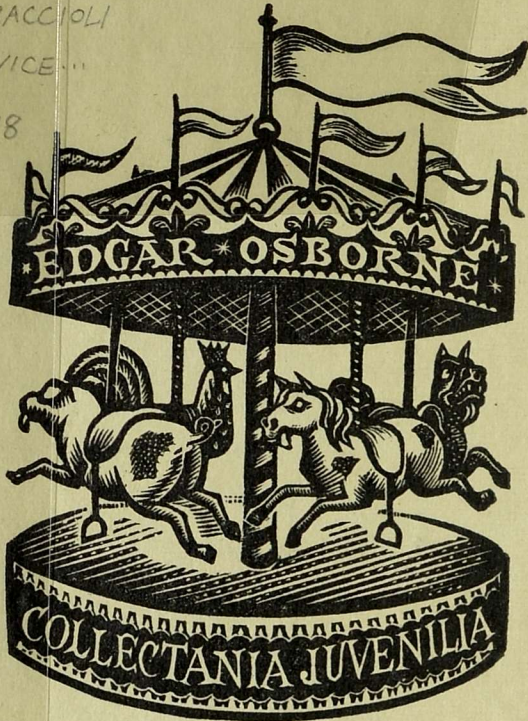




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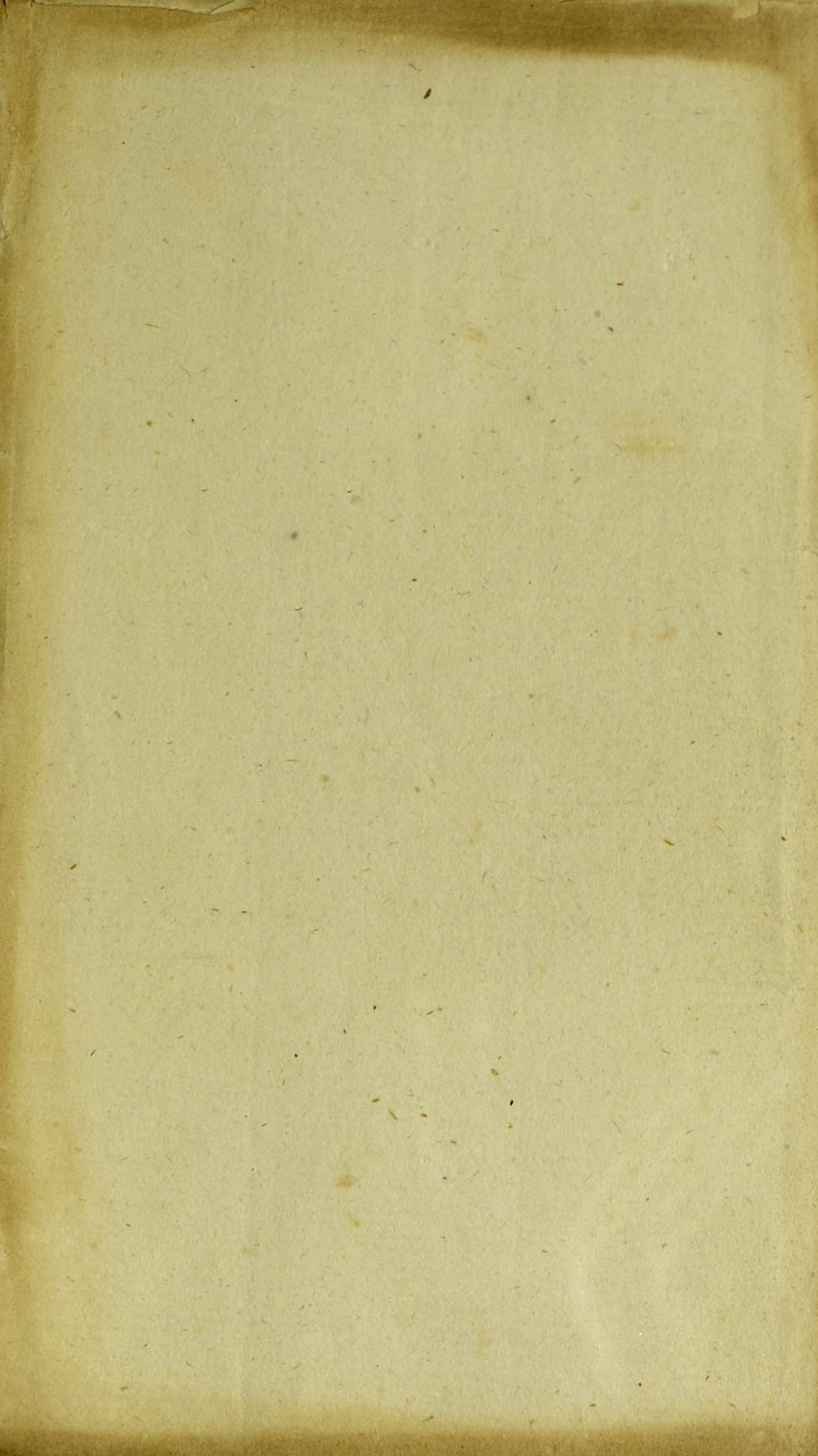
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A. D. V. I. C. S.

LABOR OF QUALITY

EVENING CONFERENCE

INTERESTING SUBJECTS

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

VOL. I

PRINTED BY R. FAIKER
And sold by R. and C. Richardson, No. 21
St. Paul's Church-Yard, T. Cadell, and
others in the Strand, London: and by
Messrs. in the High Street, Bristol.
R. BODDINGTON

A D V I C E
FROM A
LADY OF QUALITY
TO HER
CHILDREN,
IN THE LAST STAGE OF A
LINGERING ILLNESS,
IN A SERIES OF
EVENING-CONFERENCES
ON THE MOST
INTERESTING SUBJECTS.
TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

V O L. I.

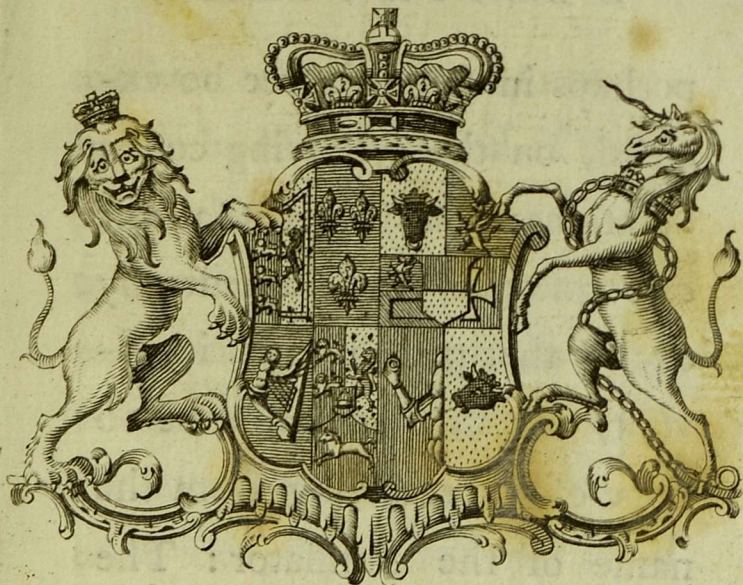
G L O C E S T E R:
PRINTED BY R. RAIKES;
And sold by J. F. and C. RIVINGTON, No. 62, in
St. Paul's Church-Yard; T. CADELL, and H.
GARDNER, in the Strand, London; and by S. AR-
NOLD, in the High-Street, Oxford.

M.DCC.LXXVIII.



Q U E R Y

THE ambitious desire of less
than your Majesty's name
prejudged to this little work may
A s



TO THE
Q U E E N.

May it please your MAJESTY,

THE ambitious desire of seeing your MAJESTY'S name prefixed to this little work may

A 2 perhaps

perhaps in some degree be excused, on the following considerations: The first is, that this circumstance will immediately excite that prejudice in its favour, which there could be no hope of its receiving from the name of the translator: The other is, that, appearing under the patronage of your MAJESTY, its power of doing good will be considerably enlarged.

WHATSOEVER influence vanity may have on the former of these motives,

motives, the latter cannot, I hope, be blamed: and if these pages should appear calculated to inculcate the principles, or to encourage the practice, of virtue, no other argument, I am confident, need be urged to induce your Majesty to suffer them to come forth under the sanction of your illustrious auspices.

A lady of high rank, instructing her children in virtue and religion, and forming their tender minds to whatsoever may

DEDICATION.

render them wise and good, seems, for very obvious reasons, particularly entitled to your MAJESTY'S gracious attention. But tho' the resemblance betwixt your MAJESTY, and the principal character before you, so far as her parental solicitude extends, is too striking to escape our notice, yet do we thankfully reflect, that in one respect a very essential difference may be observed: this lady, MADAM, employed only the uncertain intervals of sickness, and the anxious moments

moments of an expiring life, in the discharge of that important duty, which is well known to engage your MAJESTY'S best hours of youth, and health, and vigour.

MAY your MAJESTY happily persevere in so good a work! to the edification of your amiable offspring in every princely virtue—to the great delight of your loyal and affectionate subjects—to the furtherance of their Royal Highnesses' present and future happiness—and, a-

D E D I C A T I O N .

bove all, to the glory and praise
of God !

SUCH is the prayer of thou-
sands ; and among the rest, of
one, who presumes to subscribe
himself, with all imaginable du-
ty and respect,

MADAM,

Your MAJESTY'S

Most devoted,

Most obedient, and

Most humble Servant,

GREENFORD,
Nov. 16, 1778.

SAMUEL GLASSE.

ADVERTISEMENT.

WE here present you with the pure effusions of parental tenderness: as filial affection preserved them from being lost, so a desire to promote the benefit of mankind has induced me to make them public.

THIS excellent lady having herself given us the history of her life in her first discourse, we shall only add, that she had every advantage of person and understanding; and that nothing can be more affecting, than that display of female delicacy and manly sense, which appears in these conferences with her children.

WE here see a mother, elevated as it were above herself, and insensible of the miseries of sickness, and the horrors of the grave, while she is inculcating in

ADVERTISEMENT.

the minds of her children the duties which they owe to God, to their country, and to society: her discourse is chiefly directed to those of her two sons, who had engaged in a military life; but in one of these conferences, she addresses herself particularly to her third, who had dedicated himself to the church: another is confined to the instruction of her daughter; in all of them, her admonitions are enforced with tears, and interrupted by sighs; they are the natural dictates of the tenderest affection, which no bodily infirmities could prevail with her to suppress. If the reader finds not in this work those episodes, or that variety which distinguishes a romance, it is only because truth wants none of these embellishments: she needs only to be seen, to command our attention and our admiration: the voice of nature is heard throughout the work, and the eloquence here displayed is the forcible language of the heart.

THE

ADVERTISEMENT.

xi

THE evening being made choice of as the properest season for instruction, we have divided the work into *Evening Conferences*: the whole was faithfully collected by the industry of an *Amanuensis*, so placed, as to be an ear-witness of all that passed: had not this care been taken, the world would have been deprived of an invaluable system of education, which no one can read with inattention, and few without improvement.

THE reader will at once perceive, that tho' the expressions of our admirable instructress are divested of ornament and art, she was a person of superior abilities, and of great knowledge.

IT were a tribute justly due to the memory of such a lady, to transmit her name with all the respect which is due to it, to posterity: but as her humility induced her to wish she might not be recorded after her death, we think our-

ADVERTISEMENT.

selfes obliged to do violence to our inclinations, in compliance with her last request.

NOR are we at all apprehensive that this concealment will impeach the authenticity of the work: it is conceived in such terms, as to convince any judicious reader, that such sentiments could only be founded in nature. Here are no brilliant conceits, no affected phrases, but the artless expressions of maternal affection: he who does not yield to the force of such evidence as this, must be considered as one, who cannot distinguish what is really the language of nature, or as one, who never yet experienced the power of sentimental affection.

PROBABILITY does not always go hand in hand with truth; but they are happily united in this work. What indeed can be conceived more natural, than that a tender mother, anxious for her
children's

children's welfare, should take advantage of her gradually declining health to set before them the vanities of the world, and to give them the best directions for the regulation of their conduct? let any man enter seriously into himself; let him listen to the language of his own heart; and he will soon find, that those noble sentiments, which occur in the following pages, could never have been the offspring of imagination. The life of this incomparable mother was but too short, as it did not exceed thirty nine years; but she will yet live in these her genuine conferences, which, we doubt not, will be watered with the reader's tears.

T H E
TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE
T O T H E
R E A D E R.

*I*N one of Pope Ganganelli's letters, the following work is honourably mentioned, as being a complete treatise on education. From the moment of my seeing it thus spoken of, I determined to examine its pretensions to so favourable a character. The pains it has cost me to render it of general use to my countrymen, may be considered as the best proof of my opinion in this respect.

I can truly say, I have read the book with inexpressible delight: the involuntary tear hath more than once been witness to my approbation of that tenderness of affection with which it abounds; and the hours which

which I have most agreeably, and I trust not unprofitably, passed in the society of this incomparable lady, have made me ample amends for the trouble I have taken, in endeavouring to do justice to the dignity of her sentiments, the warmth of her affection, and the elegant simplicity and manly force of her expressions.

For myself, I claim no more merit from the following translation, than that which is due to a good intention: it is possible, that many may profit by these excellent instructions, who are unacquainted with the language in which they were written; and some even of those, who are acquainted with it, may yet read them with greater ease and benefit in their own tongue.

A close comparison with the original I foresee may be unfavourable to my reputation as a translator; but it cannot injure it, as an honest man; for, without adhering with too servile an attachment to my author, I have endeavoured to express the sentiments

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

timents before me as exactly as possible, except only in a very few passages; where, for obvious reasons, it was necessary to give a different turn to the expressions of this excellent lady. In all other instances, I have only cause to think meanly of myself, in proportion as I have departed from the original; as nothing can be more pure, more instructive, or more affecting, than the genuine dictates of that heart, which gave utterance to these most interesting conferences.

