little instances of that ardent, that refined affection, which makes all the happiness of my life! I want to paint the flattering attention, the delicate fondness of that lover, who is only the more so for being a husband.

You are the only woman on earth to whom I can without the appearance of insult, talk of my Rivers, because you are the only one I ever knew as happy as myself.

Fitzgerald,

L. D. RIVERS.

I will

Fitzgerald, in tenderness and delicacy of mind, resembles strongly——

I am interrupted: adieu! for a moment.

It was my Rivers, he brought me a bouquet; I opened the door, supposing it was my mother; conscious of what I had been writing, I was confused at seeing him; he smiled, and guessing the reason of my embarrassment, "I must leave you, Emily; you are writing, and by your blushes, I know you have been talking of your lover."

I should have told you he insists on never seeing the letters I write, and gives this reason for it, that he should be a great loser by seeing them, as it would restrain my pen when I talk of him.

I believe I am very foolish in my tenderness; but you will forgive me.

Rivers yesterday was throwing flowers at me and Lucy in play, as we were walking in the garden; I caught a wail-flower, and by an involuntary impulse, kissed it, and placed it in my bosom.

He observed me, and his look of pleasure and affection is impossible to be described. What exquisite pleasure there is in these agreeable follies!

He is the sweetest trifler in the world, my dear Bell: but in what does he not excel all mankind!

As the season of autumnal flowers is almost over, he is sending for those which blow early in the spring: he prevents every wish his Emily can form.

Did you ever, my dear, see so fine an autumn as this? you will perhaps, smile when I say, I never saw one so pleasing; such a season is more lovely than even the spring: I want you down before this agreeable weather is all over.

I am

I am going to air with my mother: my Rivers attends us on horseback; you cannot think how amiable his attention is to both.

Adieu! my dear; my mother has sent to let me know she is ready.

Your affectionate

EMILY RIVERS.

L E T T E R C C I I I .

To Captain FITZGERALD.

Bellfield, Oct. 24.

SOME author has said, "The happiness of the next world, to the virtuous, will consist in enjoying the society of minds like their own."

Why then should we not do our best to possess as much as possible of this happiness here?

You will see this is a preface to a very earnest request to Captain Fermor and the lovely Bell immediately at our farm: take notice, I will not admit even business as an excuse much longer.

I am just come from a walk in the wood behind the house, with my mother and Emily; I want you to see it before it loses all its charms; in another fortnight, its present variegated foliage will be literally *humbled in the dust*.

There is something very pleasing in this season,

if

I am

if it did not give us the idea of the winter, which is approaching too fast.

The dryness of the air, the soft western breeze, the tremulous motion of the falling leaves, the rustling of those already fallen under our feet, their variety of living colors, give a certain spirit and agreeable fluctuation to the scene, which is unspeakably pleasing.

By the way, we people of warm imaginations have vast advantages over others; we scorn to be confined to present scenes, or to give attention to such trifling objects as times and seasons.

I already anticipate the spring; see the wood-bines and wild roses bloom in my grove, and almost catch the gale of perfume.

Twelve o'clock.

I have this moment received your letter.

I am sorry of what you tell me of Miss H——; whose want of art has led her into indiscretions.

'Tis too common to see the most innocent, nay even the most laudable actions censured by the world; as we cannot however eradicate the prejudices of others, it is wisdom to yield to them in things which are indifferent.

One ought to conform to, and respect the customs, as well as the laws and religion of our country, where they are not contrary to virtue, and to that moral sense which heaven has imprinted on our souls: where they are contrary, every generous mind will despise them.

I agree with you, my dear friend, that two persons who love, not only *seem*, but really are, handsomer to each other than to the rest of the world.

When

When we look at those we ardently love, a new softness steals unperceived into the eyes, the countenance is more animated, and the whole form has that air of tender languor which has such charms for sensible minds.

To prove the truth of this, my Emily approaches, fair as the rising morn, led by the hand of the Graces; she sees her lover, and every charm is redoubled; an involuntary smile, a blush of pleasure speak a passion, which is the pride of my soul.

Even her voice, melodious as it is by nature, is softened when she addresses her happy Rivers.

She comes to ask my attendance on her and my mother; they are going to pay a morning visit a few miles off.

Adieu! tell the little Bell I kiss her hand.

Your affectionate

ED. RIVERS.

L E T T E R CCIV.

To Captain FITZGERALD.

Three o'clock.

WE are returned, and have met with an adventure which I must tell you.

About six miles from home, at the entrance of a small village, as I was riding very fast, a little before the chaise, a boy about four years old, beautiful as Cupid, came out of a cottage on the right hand, and, running cross the road, fell almost under my horse's feet.

I threw myself off in a moment; and snatching up the child, who was, however, unhurt, carried him to the house.

I was met at the door by a young woman, plainly drest; but of a form uncommonly elegant: she had seen the child fall, and her terror for him was plainly marked in her countenance; she received him from me, pressed him to her bosom, and, without speaking, melted into tears.

My mother and Emily had by this time reached the cottage; the humanity of both was too much interested to let them pass: they alighted, came into the house, and enquired about the child, with an air of tenderness which was not lost on the young person, whom we supposed his mother.

She appeared about two and twenty, was handsome, with an air of the world, which the plainness of
of

of her dress could not hide; her countenance was pensive, with a mixture of sensibility which instantly prejudiced us all in her favour; her look seemed to say, she was unhappy, and that she deserved to be otherwise.

Her manner was respectful, but easy and unconstrained; polite, without being servile, and she acknowledged the interest we all seemed to take in what related to her, in a manner that convinced us she deserved it.

Though every thing about us, the extreme neatness, the elegant simplicity of her house and little garden, her own person, that of the child, both perfectly genteel, her politeness, her air of the world, in a cottage like that of the meanest laborer, tended to excite the most lively curiosity; neither good-breeding, humanity, nor the respect due to those who appear unfortunate, would allow us to make any enquiries: we left the place full of this adventure, convinced of the merit, as well as unhappiness of its fair inhabitant, and resolved to find out, if possible, whether her misfortunes were of a kind to be alleviated, and within our little power to alleviate.

I will own to you, my dear Fitzgerald, I at that moment felt the smallness of my fortune: and I believe Emily had the same sensations, though her delicacy prevented her naming them to me, who have made her poor.

We can talk of nothing but the stranger; and Emily is determined to call on her to-morrow, on pretence of enquiring after the health of the child.

I tremble lest her story, for she certainly has one, should be such as, however it may entitle her to compassion, may make it impossible for

Emily:

Emily to shew it in the manner she seems to wish.

Adieu !

Your faithful

ED. RIVERS.

L E T T E R CCV.

To Captain FITZGERALD.

Bellfield, Oct. 24.

WE have been again at the cottage ; and are more convinced than ever, that this amiable girl is not in the station in which she was born ; we staid two hours, and varied the conversation in a manner which, in spite of her extreme modesty, made it impossible for her to avoid shewing she had been educated with uncommon care : her style is correct and elegant ; her sentiments noble, yet unaffected ; we talked of books, she said little on the subject ; but that little shewed a taste which astonished us.

Anxious as we are to know her true situation, in order, if she merits it, to endeavour to serve her, yet delicacy made it impossible for us to give the least hint of a curiosity which might make her suppose we entertained ideas to her prejudice.

She seemed greatly affected with the humane concern Emily expressed for the child's danger yesterday, as well as with the polite and even affectionate manner in which she appeared to interest herself in all which related to her ; Emily made her

her general offers of service with a timid kind of softness in her air, which seemed to speak rather a person asking a favour than wishing to confer an obligation.

She thanked my sweet Emily with a look of surprize and gratitude, to which it is not easy to do justice; there was, however, an embarrassment in her countenance at those offers, which a little alarms me; she absolutely declined coming to Bellfield: I know not what to think.

Emily who has taken a strong prejudice in her favour, will answer for her conduct with her life; but I will own to you, I am not without my doubts.

When I consider the inhuman art of the abandoned part of one sex, and the romantic generosity and too unguarded confidence, of the most amiable of the other; when I reflect that where women love, they love without reserve; that they fondly imagine the man who is dear to them possessed of every virtue; that their very integrity of mind prevents their suspicions; when I think of her present retirement, so apparently ill suited to her education; when I see her beauty, her elegance of person, with that tender and melancholy air, so strongly expressive of the most exquisite sensibility; when, in short, I see the child, and observe her fondness for him, I have fears for her, which I cannot conquer.

I am as firmly convinced as Emily of the goodness of her heart; but I am not so certain that even that very goodness may not have been, from an unhappy concurrence of circumstances, her misfortune.

We have company to dine.

Adieu! till the evening.

About

Ten at night.

About three hours ago, Emily received the inclosed, from our fair cottager.

Adieu !

Your affectionate

ED. RIVERS.

“ To Mrs. RIVERS.

“ Madam,

“ Though I have every reason to wish the melancholy event which brought me here, might continue unknown ; yet your generous concern for a stranger who had no recommendation to your notice but her appearing unhappy, and whose suspicious situation would have injured her in a mind less noble than yours, has determined me to lay before you a story, which it was my resolution to conceal for ever.

“ I saw, Madam, in your countenance, when you honoured me by calling at my house this morning, and I saw with an admiration no words can speak, the amiable struggle between the desire of knowing the nature of my distress in order to soften it, and the delicacy which forbade your enquiries, lest they should wound my sensibility and self-love.

“ To such a heart I run no hazard in relating what in the world, would perhaps, draw on me a thousand reproaches ; reproaches, however I flatter myself, undeserved.