If, upon the whole, the following work be read with candour, the translator has no doubt of the reader's indulgence; if otherwise, he has little to hope for, either with respect to the reader or himself: if he is desirous to profit by the instructions here presented to him, he will be more disposed to transcribe them into his own conduct, than to criticise on the precise terms in which they are conveyed.

There

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

xvii.

There never was a period in which such an address to the prevailing manners of the age was more necessary than the present. It will be a matter of unspeakable satisfaction, if it should lay the least restraint on any of the sons or daughters of pleasure; and if withdrawing their attention from the pursuit of a phantom, a bubble, and a toy, it should direct it to those objects, which religion recommends, which reason approves, and which virtue and good sense universally applaud and admire.

S. G.

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E R R A T A.

V O L. I.

- Page 21, line 9, for *flightly* read *flighty*.
39, l. 14, for *they* read *you*.
76, l. 1, f. *patircularly* r. *particularly*.
178, l. 1, for *a age* read *an age*.

V O L. II.

- 56, l. 1, for *the* read *your*.
73, l. 18, for *petit* read *petits*.
142, l. 5, dele *him*.
200, l. 3, for *Chain* read *Charm*.

A D V I C E
FROM A
LADY of QUALITY
TO HER
CHILDREN.

CONFERENCE I.

The History of her own Life.

THE very weak state of health CONF. I.
in which I have now been }
eighteen months, forbids me to
hope for any long continuation
of my life: I have determined
therefore, my dear children, to call
you together, as well to discharge
my obligations, as to amuse my
sufferings. By the loss of your
father, my duties as a mother seem
to be redoubled; I am called upon
to supply to you the want of his
excellent advice, and to labour to
render

render you worthy inheritors of his glory and his virtues.


You are not insensible of the obligations laid upon you to shew mankind from what ancestors you derive your origin. Their history you are sufficiently acquainted with, to know *who* they were, and how they distinguished themselves: but perhaps their example may less sensibly affect your minds, than my advice; especially if you consider, that it is your best friend, who is now conversing with you; one, whose instructions are the dictates of affection, and the result of a tender regard for your happiness. The only books, from which my precepts shall be drawn, are experience, a knowledge of the world,

world, and the convictions of my own heart. CONF. I.

DESCENDED from a family not less distinguished by its misfortunes than its honours, I was left an orphan at ten years of age. My education fell under the direction of my father's sister, whose inclination, as well as rank, drew her frequently to court: no time was lost in furnishing me with masters of every kind. I soon became an object of attention, and my friends took care to announce me possessed of a considerable fortune. The world presented itself to my view in the most brilliant colours; and with singular delight I indulged the deception. A succession of amusements served to stifle reflection, and I lived for

CONF. I. for no other purpose than to pursue
my pleasures.

SOMETIMES my soul, not quite as yet debased, seemed desirous to soar above these enchanting trifles ; but vanity and dissipation soon hurried me away, and effaced the impressions of reflection. How far from real happiness is a life of subjection to prevailing fashions, from which it has neither opportunity nor resolution to withdraw itself ! In vain do we perceive the miseries, which intrude themselves amidst the pleasures of the world : In vain do we receive instructions, by which we might be both affected and improved ; we still continue enslaved to our passions, and eagerly embrace the phantom of delusion.

I resembled those travellers, CONF. I.
who, knowing the right way, yet 
thinking to shorten their journey,
turn aside from it, and are lost.

ALL that were about me conspired to fill my mind with false ideas: their language was that of flattery and imposture: they either concealed from me my faults, or they only corrected such as might serve to render me ridiculous. Scarce had I begun the day, when my attendants made it their business to inspire me with a love of idleness and pleasure: one part of it was spent in decorating my person with all the ornaments of dress; and the other in receiving the rewards of my unprofitable industry. I was admired in proportion to my external appearance, and this admira-

CONF. I. tion served only to feed my vanity.

I never shall forget, that, being one evening quite overcome with that satiety, which destroys the satisfaction of the votaries of pleasure, I opened by chance a volume of moral essays, a few pages of which filled my soul with confusion and remorse: “*Either, said I to myself, I am a dupe to the life which I now lead, or this writer is an egregious impostor.*”

THESE reflections began to disquiet me; when I was informed, that it was time for me to go to a ball, to which I had been invited: my guardian, who took me with her in her coach, observed that I was unusually pensive; for which she seriously reprov'd me. Tho' she
was

was in many respects an excellent woman, she was almost wholly engaged in the pursuit of amusements: she repeated her censures, when we entered the ball-room, in which every thing appeared truly magnificent; the elegant taste of the D—s of — had brought together persons of the most eminent rank, beauty, and accomplishments.

Too soon, the instruments of music; and the harmony of the voices, made me forget my Monitor, and all his reasoning: my heart, again seduced by pleasure, quickly persuaded me, that such austere morality was calculated only to fill us with melancholy: I danced with some degree of elegance, and the praises bestowed upon

CONF. I. upon me were excessive; in short,
 I returned home more enchanted
 than ever, with the world.

WE crossed the park, which a judicious distribution of lamps had so illuminated, as to give it almost the glare of noon-day: the crowd of people about us, the variety of faces and dresses, an unrestrained festivity, which every where prevailed, all served to seduce my soul with stronger delusions. One needs no more than such a scene as this, to ruin one's taste for ever. It fills the mind with a vast idea of the world and its pleasures; and when once the heart has received these first impressions, it is next to impossible to efface them.

Six years passed away in a continual round of pleasure and diversions;

fions ; at the end of which, I was married to your much honoured father. Some circumstances, fortunate for me, gave *him* the preference in my regard to several young noblemen, who had professed the strongest attachment to me : had either of *these* succeeded in his addresses, I should have been wedded to folly and repentance ; it was my happier lot to be connected with discretion and politeness.

CONF. I.

WE must needs appear with eclat on our marriage, and in this respect my natural turn of mind was of great service to me : it made me as splendid, as I was vain ; and as our income was such as enabled me to indulge my taste for shew, I gave the reins to it without restraint.

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CONF. I.

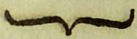
I kept a sort of court, in which I presided as a sovereign princess: my courtiers were lavish of their praises, they were suppliant for favours, and my husband and I were considered as beings superior to the rest of mankind in happiness and honours.

A war with the house of *Austria* deprived me of your father for a time: he parted from me with that heroic spirit, which distinguished his character to the latest moment of his life; while in his absence I gave myself up to sorrow and regret. His letters, however, comforted me; and no sooner was my peace of mind restored, than my taste for pleasure returned. The opera of *Thetis* was performed; at which I was present; and then it

was,

was, that my fondness for public diversions resumed its dominion in my heart. I now put myself forward to sit in judgement on every new theatrical performance; and was the first to admire the decorations of the stage. The world is like a troubled sea, whose waves always carry us away much farther than we at first intended to go.

HOWEVER, notwithstanding my allowed taste for whatever might gratify the senses, or encourage vanity, I was generally considered as a pattern of prudence and discretion: people were astonished to see a young woman, only twenty years old, with no other passion than a love for dress, and shew and diversions. The world cannot conceive it possible, that while we are gliding
ing

CONF. I.  ing down the stream of luxury and pleasure, we are, in the eye of reason, objects of pity.

THE hints, which I had received from my friendly monitor, whose writings I had only cursorily dipt into, were perpetually obtruding themselves; but like those gentle breezes which ruffle the surface of the waters, they only served to glance upon my heart. What surprized me was, that a very discreet relation of mine to whom I had mentioned this author, strictly forbade my looking into it. But this she did, as she many years afterwards declared, merely to excite my eagerness to read it, and attach me more strongly to my book. She well knew, that prohibition serves only to stimulate; and that to interdict,

terdict, is often the surest means of fixing our affections on that which is forbidden us. Her stratagem succeeded; I was never at rest, 'till I became possessed of these essays, and 'till I had read them again and again. His reflections gave me some uneasiness; but I was so far from being amended by them, that I only compared this emotion to the transient effect of a tragical representation on the stage. CONF. I.

I was affected for a moment, and that was all. At length, your father returned from the war, covered with wounds and laurels: the compliments which were paid to him at court, and the honours which were heaped upon him, occasioned a second diversion of my thoughts, which plunged me deeper than

CONF. I.

than ever in the gulph of dissipation.

My first study was to surpass all others in the elegance of my entertainments; and in this I was very successful: my exquisite taste was generally admired, and every one expressed the highest satisfaction. What an encouragement was this to a woman, whose only ambition was to shine in her sphere, to please and be applauded! You will not wonder, that our expences were excessive, and that to support our vanity, we diminished our substance, and consequently your inheritance.

You see, my dear children, that I lay open to you, without reserve, all the circumstances of my life; and that my language is that of
 one,

one, whose heart dictates nothing but tendernefs and fincerity. CONF. I.

Where my conduct has been faulty, you will, I am fure, be the firft to forgive: it may, perhaps, prove a fortunate circumftance for *you*, that I, who have been firft feduced into the ways of vanity and folly, am the better enabled to point out to you that path, which it will be your wifdom and happinefs to purfue.

CERTAIN it is, that this abridgment of our fortune wrought fome change in my manner of life: your father again left me in obedience to the orders of the court, which fent him into *Italy*; and I endeavoured to amufe myfelf in his abfence by reading our beft hiftorians.

There

CONF. I.

THERE with delight I found the name which you bear, mentioned with honour in the French and English history: there saw I those virtues displayed by your ancestors, which I hope it will be the study of your lives to imitate.

ABOUT this time, my friendship commenced with the Countess of S—, an excellent lady, of whom the hand of death has lately deprived the world; in which she seemed to live for no other purpose, than to do good. Her conversation charmed me; her prudence delighted me; there was no opportunity of instruction which she did not improve; and this she did with so much ease and affability, and in a manner so natural and agreeable, that the most inconsiderate

considerate could not but attend to her: she often urged to me the necessity of uniting in the same character the Philosopher and the Christian. Here I must acknowledge, not without taking shame to myself, that the pleasures of the world left me nothing more than a fruitless desire of being what I ought to be. It was continually interposing itself between the conviction of my judgement, and the propensities of my will, 'till my mind was utterly distracted: I would, and I would not; and my existence was nothing more than a life perpetually interrupted with doubt and perplexity.

IN this strange situation did your father find me at his return: the King received him with that gracious air,

B

which

CONF. I.

CONF. I.

which often serves instead of more substantial favours; and which is in fact equivalent to a recompence: every one partook of my joy, and dragged me out, as it were in spite of myself, into the midst of pleasures and diversions. Paris and Versailles each in its turn beheld me wholly engaged in doing honour to my husband on account of his good fortune. Pleasure and ambition are cruel tyrants; they leave us not a moment to ourselves; and when they have filled us with hope; they almost always abandon us to disappointment.

YOUR father, though much engaged in the Business of the world, had his intervals of solitude and retirement: he sometimes pleaded indisposition, that he might apply
himself

himself to the study of his profession ; and as I imagined to amuse himself by a change of employment. He found, that the world has every thing that is good in it except true wisdom. CONF. I.

THE restless spirit of mankind renewed the war; and again obliged me to live in a state of separation from a husband, who was dearer to me than myself. His valour, which rendered him insensible of danger, procured him, at the same time, the honour—of being grievously wounded, and of being made a Lieutenant General. Joy and solicitude by turns took possession of my heart; and in this anxious state I continued, 'till I was fully assured of his perfect recovery.

CONF. I.

THIS advancement of my husband revived my passion for the vanities of the world: I now again felt myself inclined to taste largely of the pleasures of the court. I hired one house at Versailles, and another at Fontainbleau; and my taste for luxury, together with my natural vanity, led me to fit them up in the most expensive manner. I piqued myself on having more elegant furniture than any woman of my rank, and on having my table more sumptuously supplied. I became proverbial for the magnificence of my entertainments, and happy was the man who could be present at them. Persons of fashion assembled at my house with eagerness, and each endeavoured to distinguish

tinguish himself by the utmost exertion of pleasantry and humour.

I never found myself so far removed from wisdom, as when I was surrounded by the most celebrated wits: I heard nothing from them but sallies of mirth, which interrupted all serious thoughts; and such slightly conversation as served only to stifle reflection. Our decisions were peremptory on every subject, and were wholly influenced by fashion and by prejudice.

THUS was my mind entirely taken up in the pursuit of folly, instead of being employed, as it ought to have been, in attending to your education.

THE prevalence of an absurd custom had taught me, my dear children, that I ought not to have

CONF. I. you with me more than a few days
in a year; with which custom I
could not comply, without doing
violence to my tenderness and affec-
tion for you. Instead of endea-
vouring to inform myself what
school was under the best and
wisest regulation, my enquiry was,
which was the most genteel; and
I was much more desirous, that
you should form honourable con-
nections, than that you should re-
ceive good instructions: thus did
I secretly encourage your vanity,
while your improvement ought to
have been my principal care.
When we cannot amend our
faults, the least we can do is to
acknowledge them: and do not
think that I offer any violence to
myself in thus confessing my folly,
and

and indiscretion : it is my greatest
 comfort, that I am giving you this
 surest evidence of my repentance. CONF. I.
 If my affection for you were less
 than it is, I should speak to you
 with less sincerity ; it is the com-
 punction I feel, for having listen-
 ed more attentively to the voice
 of custom than to that of my
 duty, which extorts from me this
 undisguised confession of my mis-
 conduct: in short, my extreme soli-
 citude for you banishes every selfish
 consideration from my mind.

THE conduct of your father di-
 stinguished him now more than
 ever: he was deservedly esteemed
 a most accomplished soldier ; inso-
 much that I dare venture to assert,
 without fearing the imputation of
 partiality or ostentation, that the dig-
 nity

CONF. I.

nity of Field-Marshal to which he was advanced, was no more than a distinction due to his superior merit as an officer. He saw himself elevated to the highest point of honour in his profession, at a time of life, wherein he was very capable of enjoying the fruits of his promotion ; being at that time not fifty years old.

I was too fond of gaiety and pleasure, not to surpass on this occasion all my former instances of luxury and expence : balls, illuminations, and entertainments of every kind conspired to celebrate that happy event, which filled my heart with joy ; and nothing was now to be seen around me, but trophies erected to my vanity : I was wholly taken up in going from
one

one circle to another, eager to receive congratulation and applause from every quarter. But how inconstant is all earthly glory! alas! your father died within three years after his promotion to the honour of a marshal: and my heart, overpowered by this dreadful stroke, seemed to go down with him even into the grave: he died like a Christian philosopher; full of loyalty to his King, full of tenderness for his wife and children; burning with a fervent desire to be admitted into the presence of God, and only concerned that it was not his good fortune to fall in the field of battle: He would have been better pleased, had his last breath been drawn in the service of his country, and had he been permitted to make compensation

CONF. I.

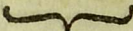
penfation with his life, for the honours which his fovereign had heaped upon him.

THE first year of my widowhood was wholly given up to the effufions of grief; to an utter difrelifh for every kind of fatisfaction, and to an entire indifference about myfelf and every thing around me. I thought of nothing, but a moft affectionate husband, who was now no more; and this fad idea ferved only to fill my foul with the moft melancholy reflections.

I could then have readily answered for myfelf, that the world would never more take poffeffion of my heart; but the world is not content with being a mafter only; it is a *tyrant*, which holds its vaffals in fetters of iron; from which in
vain

vain I endeavoured to release myself; my former habits resumed their empire in my heart; and tho' I did not forget my husband, I forgot all my resolutions. I now appeared a fashionable widow, wholly taken up by the pleasures of the world, and all its vanities. My greatest comfort in this moment of reflection is, that I never could be prevailed with to listen to any proposals of a second marriage: I had too much respect for the memory of your father, ever to consent to lose his name; and I had too much regard for you his children, ever to endanger your welfare and happiness by such a step. This double attachment was superior to every other consideration; I felt myself altogether devoted to my children; who

CONF. I.

CONF. I.  who I feared might be less the objects of my attention, if I transferred my affections to any other: this single circumstance was sufficient to determine me. Heaven grant, that you may make me the best return for this sacrifice, not merely by your thanks, but by the tenderest regard for my happiness. I have no other wish, than to excite your affection; and as I am truly sensible of the full extent of my own, no one surely can blame me for earnestly desiring, that our love for each other should be reciprocal.

WERE I so unhappy as to discover in either of you an abatement of affection towards me, I should remind you, that there is not one of you, whose birth was not almost
the

the occasion of my death; and that the more I suffered in bringing you into the world, the more closely is my heart attached to you: that only knows to what degree you have hitherto engaged its affections; that only can inform you, that amidst the dissipations of a life of pleasure, I never felt any *real* satisfaction but in seeing you thus sitting round me: happy moment! the only one which can afford me a gleam of consolation for a loss, which I can never cease to lament.

CONF. I.

BUT to return to the world; which continually enslaved my affections, and which, whilst I was engaged in the gratification of my passion for pleasure, suffered me not to rest, day or night. I had sacrificed to it the best moments of my

ADVICE *from a* LADY *of* QUALITY

my life; the hours destined to calm repose were devoted to it; and on the return of every day, fresh snares were laid for me; and new temptations offered to engage me in its service. I found myself absolutely subject to its caprice; I was present at every public assembly; I had a high opinion of its extravagances; I studied all its refinements; I commended only what the world approved; I rejected only what the world condemned; I was in short as much a slave to its commands, as one who has no power to move or act, without the permission of his master.

SOMETIMES, quite wearied with its importunity, I wished to shake off the yoke; and to enter into a serious examination of my heart;
of

of which it had too long maintained the entire disposal; but such transient inclinations only served to convince me of my weakness. This sufficiently appeared, when, after some days of strict retirement, which should have been the commencement of a new life, a slight invitation called me forth again, to put myself under the power of my tyrant, and made me foolishly repent of having ever wished to withdraw myself from his dominion.

IN the mean time I began to perceive that the spring of my life was passed and gone, and that it was time to break the charm, which thus seduced me: however the lot was cast, and rather than have recourse to reason, I employed

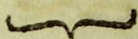
CONF. I.

ployed every artifice to supply the deficiency of blooming youth. Thus did I at once endeavour to impose on others and delude myself; and nothing but the astonishing incident which I am going to relate, was capable of overcoming this dangerous illusion.

HAVING been informed that a new play was to be acted, I engaged to go with a party of friends to the theatre, and among the rest with Lady ———, whom I loved with the tenderest affection: at the appointed hour, I called at the door of my friend: surprized, at my arrival, not to find any of the servants ready to receive me, I immediately ran up into her bed-chamber; I went to her, and saluting her, I asked her the reason why she
 was

was not ready to go with me: Oh! Heaven! She was dead: her countenance still retained its beauty; her flesh was yet warm, but her body was motionless and lifeless: having shrieked so loud as to fill the whole house with my cries, I fell into a swoon, which lasted above an hour and a half. The domestics, who in their consternation had fled different ways, reassembled at the noise of my cries; and used every possible endeavour to bring me to my senses; after which, they informed me, that their mistress was just dead of a quinsy, that had choked her: conceive if you can, the horrors of my situation; I was almost suffocated with grief, which laboured to express itself; and in the utmost

CONF. I.



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terror

CONF. I.

terror and amazement, I withdrew from this scene.

By this method it seemed that heaven thought fit to act upon my mind; to dissipate imposture and delusion. I returned to my house, wherein I saw nothing but emblems of pride and vanity: I now discovered for the first time, that those specious charms, with which the world had so long deceived me, were in reality no better than splendid miseries: I now reflected that I had been only a dupe to my own pride and the fashions of the world: that I had been running after a phantom of happiness, which had escaped me; that human life was most uncertain in its tenure; and in short, that my essayist, who had distressed me, had told

told me the truth ; and that one must be absolutely blind not to see the force of his arguments.

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As I had learnt from experience to distrust my own weakness, I felt no inclination to make a public profession of my change of sentiments ; especially, as I knew that it is not easy to support a consistency of character in extremes ; that too great zeal is seldom lasting, and almost always indiscreet ; and that to discharge the duties of Christianity, it was sufficient to be—a Christian.

HOWEVER, I insensibly withdrew myself from the world and its pleasures ; and under a pretence of taking care of my health, as my constitution had been always delicate, I began with living very

CONF. I.



much alone, and no more mixing in large companies. I was considered as an invalid; and after a few censures from my acquaintance, the world as easily resigned me, as it had formerly solicited me. There is nothing sooner forgotten, than a person, who wishes to be so: one's retirement from the world may afford a topic of conversation for a day, and to-morrow nothing more is said about us.

My solitude being neither the affectation of singularity, nor the effect of ill humour, but the result of serious reflection, I continued to discharge the duties which I owed to society: I made my appearance at court, when it was thought necessary; I visited my friends, when civility required it: I paid that attention

tention to the duties of my station which it appeared to demand; and I laid it down as a maxim, only to abstain from such things, as religion and reason forbade.

VERY soon the pleasure of reading serious books, and of studying myself, convinced me, that true happiness consists in conformity to truth, and that they who give themselves up to a life of dissipation, have in reality nothing more than the shadow of happiness.

THAT horrible spectacle before-mentioned continually presented itself to my mind: I never can forget, that whilst I fancied I was embracing a living friend, I held in my arms only a lifeless corpse, on which God himself had already passed an irrevocable sentence! At

ADVICE *from a* LADY *of* QUALITY

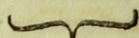
midnight the image of my friend very frequently appeared to my disturbed imagination, whom I had been wishing to drag to the theatre, while heaven was pronouncing an irreverfible decree either of life or death everlasting.

THIS it was, my children, which opened my eyes to a fight of my duty; this it was which determined me to cultivate and improve your good difpofitions, and to fow in your hearts the feeds of virtue and religion.

MAY heaven blefs and prosper my defign! Indeed it is with the greateft fatisfaction I obferve, that your fentiments appear to be fuch, as feem likely to do honour to the memory of your father; and that you want nothing but a little more
 knowledge

knowledge and information, and a little more inclination to attain it. It is with a design to assist you herein, that I have determined to call you together every evening, when my health will permit, and to discourse with you on some of the most interesting subjects in the world. Having now given you the history of my own life, I shall henceforth concern myself only about your's; and shall endeavour to furnish you with the best instructions in my power, that they may become acceptable to your God, useful to your country, and worthy of the King whom you have the honour to serve.

CONF. I.



CONFERENCE II.

On ORDER.

CONF. II.

IN vain, my dear children, do my physicians flatter me on the subject of my health; I perceive myself hastily declining; and am apprehensive, that if I any longer deferred to guard you against the rocks and shoals which you may meet with in your passage through the world, whether from the tyranny of custom, or from the violence of your own passions, I might never be able to discharge that duty, to which my own affection for you, and the dying request of your father so powerfully excite me.

me. His last words still sounding in my ear, as if they had been uttered by a voice from heaven, dwelt only on this great subject: the recollection fills my soul with an inexpressible mixture of tenderness and grief.

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ALAS! our united tears will never be sufficient to deplore our loss: those which I see you shed at this time, are the strongest assurance that you inherit his generous sentiments, and it is the only pleasure which at present I feel myself capable of enjoying.

YOUR excellent father, just before his death, taking me by the hand, expressed himself nearly in the following words: *Let your first care, I most earnestly entreat you, be the education of my children: be your-
self*

CONF. II. *self their principal instructor; and fail not to inculcate with all imaginable earnestness this great truth, that they are born for no other purpose, than to consecrate their lives to the service of their God and their King; and that they will then only do honour to the memory of their father, when they faithfully discharge this two-fold Duty. You cannot conceive, my dear children, with what heartfelt distress, I recall to my mind this last most affecting scene; it pierces my soul with the liveliest sensations of grief: but my solicitude for your welfare gets the better of every other consideration; and I had rather tear open my wounds afresh, than conceal from you a circumstance, which cannot but affect you in the strongest manner. I have*
always

always kept it treasured up in my breast, as a valuable deposit, which I intended some time or other to produce, whenever you should be enabled to judge of its value and importance.

CONF. II.

I call heaven to witness, that neither business nor pleasure has ever been able to efface the remembrance of your father; on the contrary, he is always present to my mind; and indeed it is this lively representation of him, which alone enables me to support his loss. Without this painful resource, my mind would have absolutely sunk beneath the burthen of my grief.

BUT now the hour approaches, when I shall be re-united to the tendereft of husbands, when our ashes, mixed together, shall teach you,
my

CONF. II.


dear children, the instability of every earthly possession, and the wisdom of despising the momentary vanities of life, when brought into comparison with the treasures of an immortal state.

IT is by such reflections as these, that order and regularity are preserved in our minds, and that we are taught the necessity of doing nothing contrary to the rules of prudence and discretion.

THIS practice is so essential to our happiness, and so conformable to the designs of our Creator, that it cannot be neglected without a violation of the laws of God. It is this regard to duty and propriety, by which peace is preserved in kingdoms, and union in families: it is this which regulates the conduct

duct of the servant towards his master, and the subject towards his prince; it is this which engages my love towards you, and your respect towards me: it is this which makes you studious to mitigate my sorrows, and me incessantly solicitous to advance your happiness.

IT is this regularity of conduct, which makes us good parents, good friends, and good citizens, which gives us a right judgment of things, and assists us both in the choice of the fittest time and the properest method of doing whatever is to be done. It is one of the greatest misfortunes in the world, to live without any stated rule of conduct, in perpetual tumult and confusion. Our life should be a transcript of the harmony of the universe,


CONF. II.  universe, which could not subsist, much less attract our admiration, were it not for that just proportion, which is discoverable in all its parts. Take away order from the world, and you reduce it to a frightful chaos; leave man without any other guide than his own passions and caprice, and there will be nothing but perpetual discord betwixt his judgment and his will.

RUIN ensues, when a man exhibits in his own ill-regulated mind the miseries of anarchy; his ideas are confus'd; his imagination is bewildered; his conscience is misled; his reason is obscured; and his soul becomes the seat of tumult and confusion.

If you do not accustom yourselves, at your first setting out in life, to lay down some regular plan of conduct, you will never attain to that rectitude of judgment, which estimates things according to their worth, and which in the midst of errors and prejudices will enable you to give the preference to truth.

Your father's inclinations were so wisely regulated, that his behaviour was always influenced by a strict regard to propriety: he knew, with the philosopher, that we ought to weigh the motives of our conduct; and every evening to enter into an examination of our actions.

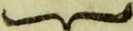
The man who lives at random, is a slave to his own whims and caprice. The world reprobates
such

CONF. II.  such an one, as a monster which disturbs its harmony; and society rejects him as a being incapable of friendship. We see, in short, that, whoever is thus irregular in his own mind is destitute of every quality, which can contribute to the ornament or benefit of human life: his manners are disgusting, his expences are excessive, and his whole conduct unaccountable.

Do not think that I am carried away by my imagination beyond the truth; which I shall always strictly observe in conversing with you; the too sad experience of many confirms what I say; and it may serve to teach you that it is impossible rightly to manage your affairs, or discharge your duty,
without

without a proper command of your mind and passions; every movement of which should be as nicely regulated, as those of a well finished clock.

CONF. II.