“ You have had the politeness to say, there is something in my appearance which speaks my
“ birth

“ birth above my present situation : in this ma-
 “ dam, I am so happy as not to deceive your ge-
 “ neros partiality.

“ My father, who was an officer of family and
 “ merit, had the misfortune to lose my mother
 “ whilst I was an infant.

“ He had the goodness to take on himself the
 “ care of directing my education, and to have me
 “ taught whatever he thought becoming my sex,
 “ though at an expence much too great for his
 “ income.

“ As he had little more than his commission, his
 “ parental tenderness got so far the better of his
 “ love for his profession, that, when I was about
 “ fifteen, he determined on quitting the army in
 “ order to provide better for me ; but whilst he was
 “ in treaty for this purpose, a fever carried him off
 “ in a few days, and left me to the world, with
 “ little more than five hundred pounds, which,
 “ however, was by his will, immediately in my
 “ power.

“ I felt too strongly the loss of this excellent
 “ parent to attend to any other consideration ;
 “ and, before I was enough myself to think what
 “ I was to do for a subsistence, a friend of my
 “ own age, whom I tenderly loved, who was just
 “ returning from school to her father’s, in the
 “ north of England, insisted on my accompanying
 “ her, and spending some time with her in the
 “ country.

“ I found, in my dear Sophia, all the consolation
 “ my grief could receive ; and, at her pressing
 “ sollicitation, and that of her father, who saw
 “ his daughter’s happiness depended on having
 “ me with her, I continued there three years,
 “ blest in the calm delights of friendship, and
 “ those

“ those blameless pleasures, with which we should
“ be too happy, if the heart could content itself,
“ when a young baronet, whose form was as
“ lovely as his soul was dark, came to interrupt
“ our felicity.

“ My Sophia, at a ball, had the misfortune to
“ attract his notice; she was rather handsome,
“ though without regular features; her form was
“ elegant and feminine, and she had an air of
“ youth, of softness, of sensibility, of blushing in-
“ nocence, which seemed intended to inspire de-
“ licate passions alone, and which would have
“ disarmed any mind less depraved than that of the
“ man, who admired only to destroy.

“ She was the rose-bud, yet impervious to the
“ sun.

“ Her heart was tender, but had never met an
“ object which seemed worthy of it; her sen-
“ timents were disinterested, and romantic to ex-
“ cess.

“ Her father was, at this time in Holland,
“ whither the death of a relation, who had left
“ him a small estate, had called him: we were
“ alone, unprotected, delivered up to the unhappy
“ inexperience of youth, mistresses of our own
“ conduct; myself the eldest of the two, but
“ just eighteen, when my Sophia's ill fate con-
“ ducted Sir Charles Verville to the ball where
“ she first saw him.

“ He danced with her, and endeavoured to re-
“ commend himself by all those little unmeaning,
“ but flattering attentions, by which our credulous
“ sex are so often misled; his manner was tender,
“ yet timid, modest, respectful; his eyes were
“ continually fixed on her, but when he met
“ hers, artfully cast down, as if afraid of offending.

“ He

“ He asked permission to enquire after her health the next day ; he came, he was enchanting, polite, lively, soft, insinuating, adorned with every outward grace which could embellish virtue, or hide vice from view, to see and to love him was almost the same thing.

“ He entreated leave to continue his visits, which he found no difficulty in obtaining : during two months, not a day passed without our seeing him ; his behaviour was such as would scarce have alarmed the most suspicious heart ; what then could be expected of us, young, sincere, totally ignorant of the world, and strongly prejudiced in favour of a man, whose conversation spoke his soul the abode of every virtue.

“ Blushing I must own, nothing but the apparent preference he gave to my lovely friend, could have saved my heart from being a prey to the same tenderness which ruined her.

“ He addressed her with all the specious arts which vice could invent to seduce innocence ; his respect, his esteem, seemed equal to his passion, he talked of honor, of the delight of an union where the tender affections alone were consulted ; wished for her father’s return, to ask her of him in marriage ; pretended to count impatiently the hours of his absence, which delayed his happiness ; he even prevailed on her to write to her father an account of his addresses.

“ New to love, my Sophia’s young heart too easily gave way to the soft impression ; she loved, she idolized the most base of mankind ; she would have thought it a kind of sacrilege to have had any will in opposition to his.

“ After some months of unremitted assiduity,
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“ He

“ her father being expected in a few days, he
 “ dropped a hint, as if by accident, that he
 “ wished his fortune less, that he might be the
 “ more certain he was loved for himself alone ;
 “ he blamed himself for this delicacy, but charged
 “ it on excess of love, vowed he would rather die
 “ than injure her, yet he wished to be convinced
 “ her fondness was without reserve.

“ Generous, disinterested, eager to prove the
 “ excess and sincerity of her passion, she fell into
 “ the snare ; she agreed to go off with him, and
 “ live some time in a retirement where she was to
 “ see only himself, after which he engaged to mar-
 “ ry her publicly.

“ He pretended extasies at this proof of affec-
 “ tion, yet hesitated to accept it : and by piquing
 “ the generosity of her soul, which knew no
 “ guile, and therefore suspected none, led her to
 “ insist on devoting herself to wretchedness.

“ In order, however, that this step might be as
 “ little known as possible, as he pretended the
 “ utmost concern for that honor he was contriving
 “ to destroy, it was agreed between them, that he
 “ should go immediately to London, and that she
 “ should follow him, under pretence of a visit to a
 “ relation at some distance : the greatest difficulty
 “ was, how to hide this design from me.

“ She had never before concealed a thought
 “ from her beloved Fanny ; nor could he now
 “ have prevailed on her to deceive me, had he
 “ not artfully persuaded her I was myself in love
 “ with him ; and that, therefore, it would be
 “ cruel, as well as imprudent, to trust me with
 “ the secret.

“ Nothing shews so strongly the power of love,
 “ in absorbing every faculty of the soul, as my
 “ dear

“ dear Sophia’s being prevailed upon to use
 “ art with the friend most dear to her on
 “ earth.

“ By an unworthy piece of deceit, I was sent
 “ to a relation for some weeks; and the next day
 “ Sophia followed her infamous lover, leaving
 “ letters for me and her father, calculated to
 “ persuade us they were privately married.

“ My distress, and that of the unhappy parent
 “ may more easily be conceived than de-
 “ scribed; severe by nature, he cast her from
 “ his heart and fortune for ever, and settled his
 “ estate on a nephew, then at the univer-
 “ sity.

“ As to me, grief and tenderness were the only
 “ sensations I felt: I went to town, and took
 “ every private method to discover her retreat,
 “ but in vain; till near a year after, when being
 “ in London, with a friend of my mother’s, a
 “ servant who had lived with my Sophia, saw me
 “ in the street, and knew me: by her means I
 “ discovered that she was in distress, abandoned
 “ by her lover, in that moment when his tender-
 “ ness was most necessary.

“ I flew to her, and found her in a miserable
 “ apartment, in which nothing but an extreme
 “ neatness would have made me suppose she had
 “ ever seen happier days: the servant who brought
 “ me to her attended her.

“ She was in bed, pale, emaciated; the lovely
 “ babe you saw with me in her arms.

“ Though prepared for my visit, she was un-
 “ able to bear the shock of seeing me. I ran to
 “ her, she raised herself in the bed, and, throwing
 “ her feeble arms round my neck, could only

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“ say, My Fanny! is this possible! and fainted
“ away.

“ Our cares having recovered her, she endeavoured to compose herself; her eyes were fixed tenderly on me, she pressed my hand between hers, the tears stole silently down her cheeks; she looked at her child, then at me; she would have spoke, but the feelings of her heart were too strong for expression.

“ I begged her to be calm, and promised to spend the day with her; I did not yet dare, lest the emotion should be too much for her weak state, to tell her we would part no more.

“ I took a room in the house, and determined to give all my attention to the restoration of her health; after which, I hoped to contrive to make my little fortune, with industry, support us both.

“ I sat up with her that night; she got a little rest, she seemed better in the morning; she told me the particulars I have already related; she, however, endeavoured to soften the cruel behaviour of the wretch, whose name I could not hear without horror.

“ She had in the afternoon a little fever; I sent for a physician, he thought her in danger; what did not my heart feel from this information? she grew worse, I never left her one moment.

“ The next morning she called me to her; she took my hand, and looking at me with a tenderness no language can describe:—

“ My dear, my only friend, said she, I am dying; you are come to receive the last breath

“ of

“ of your unhappy Sophia : I wish with ardor
 “ for my father’s blessing and forgiveness, but dare
 “ not ask them.

“ The weakness of my heart has undone me ;
 “ I am lost, abandoned by him on whom my soul
 “ doated ; by him for whom I would have sacri-
 “ ficed a thousand lives ; he has left me with my
 “ babe to perish, yet I still love him with una-
 “ bated fondness : the pang of losing him sinks me
 “ to the grave !

“ Her speech here failed her for a time ; but
 “ recovering, she proceeded.

“ Hard as this request may seem, and to
 “ whatever miseries it may expose my angel
 “ friend, I adjure you not to desert my child ;
 “ save him from the wretchedness that threatens
 “ him ; let him find in you a mother not
 “ less tender, but more virtuous, than his
 “ own.

“ I know, my Fanny, I undo you by this cruel
 “ confidence ; but who else will have mercy on
 “ this innocent ?”

“ Unable to answer, my heart torn with unut-
 “ terable anguish, I snatched the lovely babe to
 “ my bosom, I kissed him, bathed him with my
 “ tears.