THE exact proportion observable in every work of God is intended to teach us, that order is the greatest beauty in nature, and that to despise this, is to counteract one of the great laws of the creator of the universe. Endeavour then, I beseech you, to imitate in your behaviour that general harmony in the creation, which in the course of every year, supplies us with whatever is either agreeable or useful: let your studies be methodical, all conducted rather with a view to instruction, than mere amusement. If you read without

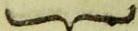
CONF. II.

plan, you will overload your memory without improving it, and your knowlege will be little better than an undigested chaos.

THE mind, in which disorder prevails, is, in the eye of reason, like a city without government, or a house without unanimity. But a person of this disposition deceives himself; and fancies, that if he keeps clear of those irregularities, which are offensive to society, he may make himself easy, tho' he has all the reason in the world to be dissatisfied with his way of life.

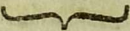
You will find many, who seem to delight in nothing but irregularity; who go to rest, when others rise; who eat, when others fast; who stay at home, when others go

church; in short, whose chief employment seems to be, to break through every rule, without the least regard to method in any part of their conduct.

CONF. II.


ALAS! when I was one of these fashionable ladies, whose gaiety was an object of envy, I confounded night with day, I knew no law but my own whim; I had no time but for pleasure, no plan, but to avoid every thing that was like regularity.

BE assured, that there is nothing so bewildered, as the life of a person, given up to the hurry and tumult of the world: such a one has no sense of the value of time; she knows no distinction of days, and pays no regard to duty: she studies fashions,

CONF. II.  is wholly taken up with trifles; she delights in that which debases the mind, and is contrary to reason; she is perpetually seeking happiness where it is not to be found; and tho' wearied with the pursuit, renews it every day.

THE world is full of persons, always engaged in new projects, and distracted with new desires, who die without reflection, because they have lived without any knowledge of themselves. When the mind is thus disordered, it is afraid to look into itself; or if it ventures to examine things at all, it only does it superficially. The senses are so many tyrants, from whose power we are unable to deliver ourselves; and nothing appears really valuable, which does not administer

administer to their gratification. CONF. II.

MAINTAIN then the dominion over your own minds, that you be not overcome by those passions, which will lay siege to your virtue; your thoughts will then be regulated by wisdom, and you will be raised above those clouds, which obscure the light of the understanding. Each of us may be considered as an epitome of the world, which is subject to eclipses, changes of weather, to storms and tempests: we all observe the strange revolutions which happen in the universe; but as Providence, in the midst of such a multitude of created beings, preserves the utmost harmony both in heaven and earth, so ought reason to preserve in the human mind

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the strictest attention to order and peace. Without this we degrade ourselves below the meanest insect, or even the inanimate parts of the creation, which only subsist, to answer the purposes for which they were made. Behold the bee, or the ant; a thousand times wiser, each of them, than the man who despises them; these never deviate from the laws of their nature, nor from the course which Providence has assigned them: it is only by an imitation of their conduct and foresight, that families are maintained, and kingdoms preserve their power and splendor.

THIS may serve to convince you, that whatever state of life you are placed in, it will always be full of disquiet, if your judgment and your
passions

passions are at variance with each other; you must therefore frequently examine into the springs and motives of your conduct, in order to regulate your affections. You will then see, as in a picture, the tendency of your actions, and will soon be enabled to rectify whatever is amiss in you. CONF. I.

WHEN a house is on fire, with what eagerness do we hasten to put it out? And shall we suffer our passions to burn with fury in the midst of us, without giving ourselves the least trouble to extinguish the flame? We seldom reflect that the mind is a kingdom, which cannot be well governed, without a constant care as well to defend it from its enemies, as to promote whatever may tend to the establishment

CONF. II.

ment of peace and tranquility. Consider the stars which shine in their courses over our heads; consider the elements which are the source of life and respiration; alas! what monitors are these to man to be always ready like them to execute the commands of God! This view of the creation perpetually reminds us, that every rational creature also ought to move in its proper sphere, and discharge its respective duty. When we only act as we are influenced by a capricious humour, we insult the wisdom of a God of order, and raise a perpetual tumult in our own breasts.

I have always observed, that persons of a dissipated turn are as much disordered with respect to their affairs, as they are unsettled in their

their own minds; and leave no inheritance to their children, but debts and law-suits. There is an easy kind of arithmetic which every lover of method is acquainted with; and which consists in computing our obligations and our necessities, and our ability to answer both, in order to keep ourselves within due bounds, and to pay a proper regard to that which may reasonably be expected from us. If you have not this love of method which I wish to recommend, you will never be able to regulate your actions, or your families, or your own minds. You will either behave with too great haughtiness, or with too great familiarity towards your domestics; you will not distinguish what is superfluous from what is necessary; and for want of calculation,

CONF. II. calculation, you will have nothing but creditors, or debtors who have nothing to pay.

You are born, my children, to a considerable fortune: but what will become of it, if its use is not regulated by oeconomy; riches are absolute ruin to a dissipated owner: the same confusion which distracts his mind produces an inconsistency in all his actions; one while, you see an astonishing prodigality, at another time you are shocked with as unreasonable avarice: he can throw away money, but he cannot give it: he sacrifices every thing to pleasure or to pride, but nothing to justice.

WHEN you are confirmed in this wise habit of acting methodically, every part of your conduct will be happily

happily adjusted: you will set apart proper seasons for study and for recreation; you will manage your time and your income with prudence; you will distribute exact justice to your neighbours, and you will never engage in any important enterprize, without *considering the end*: nothing will ever make you forget the duties which you owe to your character and station; no day will pass, in which you will not remember your duty to God: we never lose sight of these duties, but when we give the preference to a life of irregularity; when we go on without a single thought what we are, and what will become of us: hence it is, that the affections of disorderly persons differ very little from the propensities

CONF. II. } propensities of the brute crea-
tion.

YOUR good dispositions encourage me to hope that my advice will sink deep into your hearts; remember always that it is the counsel of a mother, who would gladly sacrifice her life to purchase your happiness; and of a friend, whose heart is bound up with your's, and who would not wish to live a moment, but in the most intimate connection with you. All the faults of my life have been offences against *order*, which can never be absolutely neglected, without frustrating the end of our creation; for God hath doubtless made us for this purpose, that we might moderate our desires, and keep our passions within proper bounds.

BUT

BUT if your intentions are good,
as I trust they are, enough has
been said on this subject; besides,
my want of strength reminds me
that it is time to relieve myself and
dismiss you for the present.

CONF. II.

 CONFERENCE III.

On true PATRIOTISM.

 CON. III.

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I DESIGN that the duties which you owe your country shall be the subject of this day's instructions, but as this is above my ability properly to handle, your father shall speak instead of me. A little before his death, he left me these reflections, desiring me to communicate them to you, when you were of a proper age to receive benefit from them. Read them then, and let us listen to them with great attention.

THE

THE eldest son received the manuscript from his mother, and thus began :

“ PROVIDENCE, which directs the place of our birth, as well as every other circumstance of it, has ordained that the country in which we were born, should be dearer to us than any other; and that we may not have the least doubt of the truth of it, this sentiment is so universally impressed on our minds, that there is not a man upon earth, who is not naturally a patriot. The whole world may be considered as one great family; but the alliance is much stricter betwixt those who serve the same master, and are subject to the same laws. They have all one common interest; good and evil are indiscriminately dispensed; and each

CON. III.

each partakes more or less of the prosperity or misfortunes of the state.

“THOUGH you owe the tenderest affection to your mother, you must never forget that much is also due to the country which gave you birth; and which considers you as its children and its subjects: you must divide betwixt them those sentiments of love and respect, which nature has implanted in your hearts. Nay, I will venture to say, however jealous I may be of my rights, as your father, that you ought not to hesitate, in a case of necessity, whether you should leave me or not, when your country demands your assistance. Then it is, that with the heroic self denial of a Roman, you must sacrifice every other consideration,

sideration, and postpone every other interest to the duty which you owe to your King and country. CON. III.

“ THE first character you sustained was that of a citizen: the state then recognized you as subjects intimately connected with it: religion adopts the same language with reason: she will teach you that your industry and abilities ought to be united in the service of your country; and that it is an absolute robbery to deprive her of this assistance; she has a right to demand an account of our engagements, and to expect the application of our talents to her advantage: they, therefore, who only employ themselves in the gratification of their own vanity, or who lie down in a state of torpid indolence,

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CON. III.

can only be considered as burthens to the state; or as wasps, which come to devour the labour of the bees.

“ WE are much mistaken, if we imagine ourselves at liberty to engage in those studies and employments alone which are most pleasing to ourselves; the pursuits of one who wishes to be called a patriot, ought to be directed only by the love of his country, and an earnest desire to promote her welfare. What would be the state of that kingdom, in which every one, being master of his own actions, should do just what he pleases, and employ all his powers of mind and body only in the gratification of his own fancy? A chearful submission to our governors, and a readiness to stand
forth

forth in our country's cause, give CON. III.
us the truest picture of a well or-
dered and happy government.

“ You who are already engaged in the public service, ought to be more sensible of this than any others; you are invested with honours and advantages, only on condition that you be always ready to assist your country; woe be to you, if ever ye forget, that the very blood which runs through your veins must be dedicated to *her*; that she has as much right to dispose of your life, as you have to dispose of your fortune; and that you are no longer worthy to live, than while you maintain the character of good subjects.

“ HISTORY, sacred and prophane, is full of examples of persons, ready to sacrifice their lives for their coun-

CON. III.

try's good; even women, forgetting the weakness of their sex, have become heroines, when the public welfare demanded their assistance."

— HERE the generous mother, carried beyond herself, in a kind of rapture, interrupted her son.

INDEED, my children, I firmly believe this female heroism to be very attainable. I myself actually feel resolution enough, notwithstanding my bodily infirmities, to carry me even to the mouth of a cannon, and encourage you by my exhortations to choose an honorable death, if my duty rendered such a trial necessary: reason, in that case, would make me altogether regardless of myself; the consideration that I had brought such worthy children into the world, would dry up my tears; and render

der me rather an object of envy than of pity, in the sight of my sovereign and my country.— But go on.

CON. III.

“ THE enjoyment of life is by no means equivalent to the honour of dying for our country: for life is but a shadow; whereas the glory which accrues from such a death, is a light which survives the obscurity of time, and shines with everlasting brightness. You find that *Marcellus* and many other heroes are still remembered, as if they were but just dead; they sacrificed their mortal part, that they might become immortal. The renown, which accompanied their last breath, seems to have perpetuated their duration; and there is no man of sense and reflection, who would not be glad to share their fate.

CON. III.

“ It is not enough, my children, to wear the livery of men of valour; to live in a corps, whose examples encourage bravery: fortitude must be ingrafted in the heart; and it must be so disinterested, as neither to be influenced by eye-witnesses, nor by the prospect of reward.

“ EXAMINE yourselves on this head; and if your sensations unfortunately contradict your profession, take shame to yourselves, and know that you are no better than hypocrites, as to personal courage. It is the inward motive, not the outward appearance, which stamps a value upon actions: if in taking up arms we have more regard to our own interest, than to that of our country, and if, under a pretence of defending the rights of our King and nation, we think only of enriching

enriching ourselves, we only wear the habit, without having any portion of the spirit of a soldier. Many indeed have been found acting only under the influence of avarice and pride, at the very time that they signalized themselves externally by the most specious conduct. But the true soldier desires no other recompence, than the pleasure of doing his duty; no other witness than his own conscience; he is just as ready to die in a crowd, wherein he will be mixed with the multitude, as to fall, distinguished in a single combat.

“ THIS confidence is the effect of religion; which purifies the intentions, and influences the will, and is the school of true magnanimity: without the motives which

CON. III.

religion offers, nothing is to be seen but the shadow of virtue. Whoever is actuated by self-interest, should take care to conceal the principle on which he is acting: for the world, corrupt as it is, is not yet accustomed to applaud those actions, which have no better principle than pride and covetousness.

“ You are descended from a line of ancestors, whom your country ranks in the number of her heroes; their blood circulated in their veins for no other purpose, than that it might be ready to be shed, in order to oppose the mischiefs which the enemy devised against the state. With the price of their blood they purchased those honours which you inherit; and of which you then
only

Only properly avail yourselves, when you imitate their virtues. Nobility is lost in the eye of reason and integrity, when it only serves to encourage us in pride and luxury, and give us an air of arrogance and disdain.

“ It is a certain indication of a weak and an ungenerous mind, to imagine that a title gives us a right to despise the rest of mankind, and to do whatever our passions may suggest to us. Nobility is at once both a recompence for past services done to our country, and an engagement by which the party so distinguished binds himself to excel not less in the dignity of his sentiments, and the superiority of his virtues, than in his rank and situation in the world.

“ You

CON. III.

“ You can never therefore properly reflect on your noble birth, without being touched with a sense of the duties which it requires of you. If your country gives you credit on account of your ancestors, you ought to exert yourselves to the utmost to discharge the debt, and do honour to their memory. From the first moment of your being, the world has expected that you should be as great as your progenitors, and it is your duty to answer these expectations; otherwise, the artisan or the labourer will surpass you in the eyes of your country, and your titles and honours will only serve to make you contemptible.

“ THE present age is not so barbarous, as to be ignorant, that all
men



men are naturally equal; that all ought equally to labour; and that, if some are by the favour of their country distinguished above others, it is only with a design to hold them up as patterns to the rest of mankind. It is right, that there should be, in every kingdom, persons particularly called upon to vindicate the rights of honour and virtue: when we would kindle emulation in the minds of men, we must exhibit to them examples worthy of their imitation. What a ridiculous mistake then is it, to suppose that we only receive the title of nobility, as an encouragement to licentiousness and pride?

“ IT is not a little pleasing to find one’s self, in the midst of so many different ranks and orders of men,


CON. III.

men, particularly called upon to support the character of generosity and valour. This pleasure is certainly worth all the trouble of exposing our selves to any dangers, difficulties, or inconveniencies to which our profession may be liable. True greatness consists in being ready to resign our claim to that honour which we well deserve; and in generously resolving never to be wanting to our King and country, whatever we may be exposed to, in the discharge of our duty. When you make your entrance on the theatre of the world, you must expect to be an eye-witness of the various scenes which it exhibits; and think, with *Marcus Aurelius*, that there is no part, however tragical, which you may not at one time or other be called upon to perform.

“ THE

“THE more attentive you are to your duty, the more you will be exposed to invidious censure: but it is then that you must seek for comfort in your own mind. Only make a point of doing what you ought, and then, whatever injury you sustain, you will never be greatly disconcerted. For this also is a proof of real magnanimity, to be superior to all events; nay, in some cases, even to hazard our reputation, while we are doing what we are convinced is right. It was thus, that *Fabius* conducted himself; never altering his measures, notwithstanding the murmurs occasioned by the slow caution with which he acted. It is by no means impossible that calumny and ingratitude should be the recompence of

your

CON. III.  your services; but this you will utterly disregard, whilst your conscience bears witness that you have discharged your duty: virtue is equally superior both to the smiles and to the frowns of fortune.

“ THE reason why so many persons are found disaffected towards government, is, because their patriotism is really founded in ambition; they consider only themselves, while they pretend to have nothing in view but the public good: and the least disappointment of their hopes sets them to railing against the constitution, and determines them no longer to stand forth in the service of their country. May such sentiments as these never enter into your minds! May the public welfare so engross your
attention,

attention, as to make you regardless of your own! No man can ever be esteemed poor, who can boast of the advantage of being serviceable to the nation to which he belongs.

CON. III.

“OBSERVE with what resolution the common soldier rushes into the battle; who has no expectation of being distinguished by a triumph, or of enlarging his fortune by conquest: he has nothing to expect but death: learn from him, that it is your duty to perform whatever is required of you with firmness, without considering what may be the consequence to yourself in particular.

“BUT to whatever advantage that person may appear, who is taught by his profession only to estimate his life by the pleasure of sacrificing

CON. III.

sacrificing it, whenever his duty calls upon him to do it, yet will the brightness of his glory be entirely sullied, if he is led to despise other ranks of men on the comparison. He ought to be told, that our country is a body, which hath equal need of all its members; all of which co-operate in different ways for the general benefit. The strength of a kingdom would be very soon exhausted, if it could only be maintained by the sword. The ploughshare of the husbandman, and the instrument of the lowest mechanick, are the honorable means of serving their country; such persons cannot therefore be despised, without degrading humanity itself.

“ I

“ I am not here speaking of magistrates or clergymen; you have no need to be told, that these functions (the one employed to preserve an intercourse betwixt heaven and earth, the other to maintain the peace and good order of families) are sacred and venerable; and that it is a mark of ignorance or folly in either to be insensible of their own dignity or utility. How many of both these orders of men spend their whole lives in the discharge of their respective duties! They die with less eclat, I allow, than he who falls in the field of battle; but their death is so much more precious in the sight of God, as it continued almost during their whole life; every moment of which was a kind of diminution of themselves,

F through


CON. III.

CON. III. through the continual wasting of
their health and vigour.

“ THE generality of men, looking on persons of distinction, see nothing but what serves to flatter their vanity, and excite the envy of their inferiors. But these are only superfluities, with which a mind that is really great can never be affected: it is right that our country should have rewards to bestow, and it is natural for us to be pleased with receiving them; but we then shew they are unworthily bestowed upon us, whenever we suffer them to minister to pride or luxury. Better were it to live in poverty and obscurity, than to apply our riches and honours to the purposes of vanity. The more favours you have received from the hands of your country,

country, the more ought you to study to be affable, modest, and industrious, in return for such distinctions; otherwise, you will expose her to the censures of the invidious, whose wisdom in distinguishing you, you are engaged to vindicate by an exemplary conduct.

“ O! how few are there, who are sensible of these duties! No sooner have men rendered any important service to their country, and received the rewards of such services, but they give themselves up to a dishonourable sloth, or to an excess of pleasure. They wish to make amends for the time, which they have passed in labour and fatigue; without reflecting that the seasons of honourable toil are the happiest moments of our life; and

CON. III.  that eternity will be long enough for repose."

HERE the pious mother, having made a sign to her son to stop, said with a weak voice :

“ It is time for us to finish this lecture : a vast field for reflection here opens itself to your view, if you are capable of drawing those conclusions, which present themselves to the mind. The wisdom of your father, you see, enabled him to find means of instructing you, even after his death : for my part, who have not his understanding and knowledge, I have nothing to offer you but tenderness and affection ; which indeed is so great, as to make me insensible of my sufferings, that you may not be left a prey to ignorance and passion.

However

However weak my abilities may be, and however limited my apprehension of things, I shall continue to communicate my thoughts to you on whatsoever subject I think may be of use to any of you; your father's excellent instructions being chiefly confined to the military life. My only prayer is, that my strength may be spared so long, as to give me an opportunity of accomplishing my design: I shall then close my eyes, and resign myself into the hands of death, with as little reluctance, as I would retire to sleep.

CONFERENCE IV.

On SOCIAL DUTIES.

CON. IV.

HAVING by the help of your father's invaluable manuscript instructed you in your duty to your country, I shall now proceed to those obligations which you owe to society. Affection supplies me with fresh spirits, and I willingly forget my own weakness, when your happiness is concerned: my physicians indeed would fain dissuade me from such exertions of myself; but their apprehensions only serve to quicken my zeal to discharge that office, which love and duty towards you inspire.

THOUGH

THOUGH young, you already CON. IV.
know enough of the world, to be
sensible that there are connections
suited to every condition of life.
And that, to confound the distinc-
tion betwixt each of these, would
be equally contrary to the rules of
decency and discretion. In your
choice of companions, regard must
be paid to age, profession, and
fortune. This distinction is not the
effect of scrupulous vanity, but the
fruit of a wise discernment.

WHAT would you think of a
man of quality who should only
associate with the vulgar? Would
you not justly consider him as a
contemptible character, and as one
who had forfeited the privileges of
his birth and education? Provi-
dence has appointed diversities of

CON. IV. rank and condition, which we cannot confound without a violation of its laws: the circumstances of your birth were intended to teach you, that you should connect yourselves chiefly with persons of your own rank, or at least with those who distinguish themselves by the worthiness of their sentiments. A similitude of manners, and of inclinations is the only sure foundation of friendship among men.


SOCIAL intercourse is not an arbitrary commerce with each other, with which we are at liberty to dispense, *as we will, and when we will*: the several classes into which men are divided, are mutually bound to shew respect, and friendship and good will to one another. If regard is paid to your rank, you must

must, on your part, honour your superiors: this distinction serves to maintain harmony in the world, and forms that interchange of true politeness, which cannot be too nicely preserved.

CON. IV.

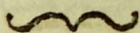


HE who is really well-bred will shew respect to his instructors, complaisance to his equals, and condescension to his inferiors: he will endeavour to accommodate himself to different characters and circumstances; you will never see such a one running from one company to another, to carry tales, to broach new opinions, or to slander persons behind their backs. Always obliging, always a friend to truth, he well knows how to reconcile his language with his heart; and never says a word, which

CON. IV.  which is inconsistent with decency or politeness; he is utterly unacquainted with the art of setting himself off at the expence of another: if he chuses to indulge a vein of humour, it is only in ridiculing the follies of the age, without any personal reflections; if he chuses to moralize, it is in so pleasing a manner, that at once he both delights and persuades:

THE safety as well as enjoyment of society would be at an end, if every libertine might freely utter his obscenities, and every Atheist his blasphemies; but good manners are a security against such offensive discourse, and even the most abandoned is obliged in spite of himself, to conceal his vices, and assume the appearance of virtue.

It



It is only in particular companies, equally reprobated by decency and good sense, that we are insulted by filthy jests, and the palm of wit is assigned to those who ridicule religion and its ministers: such company as this you ought never to be made acquainted with: true merit seeks a more advantageous residence, than in such society as this. Whatever respect you may think due to the different kinds of people with whom you associate, take care that you purchase not the company of others at too dear a price. They have never rightly estimated what is due to social life, who sacrifice their time, their liberty, and their virtue to it.

SUCH as divide their whole time betwixt dress and amusements, are a sort of beings which merely exist,
and

CON. IV.


and who, under a pretence of rendering themselves useful to the public, only think of gratifying their pride, and dissipating chagrin. It is impossible to be at rest in our own minds, when we give ourselves up to the hurry of the world; private friendship must not be supported at our country's expence: to the latter we owe much more than to the former, we must not therefore sacrifice the one, out of too much complaisance for the other. If there are some men who do nothing, it is because they have no proper sense of their duty to God, or to their country. Complaisance degenerates into weakness, when we have not resolution enough to resist the importunities of an artful woman, or the sollicitations of an
idle

idle man: only make a point of being constantly well employed, and you will easily get rid of this sort of persecution.

CON. IV.

THE greatest mischief is, when we do not distinguish betwixt the fashion of the world, and the duties which we owe to society; whereas there is a wonderful difference between them. The one engages us in a train of foolish expences, vicious intrigues, and a round of unprofitable idleness; the other makes us useful and friendly, and offers to us only those amusements which are innocent and proper.

A sociable man is really a friend to his country; a man of the world (in the sense in which we have just now considered him) would sacrifice his country to his interest and his

CON. IV.  his pleasures. When this attachment to the world has taken possession of the heart, its votaries only exist for the sake of gratification, and what dependence can there be on a mind that is subject to the tyranny of pleasure?


HE, who attends to the duties which he owes to society, is like a stream, which diffuses itself through a beautiful meadow; but he, who gives himself up to the world, is like a torrent, which hastens to empty itself into the sea: in the one we discover nothing but delight, in the other nothing but noise and violence. The love of society constitutes a part of our duty; the love of the world makes us forgetful of every duty. I have been too well acquainted with this dangerous world,

world; and it is because I foolishly confounded it with ideas of society, that I am at present so well able to distinguish betwixt them. Alas! I thought once there was no being sociable, without being present at every entertainment, at every play, and at every assembly; and I had so thoroughly reconciled myself to this notion, that I should have looked upon any one, as the most stupid and unsociable of all creatures, that did not readily concur with me in my ideas. So powerful is the love of pleasure, that it puts a false interpretation upon every thing, and assumes the language of folly instead of that of reason.

THIS delusion, one of the strongest that can be imagined among persons of a certain rank, makes

CON. IV.



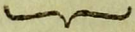
CON. IV.  makes them attach themselves to the world, without scruple or reserve: they doat upon it, under the pretext of being sociable; and they persuade themselves that the unprofitable toil which it imposes, is a duty which it is necessary for them to perform.

It is my earnest desire that my own past imprudence should prove useful to *you*; and that you would not make *society* consist in any thing, but what it really is; that is to say, in a polite intercourse, which unites us to each other;—in friendly visits, which cannot be dispensed with;—in letters of civility, which we ought to write;—and in that necessary familiarity, which we mutually stand in need of for the purposes of relaxation: all beyond this,

this, deserves not the name of *society*. CON. IV.

AFTER determining what it is to be really and properly sociable, it is necessary for us to know how we ought to conduct ourselves in the company of others. Many rules have been laid down upon this subject; and they are plainly reducible to these: never to speak, but to the purpose: never to rally but with good humour: never to appear supercilious: never to indulge caprice: never to shew any thing inconsistent with a good heart. Strokes of humour may please for a moment; but good sense is always agreeable, and always gives satisfaction: we cannot endure that which lets us down; and therefore we are much better pleased with him who only says common things,

G than

CON. IV.  than with him whose turn of conversation is of a superior kind; nature is always preferable to art.

LEARN to make use of your wit without shewing that you are vain of it; the less you affect to shew it, the more admirers you will find, and the more friends. Equally avoid both raillery and flattery; the one is always considered as ill-nature, the other passes for deceit: in former times it was necessary to praise in the most extravagant terms, in order to attract a smile, or even a gracious look: the ladies of the present age know how ridiculous such commendations are; and rather than be disgusted by flattery, they wish never to be complimented at all. If you are so happy as to have a grave and studious turn, you will
find

find fewer of these lesser duties on your hands. All those important trifles, which the world calls little attentions (tho' absolutely necessary within proper limits) seem in their extreme to belong only to *Petits Maîtres*; because every thing that is insignificant is suited to that character. You are undone, if ever you propose such as these for your examples: I never saw one of them, whose mind was not utterly ruined by his folly: they are fit only to afford diversion, and they always do it at their own expence. When the arrival of one of these gentry is announced, only by the scent of amber and musk, and when he brings nothing with him but impertinence, it is impossible that any man of sense can be pleased with such company.

CON. IV.

IT is by good manners and a genteel air, that others are prepossessed in our favour: every man has so much self-love, as to oppose him, who wishes to trample upon those about him: we love to see the charms of sweetness in a modest countenance: while you are possessed of these graces, my children, all the world will admire you. It is not necessary, in order to be sociable, that you be eloquent, or witty, or possessed of any rare or superior talents; all that society demands of you is, that you be complaisant without meanness, polite without flattery, steady without rudeness, and sprightly without affectation: she requires that you cultivate her, as the friends of mankind; and that you do her honour by an unblemished reputation,

reputation, by decency in your words, and purity in your morals.

CON. IV.

A farther knowlege of the world will teach you many particulars, on which my weakness will not suffer me to enlarge; it will furnish you with that gracefulness, that ease in your carriage, that politeness, that propriety of behaviour, which ought to distinguish a person of fashion: it will shew you the necessity of not publishing stories without caution, of not judging of any performances but with modesty; and of not speaking of your neighbour, but with reserve: it will teach you that you ought to be neither the first to set the fashion, nor the last to leave it; and in short, that you cannot too carefully avoid the imputation of needless singularity.