“ She understood me, a gleam of pleasure
 “ brightened her dying eyes, the child was still
 “ pressed to my heart, she gazed on us both with
 “ a look of wild affection ; then clasping her
 “ hands together, and breathing a fervent prayer
 “ to heaven, sunk down and expired without a
 “ groan.—

“ To you, Madam, I need not say the rest.

“ The

“ The eloquence of angels could not paint my
 “ distress; I saw the friend of my soul, the best
 “ and most gentle of her sex, a breathless corpse
 “ before me; her heart broke by the ingrati-
 “ tude of the man she loved, her honor the
 “ sport of fools, her guiltless child a sharer in her
 “ shame.

“ And all this Ruin brought on by a sensibility
 “ of which the best minds alone are suscep-
 “ tible, by that noble integrity of soul, which
 “ made it impossible for her to suspect ano-
 “ ther.

“ Distracted with grief I kissed my Sophia’s
 “ pale lips, talked to her lifeless form; I promised
 “ to protect the sweet babe, who smiled on me,
 “ and with his little hand pressed mine, as if sen-
 “ sible of what I said.

“ As soon as my grief was enough calmed to
 “ render me capable of any thing, I wrote an
 “ account of Sophia’s death to her father, who
 “ had the inhumanity to refuse to see her
 “ child.

“ I disdained an application to her murderer;
 “ and retiring to this place, where I was, and
 “ resolved to continue, unknown, determined
 “ to devote my life to the sweet infant, and to
 “ support him by an industry which I did not
 “ doubt heaven would prosper.

“ The faithful girl who had attended Sophia,
 “ begged to continue with me; we work for the
 “ milliners in the neighbouring towns, and,
 “ with the small pittance I have kept above
 “ want.

“ I know the consequence of what I have un-
 “ dertaken; I have set up the world, and all
 “ hope

“ hopes of happiness to myself: yet will I not
 “ desert this friendless little innocent, nor be-
 “ tray the confidence of my expiring friend,
 “ whose last moments were soothed with the
 “ hopes of his finding a parent’s care in me.

“ You have had the goodness to wish to serve
 “ me. Sir Charles Verville is dead: a fever,
 “ the consequence of his ungoverned intempe-
 “ rance, carried him off suddenly: his brother
 “ Sir William has a worthy character; if Colo-
 “ nel Rivers, by his general acquaintance with
 “ the great world, can represent this story to
 “ him, it possibly may procure my little Charles
 “ happier prospects than my poverty can give
 “ him.

“ Your goodness, Madam, makes it unneces-
 “ sary to be more explicit: to be unhappy, and
 “ not to have merited it, is a sufficient claim to
 “ your protection.

“ You are above the low prejudices of com-
 “ mon minds; you will pity the wretched victim
 “ of her own unsuspecting heart, you will abhor
 “ the memory of her savage undoer, you will
 “ approve my complying with her dying re-
 “ quest, though in contradiction to the selfish
 “ maxims of the world: you will, if in your
 “ power, endeavour to serve my little prat-
 “ tler.

“ Till I had explained my situation, I could
 “ not think of excepting the honor you allowed
 “ me to hope for of enquiring after your health
 “ at Bellfield; if the step I have taken meets with
 “ your approbation, I shall be most happy to
 “ thank you and Colonel Rivers for your atten-
 “ tion to one, whom you would before have been
 “ justified in supposing unworthy of it.

“ I am,

“ I am, Madam, with the most perfect respect
 “ and gratitude,

“ Your obliged

“ and obedient servant,

“ F. WILLIAMS.”

Your own heart, my dear Fitzgerald, will tell you what were our reflections on reading the inclosed: Emily, whose gentle heart feels for the weaknesses as well as misfortunes of others, will to-morrow fetch this heroic girl and her little ward, to spend a week at Bellfield; and we will then consider what is to be done for them.

You know Sir William Verville; go to him from me with the enclosed letter, he is a man of honor, and will, I am certain, provide for the poor babe, who, had not his father been a monster of unfeeling inhumanity, would have inherited the estate and title Sir William now enjoys.

Is not the midnight murderer, my dear friend, white as snow to this vile seducer? this betrayer of unsuspecting, trusting innocence? what transport is it to me to reflect, that not one bosom ever heaved a sigh of remorse of which I was the cause!

I grieve for the poor victim of a tenderness, amiable in itself, though productive of such dreadful consequences when not under the guidance of reason.

It ought to be a double tie on the honor of men, that the woman who truly loves gives up her will without reserve to the object of her affection.

Virtuous

Virtuous less from reasoning and fixed principle, than from elegance, and a lovely delicacy of mind; naturally tender, even to excess; carried away by a romance of sentiment; the helpless sex, are too easily seduced, by engaging their confidence, and piquing their generosity.

I cannot write; my heart is softened to a degree which makes me incapable of any thing.

Do not neglect one moment going to Sir William Verville.

Adieu!

Your affectionate

ED. RIVERS.

L E T T E R CCVI.

To Colonel RIVERS.

O^a. 28.

THE story you have told me has equally shocked and astonished me: my sweet Bell has dropped a pitying tear on poor Sophia's grave.

Thank heaven! we meet with few minds like that of Sir Charles Verville; such a degree of savage insensibility is unnatural.

The human heart is created weak, not wicked: fond of pleasure and of gain; but with a mixture of benevolence which prevents our seeking either to the destruction of others.

Nothing can be more false than that we are naturally inclined to evil: we are indeed naturally inclined to gratify the selfish passions of every kind; but those passions are not evil in themselves, they only become so from excess:

The malevolent passions are not inherent in our nature. They are only to be acquired by degrees, and generally are born from chagrin and disappointment; a wicked character is a depraved one.

What must this unhappy girl have suffered! no misery can equal the struggles of a virtuous mind wishing to act in a manner becoming its own dignity, yet carried by passions to do otherwise.

One o'clock.

I have been at Sir William Verville's, who is at Bath; I will write, and inclose the letter to him this evening; you shall have his answer the moment I receive it.

We are going to dine at Richmond with Lord H——.

Adieu! my dear Rivers. Bell complains you have never answered her letter: I own, I thought you a man of more gallantry than to neglect a lady.

Adieu!

Your faithful

J. FITZGERALD.

L E T-

L E T T E R CCVII.

To Captain FITZGERALD.

Bellfield, Oct. 30.

I AM very impatient, my dear friend, till you hear from Sir William, though I have no doubt of his acting as he ought : our cottagers shall not leave us till their fate is determined ; I have not told Miss Williams the step I have taken.

Emily is more and more pleased with this amiable girl : I wish extremely to be able to keep her here ; as an agreeable companion of her own age and sex, whose ideas are similar, and who, from being in the same season of life, sees things in the same point of view, is all that is wanting to Emily's happiness.

'Tis impossible to mention similarity of ideas without observing how exactly ours coincide ; in all my acquaintance with mankind, I never yet met a mind so nearly resembling my own ; a tie of affection much stronger than all your merit without that similarity.

I agree with you, that mankind are born virtuous, and that it is education and example make them otherwise.

The believing other men knaves is not only the way to make them so, but is also an infallible method of becoming such ourselves.

A false and ill judged method in instruction, by which we imbibe prejudices instead of truths, makes us regard the human race as beasts of prey ; not as brothers, united by one common bond, and promoting the general interest by pursuing our own particular one.

There is nothing of which I am more convinced than that,

“ True self-love and social are the same : ”

that those passions which make the happiness of individuals tend directly to the general good of the species.

The beneficent Author of nature has made public and private happiness the same ; man has in vain endeavoured to divide them ; but in the endeavour he almost destroyed both.

'Tis with pain I say, that the business of legislation in most countries seems to have been to counter-work this wise order of Providence, which has ordained, that we shall make others happy in being so ourselves.

This is in nothing so glaring as in the point on which not only the happiness, but the virtue of almost the whole human race is concerned : I mean marriage : the restraints on which, in almost every country, not only tend to encourage celibacy, and a destructive libertinism in the consequence of it, to give fresh strength to domestic tyranny, and subject the generous affections of uncorrupted youth to the guidance of those in whom every motive to action but avarice is dead ; to condemn the blameless victims of duty to a life of indifference, of disgust, and possibly of guilt ; but, by opposing the very spirit of our constitution, throwing property into a few hands, and favouring that excessive inequality which renders one part of the species wretched, without adding to the happiness of the other ; to destroy at once the domestic felicity of individuals, contradict, the will of the Supreme Being, as clearly wrote in the book of nature, and say the
very

very foundations of the most perfect form of government on earth.

A pretty long-winded period this: Bell would call it true Ciceronian, and quote

“——— Rivers for a period of a mile.”

But to proceed. The only equality to which parents in general attend, is that of fortune; whereas a resemblance in age, in temper, in personal attractions, in birth, in education, understanding, and sentiment, are the only foundations of that lively taste, that tender friendship, without which no union deserves the sacred name of marriage.

Timid compliant youth may be forced into the arms of age and disease; a lord may invite a citizen's daughter he despises to his bed, to repair a shattered fortune; and she may accept him, allured by the rays of a coronet: but such conjunctions are only a more shameful species of prostitution.

Men who marry from interested motives are inexcusable; but the very modesty of women makes against their happiness in this point, by giving them a kind of bashful fear of objecting to such persons as their parents recommend as proper objects of their tenderness.

I am prevented by company from saying all I intended.

Adieu! Your faithful

ED. RIVERS.

L E T.

L E T T E R CCVIII.

To Colonel RIVERS.

Temple-house, Nov. 1.

YOU wrong me excessively, my dear Rivers, in accusing me of a natural levity in love and friendship.