BE

CON. IV.

BE careful not to slight any person; yet let your attentions be properly regulated: nothing is more improper, than to treat a stranger with the intimacy of a friend; or an intimate friend with the distance due to a superior: distinguish merit wherever you find it, without troubling yourself about the garb in which it appears: court the company of the learned, and the conversation of the aged; their discourse is often more useful, than any book that you can read. Never argue on a subject which you do not understand; every one admires modesty; no one can endure conceit. If you are desired to play for mere amusement, do not decline it; but never play for the sake of gain: if you are unlucky, you will
lose

lose with good humour, when the stake is a matter of indifference: he that cannot command his temper, never fails to discover his weakness, and gives offence to every one about him. Treat the other sex with the utmost delicacy; it has a claim to the greatest attention: avoid intrigues; have a strict regard to modesty, and you will never have a quarrel with any female.

NEVER promise any thing without deliberation; but having made a promise, implicitly observe it: whoever joins the first party that comes in his way, without regarding a prior engagement, does not deserve to have friends: let discretion constantly direct your conduct: and if, notwithstanding all these precautions, you should meet with enemies,

CON. IV.

enemies, they, and not you, will be to be blamed.

THE more attention you appear to shew to these instructions, my children, the more dear you must necessarily be to me; and the less I shall lament the sad separation which death is preparing to make betwixt us: In leaving you well stored with good principles, and furnished with my best advice, I shall think I only lose you in part; and that I shall be always in some degree in the midst of you; it is thus you will be able to find me in your own minds, when you can no longer see or hear me; and I trust you will there find me faithfully represented.

CON-

CONFERENCE V.

On VIRTUE.

A SUCCESSION of fainting fits had exceedingly weakened this pious mother; but, by an exertion worthy of her virtue and magnanimity, she seemed to forget her bodily weakness, that she might fully express the dictates of her heart. Her children, full of attention, and impressed with the utmost tenderness, looked upon her with a mixture of admiration and grief, while she communicated this valuable lesson of instruction on the subject of virtue.

CON. V.

VIRTUE


CON. V.

VIRTUE, my children, ought to be the ruling principle of all your actions: I cannot but consider her as the offspring of heaven, without whom there would be nothing in this world but iniquity and impurity. In vain have the most corrupt ages of men endeavoured to obscure her brightness: she forces her way through the thickest cloud of passions, diffusing those rays of glory, which we never can sufficiently admire: even her enemies are compelled to praise her; and even those who are wicked, if not utterly abandoned, would fain be accounted virtuous.

BUT it is not sufficient to bear our testimony in favour of virtue in empty words; we must do her honour by a conduct which is irreproachable.

proachable. The eulogium which we outwardly bestow upon her, must be confirmed by the inward dispositions of the heart. CON. V.

You will never be truly great, but in proportion as you are virtuous: the highest honours are no more than the pedestal; but merit is the statue erected upon it. This it is which distinguishes an individual from the multitude; this it is which renders him superior to all that birth and fortune can bestow. Our talents do us honour; and wit gains us credit; but virtue exalts us even above humanity; raising us above the events of life, and even above ourselves; with her, we secure the admiration of posterity; we live in the annals of history; we never die; without her, on the contrary,

CON. V.  contrary, we are degraded, we grovel, we only exist, to the dishonour of humanity.

THOUGH she has flourished above 4000 years, she is not yet grown old: we speak of her, as if the great effects of her power were manifested even to this day: the *Romans* are present with us, as though they were but just now dead; we seem as it were eye-witnesses of their glory, and magnanimity; so true is it, that . . .

HERE she was obliged to break off her discourse, that she might not sink under her extreme weakness; and she had only just strength enough left to tell her children, who were melted into tears, that she must defer the remainder 'till another day.

C O N -

 CONFERENCE VI.

Farther instructions on the same subject.

FOUR days had now passed, within which this excellent lady had not been able to converse with her children; but happily her sufferings abated, and she now renewed her instructions.

CON. VI.

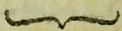
You see me, says she, restored to you for a little time; and it is with the greatest satisfaction I avail myself of this short respite, from the pleasing hope of rendering the few remaining hours of my life as useful to you as possible. Virtue, of which I was speaking, in my last conference with you, is so fruitful

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CON. VI. a field, that one might compose
} large volumes upon this subject.
O! that I were able to represent
her to you surrounded with that
peace which is peculiar to her,
adorned with those charms which
distinguish her, supported by that
true greatness, which is her cha-
racteristick! You would see that
she was formed to be the empress
of the universe; that she alone de-
serves our regard; that her sub-
lime perfections would have altars
erected in every heart, if man were
not a dupe to his passions; the
higher she is raised, the more mo-
dest is her deportment; the more
charms she possesses, the more stu-
dious is she to conceal them.

IN vain doth vice oppose her at-
tractions, and declare open war
against

against her: the remorse, which disturbs the soul of every sinner, comes to avenge her cause, and to teach us that there is no happiness, but what is found in the possession of virtue. Attach yourselves therefore closely to her, and you will find that the perfection of happiness consists in the enjoyment of her: I never knew what real pleasure was, 'till I became acquainted with the worth of virtue, and the greatness of her beauty: as a proof of this, my dearest children, I can with truth assure you, that notwithstanding I am on all sides surrounded with the shadow of death, I feel an inward joy which I am not able to express. This is the present happy effect of my love for virtue, which has taken such possession of my

CON. VI.  my heart, that nothing can materially affect me, which hath not some relation to *her*; even you are only so far dear to me, as I trust you will prove really good and virtuous.

THIS disposition, however, is the gift of God, and cannot be derived from ourselves alone; it is therefore the subject of my constant prayers that you may be filled with that grace, which I have so often and so earnestly implored for myself: no one will be richer than you, if you are in possession of this treasure; you can then be placed in no situation of life, in which you will not distinguish yourselves by some laudable action. In each of you, the indigent will find a beneficent father; your family, an equitable

equitable and kind master; your relations, an affectionate and generous friend; your country, a zealous supporter; your King, a most faithful subject; in short, all men will consider you as their brethren, who only live to comfort and assist them. CON. VI.

WHAT a blessing will riches and honours prove in your hands, if you are really virtuous! You will then become a source of comfort perpetually flowing to communicate happiness to all mankind.

YOUR favour will be implored as though ye were, in some degree, the ministers of heaven; and men will bless you, as doing honour to the age and nation in which you live.

H

VIRTUE

CON. VI.

VIRTUE is far from being unrewarded even in this life. What a satisfaction do we feel, on awaking from sleep, that we have it in our will, and in our power to distinguish the approaching day, by some singular act of mercy to the wretched! How are we delighted with such sentiments as these! What transport doth the combination of such virtues afford! These are the never-failing attendants on good men.

You must however beware of confounding natural disposition with the dictates of virtue: we often mistake constitutional firmness for heroic magnanimity: vivacity of temper produces courage, as phlegm occasions prudence. We can only know, by a strict enquiry
into

into ourselves, the true motive on which we act. If it is really virtue which excites us, there will be neither affectation, nor severity: simplicity and moderation will every where appear: they who carry things to an extreme, know not, that even wisdom itself must be tempered with sobriety.

I am not fond of those outrageous virtues, which certain enthusiasts recommend as the characteristics of human perfection. True virtue only shews herself by a most obliging deportment: the more gracious her air is, the more strongly she engages our attachment: we are offended at the sight of a countenance which is overspread with a cloud of severity.

CON. VI.

TAKE care then to exhibit nothing in your outward behaviour but what is truly amiable; for otherwise you will disfigure virtue, and make her appear different from what she really is: all that we add of our own is only an alloy unworthy of her purity. It is our misfortune that there is too great a want of sincerity amongst us: accustomed from our infancy to dissemble, we think nothing excellent but what is disguised; however there is no virtue where there is not truth.

LAY this down as a maxim, and you will detest every species of dissimulation; there is nothing more odious, than a mind enslaved to falsehood, a heart in which duplicity prevails. It is better to speak
the

the truth, tho' it should prove to our own hurt, than to make use of the least equivocation to gain the greatest advantage.

ALL the riches in the world are not worth one single virtue: so that if you were allowed to make your choice betwixt the wealth which you are to be possessed of, and the virtues which I have recommended to you to practise, you ought not to hesitate a moment, whether of these you should prefer: a man who is truly virtuous can never be really distressed: he finds in himself those rich resources, which even princes are unable to bestow: always easy, and well satisfied, he does not find his mind agitated with the vicissitudes of fortune; his thoughts are raised above the sufferings of the present

CON. VI.



CON. VI.

present life, to the joys of a much happier state; and the sublimity of his sentiments renders him superior to all the calamities, which fortune can inflict.

A soul in which virtue resides is the nearest representation of heaven itself: all is serenity and light and joy: the troubles of the world cannot interrupt its repose, the cloud of passions cannot diminish its brightness.

RELIGION is the only solid foundation of morality: this wisdom is the chief ornament of the human mind, and the chief director of our life. Without this, the heart is degraded, the whole soul is degenerate; we are dissatisfied with ourselves, and we have only fools or libertines for our companions and friends.

ASK

ASK any man who has preferred a vicious to a virtuous course of life, and if he is sincere, he will acknowledge that his uneasiness was continual; that his joy was merely external; that his imagination was bewildered; that his passions consumed him; that his actions brutalized him; and that his whole mind and body were exhausted.

WE need not wait for the coming of that awful day, when God shall punish vice, to know how odious she is: even in this life she carries with her her own condemnation; her most eloquent and bold panegyrists have never been able, with all their endeavours, to cover that deformity, which attends her, and always renders her the object of detestation. Go into any country that you please,

CON. VI and you will find vice proscribed
 and virtue honoured.

IN what ignominious terms doth history make mention of vicious princes? it speaks of them with horror, and never so much as names them, but to make them odious to every age and nation.

A vicious man is a stranger to prudence, decency, and honesty: he neither reads, nor speaks, nor acts but with a view to gratify the violence of his passions, and bitterly to inveigh against virtue, which excites his indignation so much the more, as he finds it impossible to hate her.

I would not wish for more than the mere presence of a libertine, to fill any reflecting mind with horror. He is a monster, that destroys all the pleasure of society, that stifles
 every

every worthy sentiment, that rebels against every law of reason, and that defies Heaven itself with a shocking and intolerable insolence.

CON. VI.

FROM such dreadful excesses as these, virtue, my dear children, will preserve you: She will not only remove you at a distance from every sinful act, but also from every occasion of sinning; she will inspire you with an utter aversion from those presumptuous offenders, whose very breath is infectious; she will encourage you to your several duties; she will prove the best security against idleness, which is justly esteemed the parent of every kind of wickedness.

THERE is no circumstance in life, wherein virtue will not be found useful, as there is none in
 which

CON. VI. which vice can be excused. This religious principle will make us patient in adversity; humble in prosperity; prudent in business; moderate in pleasures; undaunted in dangers; affable in conversation; judicious in the management of our domestick concerns. A man is always acting amiss, when he is not virtuous; his conduct is a satire against himself; and he finds only mean and base minds, that will venture to applaud him.

WHILE we practice virtue, we belong, as it were, to Heaven: while we lead a disorderly life, we are retained in the service of our passions. The observance of our duty unites us with good men; the love of vice throws us into the company of the wicked.

THE

THE world will not fail to throw abundance of obstacles in your way, to hinder your approach to virtue; but these difficulties will presently vanish, whenever you enter into an examination of your own hearts; you will then find, that it is impossible to be truly good, without all those qualities, which religion demands; you will then find, that the inconstancy of the human mind has need to be fixed by the authority of wisdom and justice.

THE vivacity of youth is too apt to form a false idea of religion, as throwing a veil of melancholy over the world and all its pleasures; but such young people are greatly mistaken; wisdom and goodness are very consistent with, if they are not indeed the only source of, chearfulness.

CON. VI.

CON. VI.

ness. If you look into the world, and attend carefully to the actions of men, you will find true enjoyment only among those who are really virtuous; others indeed may *appear* with more noisy jollity about them; but this is only a kind of intemperate excess, which in a few moments will give place to an invincible melancholy. When a man is only joyous by fits and by compulsion, the heart remains a prey to dissipation and remorse.

If what I have said to you in recommendation of virtue is not sufficient to determine you in favour of her charms, recall to your minds your excellent father, review the history of your illustrious ancestors! and by no means dishonour their memory by a conduct so widely different

different from their's. The life which you derive from them, should pass as uncorrupt as theirs; you ought to bear their name, only that you may shew to posterity, that you are so many living representatives of their virtues.

I flatter myself my admonitions will not easily be effaced; and that you will study that moderation in all things, which constitutes true wisdom: your minds will never be truly great, except whilst, being steady without boldness, prudent without avarice, liberal without profusion, you ennoble every action of your lives. Take heed that you do not even in secret divest yourselves of that prudence and caution which you outwardly profess; you must never forget,
that

CON. VI.

CON. VI. that you ought to be virtuous, for the sake of virtue, and for the sake of heaven; a truly good man is he who always acts, as if his whole conduct was open to the sight and examination of God and men.

CONFERENCE VII.

On PLEASURE.

AS God, my dear children, is CON. VII.
pleased to prolong my life,
only to enable me to continue my
instructions to you, I shall take
this opportunity of dwelling more
at large on the subject of pleasure,
the chief rock against which you
are in danger of splitting. Youth
is the season, in which pleasures
present themselves to the imagina-
tion to seduce and captivate it:
they begin by dazzling our sight,
and when once they have succeeded
in this point, they soon assume the
empire of the heart; there they
establish

establiſh their dominion, and choke every ſeed of virtue.