As to the latter, my frequent changes, which I freely acknowledge, have not been owing to any inconstancy, but to precipitation and want of caution in contradicting them.

My general fault has been the folly of choosing my friends for some striking and agreeable accomplishment, instead of giving to solid merit the preference, which most certainly is its due.

My inconstancy in love has been meerly from vanity.

There is something so flattering in the general favor of women, that it requires great firmness of mind to resist that kind of gallantry which indulges it, though absolutely destructive to real happiness.

I blush to say, that when I first married I have more than once been in danger, from the mere boyish desire of conquest, notwithstanding my adoration for your lovely sister: such is the force of habit, for I must have been infinitely a loser by changing.

I am now perfectly safe; my vanity has taken another turn; I pique myself on keeping the heart of the loveliest woman that ever existed, as a nobler conquest than attracting the notice of a hundred

dred coquets, who would be equally flattered by the attention of any other man, at least any other man who had the good fortune to be as fashionable.

Every thing conspires to keep me in the road of domestic happiness: the manner of life I am engaged in, your friendship, your example, and society; and the very fear I am in of losing your esteem.

That I have the seeds of constancy in my nature, I call on you and your lovely sister to witness; I have been *your* friend from almost infancy, and am every hour more *her* lover.

She is my friend, my companion, as well as mistress; her wit, her sprightliness, her pleasing kind of knowledge, fill with delight those hours which are so tedious with a fool, however lovely.

With my Lucy, possession can never cure the wounded heart.

Her modesty, her angel purity of mind and person, render her literally,

“ My ever-new delight.”

She has convinced me, that if beauty is the mother, delicacy is the nurse of love.

Venus has lent her cestus, and shares with her the attendance of the Graces.

My vagrant passions, like the rays of the sun collected in a burning glass, are now united in one point.

Lucy is here. Adieu! I must not let her know her power.

You spend to-morrow with us; we have a little ball, and are to have a masquerade next week.

Lucy

Lucy wants to consult Emily on her dress; you and I are not to be in the secret; we have wrote to ask the Fitzgeralds to the masquerade; I will send Lucy's post-coach for them the day before, or perhaps fetch them myself.

Adieu!

Your affectionate

J. TEMPLE.

L E T T E R CCIX.

To Captain FITZGERALD.

Bellfield, Nov. 1.

I HAVE this moment a letter from Temple which has set my heart at rest: he writes like a lover, yet owns his past danger with a frankness which speaks more strongly than any professions could do, the real present state of his heart.

My anxiety for my sister has a little broke in on my own happiness; in England, where the married women are in general the most virtuous in the world, it is of infinite consequence they should love their husbands, and be beloved by them; in countries where gallantry is more permitted, it is less necessary.

Temple will make her happy whilst she preserves his heart; but if she loses it, every thing is to be feared from the vivacity of his nature, which can never support one moment a life of indifference.

He

He has that warmth of temper which is the natural foil of the virtues ; but which is unhappily, at the same time, most apt to produce indiscretions.

Tame, cold, dispassionate minds resemble barren lands ; warm, animated ones, rich ground, which, if properly cultivated, yields the noblest fruit ; but if neglected, from its luxuriance is most productive of weeds.

His misfortune has been losing both his parents when almost an infant ; and having been master of himself and a noble fortune, at an age when the passions hurry us beyond the bounds of reason.

I am the only person on earth by whom he would ever bear to be controlled in any thing ; happily for Lucy, I preserve the influence over him which friendship first gave me.

That influence, and her extreme attention to study his taste in every thing, with those uncommon graces both of mind and person she has received from nature, will, I hope, effectually fix this wandering star.

She tells me, she has asked you to a masquerade at Temple-house, to which you will extremely oblige us all by coming.

You do not tell us, whether the affair of your majority is settled : if obliged to return immediately, Temple will send you back.

Adieu !

Your faithful

ED. RIVERS.

I have this moment your last letter : you are right, we American travellers are under great disadvantages ; our imaginations are restrained ; we have not the pomp of the orient to describe, but the simple and unadorned charms of nature.

L E T T E R C C X .

To Colonel RIVERS, at Bellfield, Rutland.

Nov. 4.

SIR William Verville is come back to town ; I was with him this morning ; he desires to see the child ! he tells me, his brother, in his last moments, mentioned this story in all the agony of remorse, and begged him to provide for the little innocent, if to be found ; that he had made many enquiries, but hitherto in vain ; and that he thought himself happy in the discovery.

He talks of settling three thousand pounds on the child, and taking the care of educating him into his own hands.

I hinted at some little provision for the amiable girl who had saved him from perishing, and had the pleasure to find Sir William listen to me with attention.

I am sorry it is not possible for me to be at your masquerade ; but my affair is just at the crisis : Bell expects a particular account of it from Mrs. Rivers, and desires to be immediately in the secret of the ladies dresses, though you are not : she begs you will send your fair cottager and little charge to us, and we will take care to introduce them properly to Sir William.

I am

I am too much hurried to say more.

Adieu! my dear Rivers!

Your affectionate

J. FITZGERALD.

L E T T E R C C X I.

To Mrs. FITZGERALD.

Nov. 8.

YES, my dear Bell, politeness is undoubtedly a moral virtue:

As we are beings formed for, and not capable of being happy without society, it is the duty of every one to endeavour to make it as easy and agreeable as they can; which is only to be done by such an attention to others as is consistent with what we owe to ourselves; all we give them in civility will be repaid us in respect; insolence and ill-breeding are detestable to all mankind.

I long to see you, my dear Bell; the delight I have had in your society has spoiled my relish for that of meer acquaintance, however agreeable.

'Tis dangerous to indulge in the pleasures of friendship; they weaken one's taste too much for common conversation.

Yet what other pleasures are worth the name? what others have spirit and delicacy too?

I am preparing for the masquerade, which is to be the 18th; I am extremely disappointed you will not be with us.

My

I am

My dress is simple and unornamented, but I think becoming and prettily fancied; it is that of a French *paisanne*: Lucy is to be a sultana, blazing with diamonds: my mother a Roman matron.

I chuse this dress because I have heard my dear Rivers admire it; to be one moment more pleasing in his eyes, is an object wort'y all my attention.

Adieu! your faithful

EMILY RIVERS.

L E T T E R C C X I I .

'To Mrs. RIVERS, at Bellfield, Rutland.

London, Nov. 10.

CERTAINLY, my dear, friendship is a mighty pretty invention, and, next to love, gives of all things the greatest spirit to society.

And yet the prudery of the age will hardly allow us poor women even this pleasure, innocent as it is.

I remember my aunt Cecily, who died at sixty-six, without ever having felt the least spark of affection for any human being, used to tell me, a prudent modest woman never loved any thing but herself.

For my part, I think all the kind propensities of the heart ought rather to be cherished than checked;

checked; that one is allowed to esteem merit even in the naughty creature man.

I love you very sincerely, Emily; but I like friendships for the men best; and think prudery, by forbidding them, robs us of some of the most lively as well as innocent pleasures of the heart.

That desire of pleasing, which one feels much the most strongly for a *male* friend, is in itself a very agreeable emotion.

You will say, I am a coquet even in friendship; and I am not quite sure you are not in the right.

I am extremely in love with my husband; yet chuse other men should regard me with complacency, am as fond of attracting the attention of the dear creatures as ever, and, though I do justice to your wit, understanding, sentiment, and all that, prefer Rivers's conversation infinitely to yours.

Women cannot say civil things to each other; and if they could, they would be something insipid; whereas a male friend——

'Tis absolutely another thing, my dear; and the first system of ethics I write, I will have a hundred pages on the subject.

Observe, my dear, I have not the least objection to your having a friendship for Fitzgerald. I am the best natured creature in the world, and the fondest of encreasing the number of my husband's innocent amusements.

A propos to innocent amusements, I think your fair sister-in-law an exquisite politician; calling the pleasures to Temple at home, is the best method in the world to prevent his going abroad in pursuit of them.

I am

I am mortified I cannot be at your masquerade; it is my passion, and I have the prettiest dress in the world by me. I am half inclined to elope for a day or two.

Adieu! Your faithful

A. FITZGERALD.

L E T T E R C C X I I I .

To Captain FITZGERALD.

Bellfield, Nov. 12.

PLEASE to inform the little Bell, I won't allow her to spoil my Emily.

I enter a caveat against male friendships, which are only fit for ladies of the *salamandrine* order.

I desire to engross all Emily's *kind propensities* to myself; and should grudge the least share in her heart, or, if you please, in her *friendship*, to an archangel.

However, not to be too severe, since prudery expects women to have no propensities at all, I allow single ladies of all ranks, sizes, ages, and complexions, to spread the veil of friendship between their hearts and the world.

'Tis the finest day I ever saw, though the middle of November; a dry soft west wind, the air as mild as in April, and almost Canadian sunshine.

I have been bathing in the clear stream at the end of my garden; the same stream in which I laved my careless bosom at thirteen; an idea which gave me inconceivable delight; and the more, as my bosom is as gay and tranquil at this moment as in those dear hours of cheerfulness and innocence.

Of

Of all local prejudices, that is the strongest as well as the most pleasing, which attaches us to the place of our birth.

Sweet home! only seat of true and genuine happiness.

I am extremely in the humor for writing a poem to the household gods.

We neglect these amiable deities, but they are revenged; true pleasure is only to be found under their auspices.

I know not how it is, my dear Fitzgerald; but I don't find my passion for the country abate.