As ſoon as the inordinate love of pleaſure takes poſſeſſion of the ſoul, virtue is obliged to retire; we are thenceforth wholly taken up with ſuch objects as gratify the paſſions, cheriſh effeminacy, and ſupport vanity: we ſeek for nothing but miſchievous indulgencies, we liſten only to the dictates of our ſenſual appetites.

THERE is no man who is not fond of eaſe and tranquility; it is ſo deeply imprinted in our minds, that we muſt divest ourſelves of our nature, before we can think otherwiſe: but by tranquility of mind, we mean that pure ſatiſfaction, which has nothing in common with thoſe gratifications, in which the
world

world chiefly delights: for you cannot be too often told, that the pleasures which it pursues, as its sovereign good, are only phantoms which mislead us.

I am no stranger to these boasted delights: I have been sufficiently engaged in their vain pursuit; and from my own experience I can with truth declare, that they only serve to lull reason to sleep: it is, in short, a state of stupefaction, which terminates in remorse; a dream, from which when we awake, we find a *vacuum* which we are not able to supply. I always fancied that they would fill my heart with the most perfect joy, and I found myself constantly disappointed.

THOUGH the soul drink ever so largely of this cup, it never finds
that

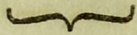
CON. VII.  that inward satisfaction, which leaves nothing farther to be desired: we never can be completely happy, whilst we are under the government of our passions.

IF I had time and ability to analyze those pleasures to which the world is enslaved, I could demonstrate to you the insufficiency of public diversions and amusements to give real satisfaction to a rational mind: it is sufficient to know that they are trifling, that they are fatiguing, that they are transient; whereas the soul can find no real happiness in that which is not substantial, peaceful, and unchangeable: we always therefore offer violence to our better part, when we launch forth into that tumultuous ocean of trifles, which constitute
the

the life of people of fashion. It is only by stifling reflection, that the lovers of pleasure can support themselves: they well know, that a little serious consideration would give them a distaste for the pleasures which they are pursuing, and therefore they do every thing they can to get rid of it. Thus do they live in a wilful ignorance even of their own minds.

How often does the theatre, which we are fond of calling the school of true politeness, and just sentiments, carry us away from ourselves, and render us the slaves of passion! It is always love, which performs the principal character, and which is represented in the most alluring manner: I never went to it in my life, without returning,

CON. VII.



more enamoured with the world, more passionately fond of dress, more strongly inclined to dissipation. The glaring appearance of the stage, the sentiments there delivered, and the objects exhibited, all serve to enchant the senses, excite the passions, intoxicate the mind, and encourage the love of pleasure.

THINK not I assume the language of a preacher, mine is only that of reason and experience. The theatre is very frequently the ruin of young men, whom the sight of an actress seduces, and carries headlong into every species of mischief: from that moment all domestic attachments are at an end; all relative duties are neglected; a total disorder in their affairs succeeds, and they become the subject of public conversation,

tation, and the authors of ruin to themselves and to their families. CON. VII.

I defy the advocates for these entertainments to deny the facts, just mentioned. Alas! what I have said is too frequently verified, to question the truth of it. In vain are we told, that the tears which we shed in the theatre teach us to be compassionate; the momentary tenderness excited by romance never yet materially affected the heart: they who are just come from a scene, at which they were almost dissolved into tears, could with dry eyes behold the wretch, who, in want of every comfort, implores their pity and relief.

ASSEMBLIES have so often proved the occasions of intrigues and duels, that I cannot venture to recom-

CON. VII. } mend them to you : it is certainly
very proper, that a young man
of fashion should know how to in-
troduce himself, at such places ;
and particularly that he should be
able to dance gracefully ; but it
is also very necessary, that he should
know, that of all qualifications,
dancing is the least considerable ;
that a man of science looks on it
with an eye of pity ; and that an
officer ought neither too curiously
to study it, nor too earnestly engage
in it ; it is the property of persons of
a trifling character to be wholly oc-
cupied by trifles.

As to play, there is no species of
it, which does not stand in need
of some apology to excuse it. At
best, it shews a feebleness of mind,
which is incapable of proper appli-
cation,

cation, and occasions a loss of CON. VII.
time, which it is impossible to re-
deem: you must never consider
it, but as a necessary recreation, and
an act of civility which you owe to
society; but lay this down as a
maxim, that the money which we
win, seldom does us the least good,
and that the loss of our money sel-
dom fails to disconcert us.

OF games of hazard I say no-
thing; they are so dangerous, that
I am persuaded you will most care-
fully avoid them: in these, men ei-
ther lose their reputation, or their
fortune, or both; and however rich
they may suppose themselves, from
the moment they commence game-
sters, they can never insure their
being worth a shilling; a single

CON. VII.


throw often reduces an opulent man to absolute beggary.

I am, perhaps, wrong, in reckoning play in the number of pleasures; it certainly has much more the appearance of study, than of recreation: the eyes fixed, the attention engrossed, a deep silence, a restless inquietude arising from the fear of losing, or the hopes of gain, exclude the most distant idea of pleasure. This is the state of all who lose: they are full of care, they are full of complaints, they torment themselves, and when they are seen *playing*, to say the truth, they do every thing but *play*.

As for feasts, they are only our ordinary meals embellished by elegance and a variety of meats, and
may

may serve to remind us, that this body of ours is a slave, that has a great many wants to be supplied; and that all these kinds of food with which our vanity is fed, were originally designed merely for a remedy against death. It is a sure indication of a degenerate mind, when any man makes his happiness to consist in the pleasure of eating.

Do not imagine, my dear children, that I have the least desire of making you unsociable or morose: my intention is only to inspire you with elevated sentiments; to teach you the true value of things, that you may not mistake tinsel for gold, but that you may use this world as not abusing it; and that you may be assured, that a conscientious discharge of your duty is the only source

CON. VII.  source of real pleasure; that to reach forth comfort to the miserable gives the truest satisfaction; and furnishes the mind with that enjoyment, which no entertainments or diversions can afford.

CAN there be a more pitiable object than one, whose whole happiness depends on a fox chase, a concert, or a play? Should either of these fail him, he is undone: or if by chance he should be so circumstanced as to be out of the reach of them, he is so miserable, that his existence is a burthen to him.

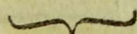
WHO, on the contrary, is more happy than he, who, furnished with the means of amusing solitude, can sit down and relish the pleasures of reading and contemplation? Such
a man

a man goes out into the world merely for recreation, and to discharge the duties which he owes to society: he considers the public amusements as incidental means of relaxation, but can never be induced to set his heart on such useless trifles.

As your military life may often oblige you to live in countries very ill supplied even with common necessaries, you must accustom yourselves to be well satisfied, wherever you are: in order to which, reflect, that the mind is the principal object, which deserves your attention; and that if you cultivate the growth of virtue in your hearts, you will have within yourselves a never failing source of satisfaction.

THE

THE diversions of the field are certainly amusing; the charms of music are unquestionably great; but our attachment to either falls little short of madness, if we suffer them to engross our whole time, or our best affections. It is temperance, which must give a relish even to our pleasures; and which alone renders them worthy of a rational soul. When we would be always amused, we lose the idea of amusement; even what is most delicious becomes insipid, by being constantly within our reach. Every thing grows dull to that heart, which is a prey to voluptuousness; every unnecessary refinement made use of to whet the appetite for pleasure, produces a painful satiety; if you only consider recreation, as the remedy



medy of fatigue, it will be very easy to find amusement: studied pleasures are only for those, whose appetites are in a manner exhausted.

As you are now arrived at an age in which your passions begin to shew themselves, guard with the utmost care against every thing which may corrupt your morals, or disturb your tranquility. Youth is the torrid zone of life, and the love of women the source of inquietude and misfortunes: history abounds with instances of those ravages which it is continually making: it presents itself to us under the attractive idea of pleasure; but it soon becomes a torment, which disorders the imagination, distracts the mind, and tyrannizes over the heart.

WHOEVER

CON. VII.

WHOEVER is thoroughly subject to its power, is always ready to violate the most sacred duties; he forgets his friends, his country, and his God: he sees nothing but the object of his passion, he hearkens to nothing but the voice of his unbridled desires.

In this dreadful situation you will be sure to find yourselves, if you know not how to fill up your time in a proper manner. The passions must be subdued by the stubbornness of labour, and temptation must be resisted, by avoiding the occasions of it: we are sure of being lost, whenever we seek for danger. The miseries of lust may be read in the very faces of those, who give themselves up to it. Nothing exhausts and enervates like

like debauchery; it destroys at once the understanding and the health.

CON. VII.

You will tell me, perhaps, that by my system of morality *all* pleasures are forbidden: No, my children; there are many recreations which virtue allows; and in which you will find sufficient satisfaction, when you only seek them for the sake of amusement.

A social game at cards, cheerful conversation, an evening-walk, an interesting book, a game at tennis, or a day's hunting, a dinner with your friends, and innocent mirth; these should be your amusements; and these will have charms enough, if you know the nature of true pleasure; I mean that, which is not purchased with pain or remorse;

morse; and which leaving the mind at all times in the same easy state, in which it found it, is under no apprehension of shame, nor fears the censures of mankind.

IF a libertine would venture to calculate all the difficulties and embarassments, which he is under, to disguise his conduct from the eyes of men; and to conceal his shame from his parents or his friends, he would see that his life is a continual torment; and that the wretched privilege of ruining his constitution, and destroying his life, is purchased with endless vexations: in vain does he shelter himself from the reproaches of men; God sees him and his crimes in the very moment of commission; and they are written

in that everlasting book, in which all our actions are recorded. CON. VII.

FREQUENTLY reflect, I beseech you, on what I have said, and you will find, that true satisfaction consists only in an upright attention to your duty; a mind so composed will receive pleasure even from the sight of a flower beginning to disclose its beauties, or from a murmuring stream; or even from viewing the formation of the smallest insect. A reflecting mind improves every contemplation of the wonderful works of the creator; it finds numberless beauties in those objects, which pass unnoticed by persons of a dissipated turn.

WHAT delight does the prospect of a flowery meadow afford to a mind unfulfilled by vice! What satisfaction

K

CON. VII.



tisfaction does a tender and a virtuous heart feel from the conscious sense of a good action? Such as these are the pleasures which I wish you to experience: we are always independent, when we have the resources of entertainment within ourselves. He who is always running about in search of happiness, seldom finds any thing more than the shadow of it.

LET your minds then open themselves to the pleasures which virtue offers to your acceptance; and think, that, as effeminacy is the parent of chagrin, you will no longer be able to support yourselves, than while you are fond of labour, and know how to diversify it. This variety tends admirably to hinder distaste; nothing being
so

so tedious as an uniform sameness of employment. CON. VII.

WHILST you carefully avoid the company of libertines, I am sure you will be safe; but if once you associate with them, you will infallibly become a prey to vice: their conversation tends only to seduce, and their examples are infectious. Accustomed to receive, from the most admired authors, whatever can inspire them with the love of pleasure, they commend, extol, and recommend them wherever they go; as a cloud scatters hail or rain over every country through which it passes.

I am sensible that you have need of resolution: but what is a man, that is driven about with every wind, and can be good with such as are good, and a libertine with such

CON. VII.

as are dissolute; in short, that has no inclinations or purpose of his own? If you think my advice tends only to render your life melancholy, you will neither do justice to my affection, nor to my discernment: adopt the measures which I recommend, and you will very soon know by experience, that your happiness is the only earthly object of my care, and that I am neither mistaken in the end, nor in the means which I point out to you, of effecting it. The voice of a mother, so deeply interested as I am in your welfare, is not the voice of treachery: death approaching begins to open my eyes; and imparts to me new rays of light: it destroys indeed my bodily strength, but it increases the powers

powers of my understanding; it re-
doubles my love of those, whom I
consider as a part of myself, which
will soon survive me, and, as it
were, secure to me a continuance
on that earth, on which I shall no
longer personally exist.

CON. VII.

IF any thing can afford me comfort in death, it will be the confidence that you will conscientiously observe my precepts. Promise me, therefore, my beloved children, with such expressions as a sense of duty will suggest, promise me on the truth of a soldier, whose word of honour is most sacred, promise me that you will conform your lives to the rules which I have here laid down, and that you will not dishonour my memory by an irregular and vicious conduct.

CON. VII.

HERE the children of our excellent mother cast themselves at her feet, and in the midst of tears and sighs protested, that their lives should be exactly such, as she had marked out to them; and that they had rather die in her presence, than make her such promises, as they did not mean to perform. Each of them embraced her in the tenderest manner; after which the generous parent finished her conference by saying, in a steady but interrupted tone of voice:

I receive your protestation with the utmost comfort: I would make it known, that it might be a witness against you, if you should ever counteract your own solemn engagements. The world, corrupt as it is, would then shew, that it has
virtue

virtue enough to set itself against you, and vindicate my rights; but in so doing, I should think I dishonoured you by my unjust apprehensions: only remember that no one, without God's assisting grace, can attain to any thing that is good, and that you stand in need of succour from heaven, to enable you to put in practice what you have promised.

CON. VII.

CONFERENCE VIII.

On AMBITION.

CON. VIII. **T**HIS evening shall be employed in finishing the manuscript which your father left you; let us give it that attention which it deserves.

THE love of honour being the passion of persons of rank, and especially of soldiers, it is very necessary that you should be taught the best means of regulating it. If it has no bounds, it becomes an headstrong vice, which is ready to sacrifice families, provinces, and kingdoms, nay even the whole universe
to

to its own interest. Massacres, CON. VIII.
wars, depredations of every kind, take their rise only from a false ambition; when this affection of the mind is improved into a system, we no longer regard the law, our country, or our God.