I still find the scenes around me lovely; though, from the change of season, less smiling than when I first fixed at Bellfield; we have rural business enough to amuse, not embarrass us; we have a small but excellent library of books, given us by my mother; she and Emily are two of the most pleasing companions on earth; the neighbourhood is full of agreeable people, and what should always be attended to in fixing in the country, of fortunes not superior to our own.

The evenings grow long, but they are only the more jovial; I love the pleasures of the table, not for their own sakes, for no man is more indifferent on this subject; but because, they promote social, convivial joy, and bring people together in good humor with themselves and each other.

My Emily's suppers are enchanting; but our little income obliges us to have few; if I was rich, this would be my principal extravagance.

To fill up my measure of content, Emily is pleased with my retirement, and finds all her happiness in my affection.

We

We are so little alone, that I find our moments of unreserved conversation too short; whenever I leave her, I recollect a thousand things I had to say, a thousand new ideas to communicate, and am impatient for the hour of seeing again, without restraint, the most amiable and pleasing of womankind.

My happiness would be complete, if I did not sometimes see a cloud of anxiety on that dear countenance, which, however, is dissipated the moment my eyes meet hers.

I am going to Temple's, and the chaise is at the door.

Adieu! my dear friend!

Your affectionate

ED. RIVERS.

L E T T E R CCXIV.

To Colonel RIVERS.

Nov. 14.

SO you disapprove male friendships, my sweet Colonel! I thought you had better ideas of things in general.

Fitzgerald and I have been disputing on French and English manners, in regard to gallantry.

The great question is, Whether a man is more hurt by the imprudent conduct of his daughter or wife?

Much may be said on both sides.

There is some hazard in suffering coquetry in either; both contribute to give charms to conversation, and introduce ease and politeness into society; but both are dangerous to manners.

Our

Our customs, however, are most likely to produce good effects, as they give opportunity for love marriages, the only ones which can make worthy minds happy.

The coquetry of single women has a point of view consistent with honor; that of married women has generally no point of view at all; it is, however, of use, *pour passer le tems*.

As to real gallantry, the French style depraves the minds of men least, ours is most favourable to the peace of families.

I think I preserve the balance of argument admirably.

My opinion however is, that if people married from affection, there would be no such thing as gallantry at all.

Pride, and the parade of life, destroy all happiness: our whole felicity depends on our choice in marriage, yet we chuse from motives more trifling than would determine us in the common affairs of life.

I knew a gentleman who fancied himself in love, yet delayed marrying his mistress till he could afford a set of plate.

Modern manners are very unfavourable to the tender affections.

Ancient lovers had only dragons to combat; ours have the worse monsters of avarice and ambition.

All I shall say further on the subject is, that the two happiest people I ever knew were a country clergyman and his wife, whose whole income did not exceed one hundred pounds a year.

A pretty philosophical, sentimental, dull kind of an epistle this.

But you deserve it, for not answering my last, which was divine.

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Nov. 14.

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Our

I am pleased with Emily's ideas about her dress at the masquerade ; it is a proof you are still lovers.

I remember the first symptom I discovered of my *tendresse* for Fitzgerald was my excessive attention to this article ; I have tried on twenty different caps when I expected him at Silleri.

Before we drop the subject of gallantries, I must tell you I am charmed with you and my *sposo*, for never giving the least hint before Emily, and me that you have had any ; it is a piece of delicacy which convinces me of your tenderness more than all the vows that ever lovers broke would do.

I have been hurt at the contrary behaviour in Temple ; and have observed Lucy to be so too, though her excessive attention not to give him pain prevented her shewing it : I have on such an occasion seen a smile on her countenance, and a tear of tender regret starting into her eyes.

A woman who has vanity without affection will be pleased to hear of your past conquests, and regard them as victims immolated to her superior charms : to her, therefore, it is right to talk of them ; but to flatter the *heart*, and give delight to a woman who truly loves, you should appear too much taken up with the present passion to look back to the past ; you should not even present to her imagination the thought that you have had other engagements : we know such things are, but had rather the idea should not be awakened : I may be wrong, but I speak from my own feelings.

I am excessively pleased with a thought I met with in a little French novel :

“ Un homme qui ne peut plus compter ses bonnes fortunes, est de tous, celui qui connoit le moins les *faveurs*. C'est le cœur qui les accorde, & ce n'est pas le cœur qu'un homme a la monde
“ interesse.

“ interresse. Plus on est *prone* par les femmes, plus
 “ il est facile de les avoir, mais moins il est possible
 “ de les enflammer.”

To which truth I most heartily set my hand.

Twelve o'clock.

I have just heard from your sister, who tells me, Emily is turned a little natural philosopher, reads Ray, Derham, and fifty other strange old fellows that one never heard of, and is eternally poring through a microscope to discover the wonders of creation.

How amazingly learned matrimony makes young ladies! I suppose we shall have a volume of her discoveries by and by.

She says too, you have little pets like sweethearts, quarrel and make it up again in the most engaging manner in the world.

This is just what I want to bring Fitzgerald to; but the perverse monkey won't quarrel with me, do all I can: I am sure this is not my fault, for I give him reason every day of his life.

Shenstone says admirably, “ That reconciliation
 “ is the tenderest part of love and friendship: the
 “ soul here discovers a kind of elasticity, and, being
 “ forced back, returns with an additional violence.”

Who would not quarrel for the pleasure of reconciliation! I shall be very angry with Fitzgerald if he goes on in this mild way.

Tell your sister, she cannot be more mortified than I am, that it is impossible for me to be at her masquerade.

Adieu! Your affectionate

A. FITZGERALD.

Don't you think, my dear Rivers, that marriage, on prudent principles, is a horrid sort of an affair? It is really cruel of papas and mammas to shut up
 two

two poor innocent creatures in a house together, to plague and torment one another, who might have been very happy separate.

Where people take their own time, and chuse for themselves, it is another affair, and I begin to think it possible affection may last through life.

I sometimes fancy to myself Fitzgerald and I loving on, from the impassioned hour when I first honored him with my hand, to that tranquil one, when we shall take our afternoon's nap *vis a vis* in two arm-chairs, by the fire-side, he a grave country justice, and I his worship's good sort of a wife, the Lady Bountiful of the parish.

I have a notion there is nothing so very shocking in being an oldish gentlewoman; what one loses in charms, is made up in the happy liberty of doing and saying whatever one pleases. Adieu!

L E T T E R C C X V .

To Captain FITZGERALD.

Bellfield, Nov. 16.

MY relation, Colonel Wilmott, is just arrived from the East Indies, rich, and full of the project of marrying his daughter to me.

My mother has this morning received a letter from him, pressing the affair with an earnestness which rather makes me feel for his disappointment, and wish to break it to him as gentle as possible.

He talks of being at Bellfield on Wednesday evening, which is Temple's Masquerade; I shall stay behind at Bellfield to receive him, have a domino ready, and take him to Temple-house.

He seems to know nothing of my marriage or my

my sister's, and I wish him not to know of the former till he has seen Emily.

The best apology I can make for declining his offer, is to shew him the lovely cause.

I will contrive they shall converse together at the masquerade, and that he shall sit next to her at supper, without their knowing any thing of each other.

If he sees her, if he talks with her, without that prejudice which the knowledge of her being the cause of his disappointment might give, he cannot fail of having for her that admiration which I never met with a mind savage enough to refuse her.

His daughter has been educated abroad, which is a circumstance I am pleased with, as it gives me the power of refusing her without wounding either her vanity or her father's, which, had we been acquainted, might have been piqued at my giving the preference to another.

She is not in England, but is hourly expected: the moment she arrives, Lucy and I will fetch her to Temple-house: I shall be anxious to see her married to a man who deserves her. Colonel Wilmott tells me, she is very amiable; at least as he is told, for he has never seen her.

I could wish it were possible to conceal this offer for ever from Emily; my delicacy is hurt at the idea of her knowing it, at least from me or my family.

My mother behaves like an angel on this occasion; expresses herself perfectly happy in my having consulted my heart alone in marrying, and speaks of Emily's tenderness as a treasure above all price.

She does not even hint to see me richer than I am.

Had I never seen Emily, I would not have married this lady unless love had united us.

Do

Do not, however, suppose that I have that romantic contempt for fortune, which is so pardonable, I had almost said so becoming, at nineteen.

I have seen more of the world than most men of my age, and I have seen the advantages of affluence in their strongest light.

I think a worthy man not only may have, but ought to have, an attention to making his way in the world, and improving his situation in it, by every means consistent with probity and honor, and with his own real happiness.

I have ever had this attention, and ever will, but not by base means: and in my opinion, the very basest is that of selling one's hand in marriage.

With what horror do we regard a man who is kept! and a man who marries from interested views alone, is kept, in the strongest sense of the word.

He is equally a purchased slave, with no distinction, but that his bondage is of longer continuance.

Adieu! I may possibly write again on Wednesday.

Your faithful

ED. RIVERS.

L E T T E R C C X V I .

To Colonel RIVERS, at Bellfield, Rutland.

London, Nov. 18.

FITZGERALD is busy, and begs me to write to you.

Your cottagers are arrived: there is something very interesting in Miss Williams, and the little boy is an infant Adonis.

Heaven

Heaven send he may be an honest man than his father, or I foresee terrible devastations amongst the sex.

We have this moment your letter; I am angry with you for blaspheming the sweet season of nineteen:

“ O lovely source

“ Of generous foibles, youth; when opening
“ minds

“ Are honest as the light, lucid as air,

“ As fostering breezes kind, as linnets gay,

“ Tender as buds, and lavish as the spring.”

You will find out I am in a course of Shenstone, which I prescribe to all minds tinctured with the uncomfortable selfishness of the present age.

The only way to be good is to retain the generous mistakes, if they are such, of nineteen through life.

As to you, my dear Rivers, with all your airs of prudence and knowing the world, you are, in this respect, as much a boy as ever.

Witness your extreme joy at having married a woman with two thousand pounds, when you might have had one with twenty times the sum.

You are a boy, Rivers, I am a girl, and I hope we shall remain so as long as we live.

Do you know, my dear friend, that I am a daughter of the Muses, and that I wrote pastorals at seven years old?

I am charmed with this, because an old physician once told me it was a symptom, not only of long life, but of long youth, which is much better.

He explained this, by saying something about animal spirits, which I do not at all understand, but which perhaps you may.

I should

Heaven

I should have been a pretty enough kind of a poetess, if papa had not attempted to teach me how to be one, and insisted on seeing my scribbles, as I went on: these same Muses are such bashful misses they won't bear to be looked at.

Genius is like the sensitive plant; it shrinks from the touch.

So your nabob cousin is arrived: I hope he will fall in love with Emily; and remember, if he had obligations to Mrs. Rivers's father, he had exactly the same to your grandfather.

He might spare ten thousand pounds very well which would improve your *petits soupers*.

Adieu! Sir William Verville dines here, and I have but just time to dress.

Yours,

A. FITZGERALD.

L E T T E R CCXVII.

To Captain FITZGERALD.

Bellfield, Nov. 17, Morning.

I HAVE had a letter from Colonel Wilmott myself to-day; he is still quite unacquainted with the state of our domestic affairs; supposes me a batchelor, and talks of my being his son-in-law as a certainty, not attending to the probability of my having other engagements.

His history, which he tells me in this letter, is a very romantic one. He was a younger brother, and provided for accordingly: he loved, when but twenty, a lady who was as little a favorite of fortune as himself: their families, who on both sides had other views, joined their interest to get him sent to the East Indies; and the young lady was removed

moved to the house of a friend in London, where she was to continue till he had left England.

Before he went, however, they contrived to meet, and were privately married; the marriage was known only to her brother, who was Wilmott's friend.

He left her in the care of her brother, who, under pretence of diverting her melancholy, and endeavouring to cure her passion, obtained leave of his father to take her with him to France.

She was there delivered of this child, and expired a few days after.

Her brother, without letting her family know the secret, educated the infant, as the daughter of a younger brother who had been just before killed in a duel in France; her parents, who died in a few years, were, almost in their last moments, informed of these circumstances, and made a small provision for the child.

In the mean time, Colonel Wilmott, after experiencing a great variety of misfortunes for many years, during which he maintained a constant correspondence with his brother-in-law, and with no other person in Europe, by a train of lucky accidents, acquired very rapidly a considerable fortune, with which he resolved to return to England, and marry his daughter to me, as the only method to discharge fully his obligations to my grandfather, who alone, of all his family, had given him the least assistance when he left England. He wrote to his daughter, letting her know his design, and directing her to meet him in London; but she is not yet arrived.

Six in the Evening.

My mother and Emily went to Temple's to dinner; they are to dress there, and I am to be surprized.

Seven.

Colonel Wilmott is come: he is an extreme handsome man; tall, well-made, with an air of dignity which one seldom sees; he is very brown, and, what will please Bell, has an aquiline nose: he looks about fifty, but is not so much; change of climate has almost always the disagreeable effect of adding some years to the look.

He is dressing, to accompany me to the masquerade; I must attend him: I have only time to say,

I am yours,

ED. RIVERS.

L E T T E R CCXVIII.

To Mrs. RIVERS, at Bellfield, Rutland.

London, Nov. 18, twelve at night.

WHO should I dine and sup with to-day, at a merchant's in the city, but your old love, Sir George Clayton, as gay and amusing as ever!

What an entertaining companion have you lost, my dear Emily!

He was a little disconcerted at seeing me, and blushed extremely; but soon recovered his amiable uniform insipidity of countenance, and smiled and simpered as usual.

He never enquired after you, nor even mentioned your name; being asked for a toast, I had the malice to give Rivers; he drank him, without seeming ever to have heard of him before.

The city misses admire him prodigiously, and he them; they are charmed with his beauty, and he with their wit.

His mother, poor woman! could not bring the match she wrote about to bear: the family approved

proved him; but the fair one made a better choice, and gave herself last week, at St. George's, Hanover-square, to a very agreeable fellow of our acquaintance, Mr. Palmer; a man of sense and honor, who deserves her had she been ten times richer: he has a small estate in Lincolnshire, and his house is not above twenty miles from you: I must bring you and Mrs. Palmer acquainted.

I suppose you are now the happiest of beings; Rivers finding a thousand new beauties in his *belle paisanne*, and you exulting in your charms, or, in other words, glorying in your strength.

So the maiden aunts in your neighbourhood think Miss Williams no better than she should be?

Either somebody has said, or the idea is my own; after all, I believe it Shenstone's, 'That those are generally the best people, whose characters have been most injured by slanderers, as we usually find that the best fruit which the birds have been pecking at.

I will, however, allow appearances were a little against your cottager; and I would forgive the good old virgins, if they had always as suspicious circumstances to determine from.

But they generally condemn from trifling indiscretions, and settle the characters of their own sex from their conduct at a time of life when they are themselves no judges of its propriety; they pass sentence on them for small errors, when it is an amazing proof of prudence not to commit great ones.

For my own part, I think those who never have been guilty of an indiscretion, are generally people who have very little active virtue.

The waving line holds in moral as well as in corporal beauty.

Adieu! Yours ever,

A FITZGERALD.

All I can say is, that if imprudence is a sin, heaven help poor little Bell!

On those principles, Sir George is the most virtuous man in the world; to which assertion, I believe you will enter a caveat.

L E T T E R C C X I X .

To Colonel RIVERS, at Bellfield, Rutland.

London, Nov. 19.

YOU are right, my little Rivers: I like your friend Colonel Wilmott vastly better for his aquiline nose; I never yet saw one on the face of a fool.

He is a fortunate man to be introduced to such a party of fine women at his arrival; it is literally *to feed among the lilies*.

Fitzgerald says, he should be jealous of him in your esteem, if he was fifteen years younger; but that the strongest friendships are, where there is an equality in age; because people of the same age have the same train of thinking, and see things in the same light.

Every season of life has its peculiar set of ideas; and we are greatly inclined to think nobody in the right, but those who are of the same opinion with ourselves.

Don't you think it a strong proof of my passion for my *spose*, that I repeat his sentiments?

But

But to business: Sir William is charmed with his little nephew; has promised to settle on him what he before mentioned, to allow Miss Williams an hundred pounds a year, which is to go to the child after her death, and to be at the expence of his education himself.

I die to hear whether your oriental Colonel is in love with Emily.

Pray tell us every thing.

Adieu!

Your affectionate

A. FITZGERALD.

KIX.

Rutland.

Nov. 19.

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L E T T E R CCXX.

To Captain FITZGERALD.

Temple-house, Tuesday morning, 11 o'clock.

OUR masquerade last night was really charming; I never saw any thing equal to it out of London.

Temple has taste, and spared no expence to make it agreeable; the decorations of the grand saloon were magnificent.

Emily was the loveliest *paisanne* that ever was beheld; her dress, without losing sight of the character, was infinitely becoming: her beauty never appeared to such advantage.

There was a noble simplicity in her air, which it is impossible to describe.

The easy turn of her shape, the lovely roundness of her arm, the natural elegance of her whole form, the waving ringlets of her beautiful dark hair, carelessly fastened with a ribbon, the unafected grace of her every motion, all together conveyed

conveyed more strongly than imagination can paint, the pleasing idea of a wood nymph, deigning to visit some favourite mortal.

Colonel Wilmott gazed on her with rapture; and asked me, if the rural deities had left their verdant abodes to visit Temple-house.

I introduced him to her, and left her to improve the impression: 'tis well I was married in time; a nabob is a dangerous rival.

Lucy looked lovely, but in another style; she was a sultana in all the pride of imperial beauty; her charms awed, but Emily's invited; her look spoke resistless command, Emily's soft persuasion.

There were many fine women; but I will own to you, I had, as to beauty, no eyes but for Emily.

We are going this morning to see Burleigh: when we return, I shall announce Colonel Wilmott to Emily, and introduce them properly to each other: they are to go in the same chaise; she at present only knows him as a friend of mine, and he her as his *belle paisanne*.

Adieu! I am summoned.

Your faithful

ED. RIVERS.

I should have told you, I acquainted Colonel Wilmott with my sister's marriage before I took him to Temple-house, and found an opportunity of introducing him to Temple unobserved.

Emily is the only one here to whom he is a stranger: I will caution him not to mention to her his past generous design in my favour. Adieu!

L E T T E R CCXXI.

To Mrs. FITZGERALD.

Temple-house, Thursday morning.

YOUR Emily was happy beyond words last night: amongst a croud of beauties, her Rivers's eyes continually followed her; he seemed to see no other object: he would scarce let me wait till supper to unmask.

But you will call me a foolish romantic girl; therefore I will only say, I had the delight to see him pleased with the dress, and charmed with the complaisance which was shewn me by others.

There was a gentleman who came with Rivers, who was particularly attentive to me; he is not young, but extremely amiable: has a very fine person, with a commanding air: great politeness, and, as far as one can judge by a few hours conversation, an excellent understanding.

I never in my life met with a man for whom I felt such a partiality at first sight, except Rivers, who tells me I have made a conquest of his friend.

He is to be my cavalier this morning to Burleigh.

It has this moment struck me, that Rivers never introduced his friend and me to each other, but as masks; I never thought of this before; I suppose he forgot it in the hurry of the masquerade.

I do not even know this agreeable stranger's name; I only found out by his conversation he had served in the army.

There

L E T -

There is no saying how beautiful Lucy looked last night ; her dress was rich, elegantly fancied, and particularly becoming to her graceful form, which I never saw look so graceful before.

All who attempted to be fine figures, shrunk into nothing before her.

Lucy carries her head, you know, remarkably well ; which, with the advantage of her height, the perfect standard of women, her fine proportion, the native dignity of her air, the majestic flow of her robe, and the blaze of her diamonds, gave her a look of infinite superiority : a superiority which some of the company seemed to feel in a manner, which rather, I will own, gave me pain.

In a place consecrated to joy, I hate to see any thing like an uneasy sensation ; yet, whilst human passions are what they are, it is difficult to avoid them.

There were four or five other sultanas, who seemed only the slaves of her train.

In short,

“ She look’d a goddess, and she mov’d a queen.”

I was happy the unassuming simplicity of the character in which I appeared, prevented comparisons which must have been extremely to my disadvantage.

I was safe in my littleness, like a modest shrub by the side of a cedar ; and, being in so different a style, had the better chance to be taken notice of, even where Lucy was.

She was radiant as the morning star, and even dazzling lovely.

Her complexion, for Temple would not suffer her to wear a mask at all, had the vivid glow of youth and health, heightened by pleasure, and the consciousness of universal admiration.

Her

Her eyes had a fire which one could scarce look at.

Temple's vanity and tenderness were gratified to the utmost: he drank eagerly the praises which envy itself could not have refused her.

My mother extremely became her character; and, when talking to Rivers, gave me the idea of the Roman Aurelia, whose virtues she has equalled.

He looked at her with a delight which rendered him a thousand times more dear to me: she is really one of the most pleasing women that ever existed.

I am called: we are just setting out for Burleigh, which I have not yet seen.

Adieu! Yours,

EMILY RIVERS.

L E T T E R C C X X I I I .

To Captain FITZGERALD.

Bellfield, Thursday, two o'clock.

WE are returned; Colonel Wilmott is charmed with Burleigh, and more in love with Emily than ever.

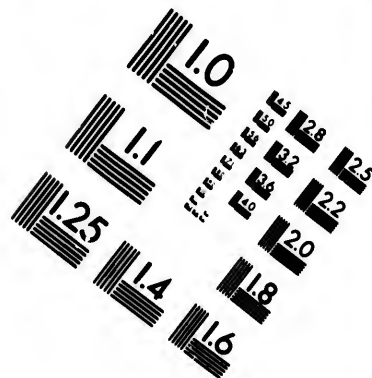
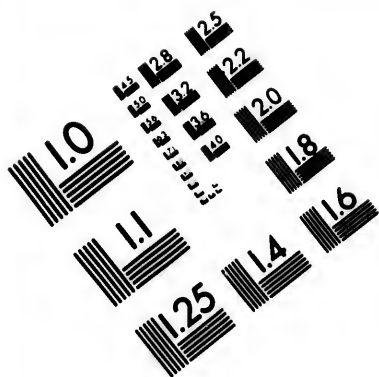
He is gone to his apartment, whither I shall follow him, and acquaint him with my marriage; he is exactly in the disposition I could wish.

He will, I am sure, pardon any offence of which his *belle faisanne* is the cause.

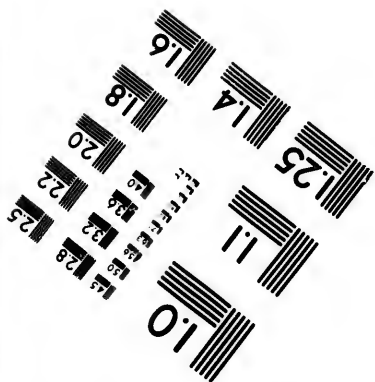
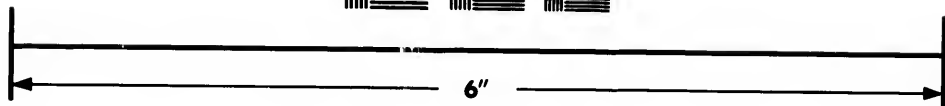
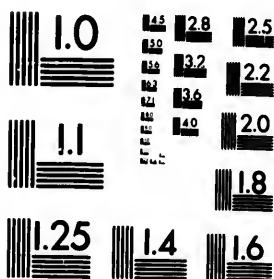
I am returned.

He is disappointed, but not surprized; owns no human heart could have resisted Emily; begs she will allow his daughter a place in her friendship.





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He insists on making her a present of diamonds ; the only condition, he tells me, on which he will forgive my marriage.

I am going to introduce him to her in her apartment.

Adieu ! for a moment.

Fitzgerald!—I scarce respire—the tumult of my joy—this daughter whom I have refused—my Emily—could you have believed——my Emily is the daughter of Colonel Wilmott.

When I announced him to her by that name, her color changed ; but when I added that he was just returned from the East Indies, she trembled, her cheeks had a dying paleness, her voice faltered, she pronounced faintly, “ My father !” and sunk breathless on a sofa.

He ran to her, he pressed her wildly to his bosom, he kissed her pale cheek, he demanded if she was indeed his child ? his Emily ? the dear pledge of his Emily Montague’s tenderness ?

Her senses returned, she fixed her eyes eagerly on him, she kissed his hand, she would have spoke, but tears stopped her voice.

The scene that followed is beyond my powers of description.

I have left them a moment, to share my joy with you ; the time is too precious to say more. To-morrow you shall hear from me.

Adieu ! Yours,

ED. RIVERS.

L E T T E R CCXXIII.

To Captain FITZGERALD.

Temple-house, Friday.

YOUR friend is the happiest of mankind.

Every anxiety is removed from my Emily's dear bosom: a father's sanction leaves her nothing to desire.

You may remember, she wished to delay our marriage; her motive was, to wait Colonel Wil-mott's return.

Though promised by him to another, she hoped to bring him to leave her heart free; little did she think the man destined for her by her father, was the happy Rivers her heart had chosen.

Bound by a solemn vow, she concealed the circumstances of her birth even from me.

She resolved never to marry another, yet thought duty obliged her to wait her father's arrival.

She kindly supposed he would see me with her eyes, and, when he knew me, change his design in my favor: she fancied he would crown her love as the reward of her obedience in delaying her marriage.

My importunity, and the fear of giving me room to doubt her tenderness, as her vow prevented such an explanation as would have satisfied me, bore down her duty to a father she had never seen, and whom she had supposed dead, till the arrival of Mrs. Melmoth's letters; having been two years without hearing any thing of him.

She married me, determined to give up her right to half his fortune in favour of the person for whom he designed her; and hoped, by that means

to discharge her father's obligations, which she could not pay at the expence of sacrificing her heart.

But she writes to Mrs. Fitzgerald, and will tell you all.

Come and share the happiness of your friends.

Adieu !

Your faithful

ED. RIVERS.

L E T T E R CCXXIV.

To Mrs. FITZGERALD.

Temple-house, Friday.

MY Rivers has told you—My sweet friend, in what words shall I convey to you an adequate idea of your Emily's transports at a discovery which has reconciled all her duties !

Those anxieties, that sense of having failed in filial obediences, which cast a damp on the joy of being wife to the most beloved of mankind, are at an end.

This husband whom I so dreaded, whom I determined never to accept, was my Rivers.

My father forgives me ; he pardons the crime of love : he blesses that kind Providence which conducted us to happiness.

How many has this event made happy !

The most amiable of mothers shares my joy ; she bends in grateful thanks to that indulgent power, who has rewarded her son for all his goodness to her.

Rivers hears her, and turns away to hide his tears : her tenderness melts him to the softness of a woman.

What

What gratitude do we not owe to heaven! may the sense of it be for ever engraven on our heart!

My Lucy too; all, all are happy.

But I will tell you Rivers has already acquainted you with part of my story.

My uncle placed me with a servant in whom he could confide in a convent in France, till I was seven years old; he then sent for me to England, and left me at school eight years longer; after which he took me with him to his regiment in Kent, where, you know, our friendship began, and continued till he changed into another, then in America, whither I attended him.

My father's affairs were at that time, in a situation which determined my uncle to take the first opportunity of marrying me to advantage.

I regarded him as a father; he had always been more than a parent to me; I had the most implicit deference to his will.

He engaged me to Sir George Clayton; and when dying told me the story of my birth, to which I had till then been a stranger, exacting from me, however, an oath of secrecy till I saw my father.

He died, leaving me with a trifle left in trust to him for my use from my grandfather, about two thousand pounds, which was all I, at that time, ever expected to possess.

My father was then thought ruined; there was even a report of his death, and I imagined myself absolutely mistress of my own actions.

I was near two years without hearing any thing of him; nor did I know I had still a father, till the letters you brought me from Mrs. Melmoth.

A variety of accidents, and our being both abroad, and in such distant parts of the world, prevented his letters arriving.

In

What

In this situation, the kind hand of heaven conducted my Rivers to Montreal.

I saw him; and from that moment my whole soul was his.

Formed for each other, our love was sudden and resistless as the bolt of heaven: the first glance of those dear sparkling eyes gave me a new being, and awakened in me ideas never known before.

The strongest sympathy attached me to him in spite of myself: I thought it friendship, but felt that friendship more lively than what I called my *love* for Sir George; all conversation but his became insupportable to me; every moment that he passed from me, I counted as lost in my existence.

I loved him; that tenderness hourly increased: I hated Sir George, I fancied him changed; I studied to find errors in a man who had, a few weeks before, appeared to me amiable, and whom I had consented to marry; I broke with him, and felt a weight removed from my soul.

I trembled when Rivers appeared; I died to tell him my whole soul was his; I watched his looks, to find there the same sentiments with which he had inspired me: that transporting moment at length arrived; I had the delight to find our tenderness was mutual, and to devote my life to making happy the lord of my desires.

Mrs. Melmoth's letter brought me my father's commands, if unmarried, to continue so till his return.

He added, that he intended me for a relation, to whose family he had obligations; that, his affairs having suffered such a happy revolution, he had it in his power, and, therefore, thought it his duty, to pay his debt of gratitude; and, at the same time, hoped to make me happy by connecting

needing me with an amiable family, allied to him by blood and friendship; and uniting me to a man whom report spoke worthy of all my tenderness.

You may remember, my dearest Bell, how strongly I was affected on reading those letters: I wrote to Rivers, to beg him to defer our marriage; but the manner in which he took that request, and the fear of appearing indifferent to him, conquered all sense of what I owed to my father, and I married him; making it however, a condition that he should ask no explanation of my conduct till I chose to give it.

I knew not the character of my father; he might be a tyrant, and divide us from each other: Rivers doubted my tenderness; would not my waiting, if my father had afterwards refused his consent to our union, have added to those cruel suspicions? might he not have supposed I had ceased to love him, and waited for the excuse of paternal authority to justify a change of sentiment?

In short, love bore down every other consideration; if I persisted in this delay, I might hazard losing all my soul held dear, the only object for which life was worth my care.

I determined, if I married, to give up all claim to my father's fortune, which I should justly forfeit by my disobedience to his commands: I hoped, however, Rivers's merit, and my father's paternal affection, when he knew us both, would influence him to make some provision for me as his daughter.

Half his fortune was all I ever hoped for, or even would have chose to accept; the rest I determined to give up to the man whom I refused to marry.

I gave my hand to Rivers, and was happy; yet the idea of my father's return, and the consciousness of having disobeyed him, cast sometimes a damp on my

my felicity, and threw a gloom over my soul, which all my endeavours could scarce hide from Rivers, though his delicacy prevented his asking the cause.

I now know, what was then a secret to me, that my father had offered his daughter to Rivers, with a fortune which could, however, have been no temptation to a mind like his, had he not been attached to me; he declined the offer, and, lest I should hear of it, and, from a romantic disinterestedness, want him to accept it, pressed our marriage with more importunity than ever; yet had the generosity to conceal this sacrifice from me, and to wish it should be concealed for ever.

These sentiments, so noble, so peculiar to my Rivers, prevented an explanation, and hid from us, for some time, the circumstances which now make our happiness so perfect.

How infinitely worthy is Rivers of all my tenderness!

My father has sent to speak with me in his apartment: I should have told you, I this morning went to Bellfield, and brought from thence my mother's picture, which I have just sent him.

Adieu! Your faithful

EMILY RIVERS.

L E T T E R CCXXV.

To Mrs. RIVERS, Bellfield, Rutland.

London, Sunday.

NO words, my dear Emily, can speak our joy at the receipt of your two last letters.

You are then as happy as you deserve to be: .
w.c.

we hope, in a few days, to be witness of your felicity.

We knew from the first of your father's proposal to Rivers; but he extorted a promise from us, never on any account to communicate it to you: he also desired us to detain you in Berkshire, by lengthening our visits till your marriage, lest any friend of your father's in London should know his design, and chance to acquaint you with it.

Fitzgerald is *Monsieur le Majeur*, at your ladyship's service: he received his commission this morning.

I once again congratulate you, my dear, on this triumph of tenderness: you see love, like virtue, is not only its own reward, but sometimes intitles us to other rewards too.

It should always be considered, that those who marry from love, *may* grow rich; but those who marry to be rich, will *never* love.

The very idea that love will come after marriage, is shocking to minds which have the least spark of delicacy: to such minds, a marriage which begins with indifference will certainly end in disgust and aversion.

I bespeak your papa for my *cecisbeo*; mine is extremely at your service in return.

But I am piqued, my dear. "Sentiments so noble, so peculiar to your Rivers—"

I am apt to believe there are men in the world—that nobleness of mind is not so very *peculiar*—and that some people's sentiments may be as noble as other people's.

In short, I am inclined to fancy Fitzgerald would have acted just the same part in the same situation.

But it is your great fault, my dear Emily, to suppose you love a phoenix, whereas he is only an agreeable,

agreeable, worthy, handsome fellow, *comme un autre*.

I suppose you will be very angry ; but who cares ? I will be angry too.

Surely, my Fitzgerald—I allow Rivers all his merit ; but comparifons, my dear—

Both our fellows, to be fure, are charming creatures ; and I would not change them for a couple of Adonis's : yet I don't infift upon it, that there is nothing agreeable in the world but them.

You fould remember, my dear, that beauty is in the lover's eye ; and that, however highly you may think of Rivers, every woman breathing has the fame idea of *the dear man*.

O heaven ! I must tell you, because it will flatter your vanity about your charmer.

I have had a letter from an old lover of mine at Quebec, who tells me, Madame des Roches has juft refused one of the beft matches in the country, and vows fhe will live and die a bachelor.

'Tis a mighty foolifh refolution, and yet I cannot help liking her the better for making it.

My dear papa talks of taking a houfe near you, and of having a garden to rival yours : we fhall fpend a good deal of time with him, and fhall make love to Rivers, which you know will be vaffly pretty.

One must do fomething to give a little variety to life ; and nothing is fo amufing, or keeps the mind fo pleafingly awake, efppecially in the country, as the flattery of an agreeable fellow.

I am not, however, quite fure I fhall not look abroad for a flirt, for one's friend's husband is almoft as infipid as one's own.

Our romantic adventures being at an end, my dear ; and we being all degenerated into fober people, who marry and *fettle* ; we feem in great danger

danger of sinking into vegetation : on which subject I desire Rivers's opinion, being, I know, a most exquisite inquirer into the laws of nature.

Love is a pretty invention, but, I am told, is apt to *mellow* into friendship ; a degree of perfection, at which I by no means desire Fitzgerald's attachment for me to arrive on this side seventy.

What must we do, my dear, to vary our days?

Cards, you will own, are an agreeable relief, and the subject to pall of any pleasures under the sun : and really, philosophically speaking, what is life but an intermitted pool at quadrille ?

I am interrupted by a divine colonel in the guards.

Adieu ! Your faithful

A. FITZGERALD.

L E T T E R CCXXVI.

To Mrs. FITZGERALD.

Bellfield, Tuesday.

I ACCEPT your challenge, Bell ; and am greatly mistaken if you find me so very insipid as you are pleased to suppose.

Have no fear of falling into vegetation ; not one amongst us has the least vegetative quality !

I have a thousand ideas of little amusements, to keep the mind awake.

None of our party are of that sleepy order of beings, who want perpetual events to make them feel their existence : this is the defect of the cold and inanimate, who have not spirit and vivacity enough to taste the natural pleasures of life.

Our

Our adventures of one kind are at an end ; but we shall see others, as entertaining, springing up every moment.

I dare say, our whole lives will be pindaric: my only plan of life is to have none at all, which, I think, my little Bell will approve.

Please to observe, my sweet Bell, to make life pleasant, we must not only have great pleasures but little ones, like the smaller auxiliary parts of a building ; we must have our trifling amusements, as well as our sublime transports.

My first *second* pleasure (if you will allow the expression) is gardening ; and for this reason, that it is my divine Emily's. I must teach you to love rural pleasures.

Colonel Wilmott has made me just as rich as I wish to be.

You must know, my fair friend, that whilst I thought a fortune and Emily incompatible, I had infinite contempt for the former, and fancied that it would rather take from, than add to, my happiness ; but now I can possess it with her, I allow it all its value.

My father (with what delight do I call the father of Emily by that name !) hinted at my taking a larger house ; but I would not leave my native Dryads for an imperial palace: I have, however, agreed to let him build a wing to Bellfield, which it wants, to complete the original plan, and to furnish it in whatever manner he thinks fit.

He is to have a house in London ; and we are to ramble from one to the other as fancy leads us.

He insists on our having no rule but inclination. Do you think we are in any danger of vegetation, my dear Bell ?

The great science of life is, to keep in constant employment that restless active principle within us, which, if not directed right, will be eternally drawing us from real to imaginary happiness.

Love, all charming as it is, requires to be kept alive by such a variety of amusements, or avocations, as may prevent the languor to which all human pleasures are subject.

Emily's tenderness and delicacy make me ever an expecting lover: she contrives little parties of pleasure, and by surprize, of which she is always the ornament and the soul: her whole attention is given to make her Rivers happy.

I envy the man who attends her on these little excursions.

Love with us is ever led by the Sports and the Smiles.

Upon the whole, people who have the spirit to act as we have done, who dare to chuse their own companions for life, will generally be happy.

The affections are the true sources of enjoyment: love, friendship, and if you will allow me to anticipate, paternal tenderness, all the domestic attachments, are sweet beyond words.

The beneficent Author of nature, who gave us these affections for the wisest purposes—

“Cela est bien dit, mon cher Rivers; mais il faut cultiver notre jardin.”

You are right, my dear Bell, and I am a prating coxcomb.

Lucy's post-coach is just setting off, to wait your commands.

I fend

The

I send this by Temple's servant. On Thursday I hope to see our dear group of friends re-united, and to have nothing to wish, but a continuance of our present happiness.

Adieu !

Your faithful

ED. RIVERS.

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