I have never been able to read the history of those wretched people without horror, who to satisfy their inordinate desires, have effected the utter subversion of a whole nation, and feasted their eyes and their hearts with the dreadful spectacle. They are monsters, which deserved to have been stifled: history itself ought not to have transmitted their names to our remembrance. Immortality is the reward of virtue alone; as for wickedness it is worthy

CON. VIII. thy to be configned to that darkneſs,
 whence it proceeded.

THERE is a kind of ambition, which we call emulation, and which having nothing in its view but the public good, or its own advancement, according to the ſtricteſt rules of equity and honour, muſt needs be conſidered as a virtue: without this ſpecies of ambition, our faculties would be benumbed, our talents would remain buried; there would be no enterprize, or diſcovery in the world; men reduced to a level with the brute creation, would live without rule and without reaſon.

IT was the deſign of Providence that our own private intereſt ſhould be intimately connected with that
 of

of the public; and that the general good should be promoted by the exertion of each man's particular abilities. Every one seems to be labouring for himself; and yet this labour, tho' *self* appears to be the immediate object, soon unites with the common mass of industry; and thus is composed that useful body of men, who maintain the strength and magnificence of the state at the hazard of their lives, or by the sweat of their brows. CON. VIII.

WE are no where forbidden to keep our own advancement in our view; but we are at all times required to prefer the good of the public before our private interest; and while we are less concerned about our own advantage, than about that of our country, we shall
never

CON. VIII. never desire any thing, but what is just and reasonable. When either arrogance or avarice so far prevails, as to make us wish to appropriate to ourselves the praises and rewards, which are not our due, we then become usurpers, and cease to be worthy citizens.

AMBITION is a passion which runs into every extreme: one while it debases him, who is enslaved to it; at another time it exalts him above measure: it is the parent of pride on one hand, and of meanness on the other. Of this sort are those obsequious wretches, who bow themselves at the feet of such as are able to promote them, while they treat those with contempt, from whom they have nothing to expect.

WE

WE must be well acquainted CON. VIII.
with the ambitious, if we would be
competent judges of the miseries
they endure: we should then see
what a variety of projects, what a
succession of uneasinesses fills their
imagination; how their minds are
distracted with hopes and fears; how
continually they are deluded with
the phantom of glory, which sud-
denly vanisheth away; and which
makes the ambitious man think
himself perpetually on the brink of
happiness, without ever actually
attaining to it. Scarce is one of his
desires gratified, when a second
presents itself; his heart, like the
vessel of the *Danaides*, can never
be filled; he is like another *Tan-
talus*, whose thirst is never to be
quenched.

CON. VIII. quenched. What a lamentable
 } state is this!

WHETHER it is the design of Providence to stop the ambitious in his career, or whether he is exhausted by his own desires; I have seen a multitude of young people, hurried away by this passion, perish in the midst of their projects of grandeur and advancement. Alas! will there not be earth enough to supply us with a grave; and must we be incessantly reminded, that this life is so short and transitory, that there is not time to form designs, and to see them executed!

It should seem that the honours with which men feed their imagination, must needs be eternal; and yet—a single moment is sufficient
 to

to put an end both to them and CON. VIII.
their possessors. The earth is covered with inscriptions, which announce the transitory condition of human grandeur; we spend our whole lives in desiring that promotion, at which we never arrive, or, at least, not before the eve of death. Truly it was well worth our while to torment ourselves night and day, about what is so full of uncertainty and of so short duration!

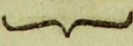
THERE is only one sort of ambition which I can venture to recommend to you; that of imitating your ancestors, and of serving your country with a zeal which nothing can diminish. In every thing else, let moderation set bounds to your desires; he is worthy of every thing, who thinks he deserves nothing.

THEY

CON. VIII.

THEY who are continually complaining of the injustice done them, because their merit is not properly attended to, are men of a most ignoble spirit: we adopt a very different language, when we feel in our minds that generosity of sentiments, which raises us above the caprice of fortune. The meer satisfaction of having honourably served the public, is of more value, than every kind of recompence. We must put ourselves in a situation to hope for every thing from heaven; this will prove the best ground of comfort, amidst all the injustice of men.

I should be very miserable, if I thought you could only rise, by means of intrigue. Shew on all occasions a generous greatness of mind,

mind, which raises you above all CON. VIII.
the little artifices, and base compliances, which ambition studies: 
habituate yourselves to desire no other advancement, than that which may arise from the performance of your duty; chuse rather to live in obscurity, than to shine with a borrowed lustre: if we would be really honoured by the dignities conferred on us, we must never be ashamed to declare, by what means we attained to them: true honour consists not so much in obtaining promotion, as in having deserved it. Those titles, with which a man of fashion is distinguished, no longer afford him any real satisfaction, than while they are confirmed by the public approbation.

L

IF

CON. VIII.




IF you love the truth, as I trust you always will, you will be utter strangers to flattery and duplicity; but you must expect in return, that Fortune, who bestows the chief of her favours on compliance and deceit, will not reckon you in the number of her favourites. You will then be great only in the way which is proper for you; true glory will never leave you; you will find, in yourselves, those honours and riches, which are not to be found in courts, and you will have this satisfaction, that neither injuries nor death itself will be able to take any thing from you.

It is time for you, my children, to shew to the world an example of true magnanimity: the hearts of

too many are so debased, that they CON. VIII.
only think how they may arrive at honours, without concerning themselves whether the means are generous and lawful. Envy, which always forms an atmosphere round virtuous characters, will perhaps consider you as proud; but what doth calumny avail, against a conscience void of offence? It is then we wrap ourselves up in our integrity, and are contented to defy malevolence. Whoever resolutely devotes himself to the practice of virtue, will not fail to have enemies; so invariably is it the lot of real merit to be persecuted, that it is laid down as an axiom, that it must be so.

It is not sufficient to be possessed of military courage; you must have

CON. VIII.  a strength of mind, which extends itself to every part of your conduct; which raises you above all the rumours of malice and envy, which makes you despise reports and cabals, and which renders you invulnerable to the shafts of ingratitude and revenge.

Do not imagine that under the pretext of elevating your minds, I wish so to debase them, as to make you indifferent to every insult which may be offered to you: all I have to say on so delicate a subject, is, that your own prudence must be your chief defence: by being affable and well-bred you will avoid those dreadful rencounters, in which we know what we ought to do, but do not know, what we shall be compelled to do.

WHATSOEVER

WHATEVER may happen to you, CON. VIII.
never forget, that every subject
owes his life to his King and coun-
try; and that you doubly owe
your's, both as citizens and sol-
diers: you are appointed by the
state as centinels, to watch in its
defence; the preservation therefore
of your own lives is a necessary part
of your duty.

IF a trial must be made of your
personal courage, war will furnish
you with abundant opportunities
of shewing it. You never will be
accused of want of bravery, whilst
you are seen the last in a retreat,
and the foremost to engage; it is
in such situations, that a noble am-
bition ought to influence your con-
duct. When you have only desires
of this kind, virtue will secure them,

CON. VIII. and crown them with blessing and
 } good success.

THE duties of a soldier are the properest to excite emulation; they never want opportunities to distinguish themselves. Even peace furnishes them with means of exercising their faculties both of mind and body. It is then they make themselves masters of their profession, and become accomplished through study and practice.

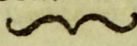
WHEN your rank requires you to make your appearance at court, you will not fail to attend there; not for the sake of offering the incense of adulation to the great; nor to solicit more lucrative employments, but merely to form honourable connections with noblemen of the best character; and to
 cherish

cherish in your hearts that respectful and filial love, which you owe to your King. Let merit alone speak in your behalf, and leave it to those who wish you well, to give it its proper weight. Your attendance at court will not then be irksome to you; and courtiers will not look upon you with a jealous eye. As you will not have any pretensions, you will have no inducement to act a part; and this simplicity and ease being something uncommon, will perhaps more strongly recommend you than dissimulation. We had once an * Ambassador, who surprized those of every other court, and obtained every thing he wanted, by always


* Colbert.

CON. VIII. speaking the truth. Behold in him
the perfect model of a worthy minister.

THE minds of men are so corrupt, that I should not be at all surprized, if these hints for your future conduct were considered as romantic notions; but if you consult truth and experience, you will think very differently of them: they will convince you, that it is not from the republick of *Plato*, that I derive these admonitions; and that you will never be truly happy, but when you reduce them into practice. Follow after virtue, make a grateful return for the love which I have shewn you; honour your mother, listen to her instructions; and remember, that there are no people upon earth, with whom

whom the advice of a dying parent CON. VIII.
 is not accounted as sacred as an 
 oracle.

THIS conference made such an
 impresson upon them, that they
 kept a profound silence, 'till their
 mother, whose very soul was filled
 with a tender anxiety for her chil-
 dren's happiness, thus addressed
 them: Such, my dear children, are
 the truths of which your hearts
 must be the faithful depositaries,
 and which you must have continu-
 ally before your eyes, as the most
 lively image of your father. I
 would to God he had survived me;
 you would have found in the strength
 of his understanding, and in the
 greatness of his sentiments, every
 thing that is capable of improving
 and perfecting your own. But
 alas!

CON. VIII.  alas! this is a vain wish: he is departed as a shadow; you have only had a father—to regret your loss of him; and the hour is at hand, when you will have nothing left you but—the remembrance of a mother.

 CONFERENCE IX.

On GENEROSITY.

I HAVE often thought that amidst CON. IX.
 all the different modes of edu-
 cating young people, they have ne-
 ver been sufficiently instructed in
 the nature of true generosity: to
 supply this defect, I intend to shew
 you, that there is nothing which
 raises us to a nearer resemblance
 with the Deity, than the practice
 of this duty. We become imitators
 of that providence which dispenses
 its bounty with profusion; and we
 resemble those beneficial clouds
 which distil plenty on every part of
 the earth.

THE

CON. IX.

THE spendthrift is as far from generosity as the miser: they are both of them beings, who have nothing in view but their own gratification, without any regard to the necessities of their neighbour. The one throws his money away, and the other locks it up; but misery receives no consolation from either. There is no virtue, where there is neither discretion, nor any regard for the public good: whatever has nothing better than vanity for its principle, is certainly far from being worthy of praise.

WHAT indeed would become of us, if our sentiments were wholly under the influence of caprice? Nothing but folly and singularity would be found among men; and that attention to the public welfare, which

which ought to direct our sentiments and conduct, would insensibly come to nought. It is the law of prudence and of reason which determines the use we ought to make of our talents and abilities; and it is only in following this law, that we advance towards perfection, and do honour to humanity.

CON. IX.

RICHES are either an honour or a disgrace to those who possess them; it is a real misfortune to be rich, when we know not how to use our riches. I had infinitely rather leave you in a state of indigence, than know, that you were either covetous or extravagant. Avarice renders us the objects of public indignation; prodigality carries us headlong into a thousand difficulties. It is generosity alone,
which

CON. IX.

which observes the happy medium betwixt both; which renders us worthy partakers of earthly and heavenly blessings; provided it is the work of the heart, and not the effect of humour or ostentation.

WHAT delight does it afford one, to see a generous nobleman, who, giving every thing to beneficence and nothing to vanity, finds resources in frugality, for the supply of the necessities of his friend, the assistance of an indigent widow, or the consolation of the unfortunate? such a sight as this addresses itself to the heart; and with a power ten thousand times more affecting than any theatrical representation, awakens all the sensibility of the soul, and raises it above humanity itself.

EXHIBIT,

EXHIBIT, to the world, my dear children, such a character as this; consecrate a part of your income to the benefit of your distressed fellow-creatures; let your liberality extend itself, wherever the miseries of others are urgent; adapt your bounty to the different degrees of wretchedness; and when circumstances demand it, be generous to the utmost extent of your ability.

TRUE generosity consists in giving with propriety: the manner of dispensing, is oftentimes more pleasing than the gift itself: a man who gives with an ungracious air, destroys all the merit of his benefaction: if you would oblige by your generosity, you must shew the party whom you serve, that you think

CON. IX. think it more *blessed to give than to receive*. A liberal man sets no value on gold, but as it enables him to relieve the necessitous.

I have often seen your father give large sums of money to the truly distressed; and perceived that he was more delighted with such an act, than he could have been by any favour conferred upon himself. He felt, in his heart, that there is no satisfaction equal to the pleasure of obliging others. Oh! if he were now instructing you in my stead, with what earnestness of affection would he encourage you to adopt his sentiments, and imitate his practice! How often hath the generous tear of pity fallen from his eyes, at the sight of a miserable object. Many a time has he led
me

me to the habitations of the wretched, to teach me a proper regard for the poor, and to excite my desire to comfort them: he sought the company of such as needed relief, he conversed freely with them as with brethren; he became a party in their sufferings by a friendly sympathy, and filled their hearts with consolation and joy.

So bright an example must needs engage your reverence and imitation: you are under the strongest obligations to shew those persons who have experienced the goodness of your father, that his virtues have descended to you, and that you are not degenerate; otherwise, you will only be despised, and will be considered as unworthy of that inheritance which he has left you.

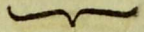
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CON. IX.

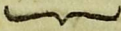
You live in a age, wherein luxury dries up the source of liberality: that we may give full scope to our vanity, we have nothing left for the relief of misery. We do not enquire, how much we can spare for acts of mercy, but what will enable us to gratify our passion for the most expensive pleasures? As for generosity, it passes for a romantic virtue; and yet I will venture to assure you, that it is as essential to a man of quality as courage, and that it even makes a part of honesty itself.

You will never be truly great, but so long as greatness is the principle of your actions. Every thing is little in a nobleman who is not generous: his ideas are little, his sentiments are mean. The soul
grows



grows narrow and confined, when we are thinking only of œconomy; we must know how to spend, and how to give.


GENEROSITY is a virtue, which foresees evil and endeavours to prevent it; which embraces every opportunity of doing good, and is awakened by the first complaint of the miserable. Listen only to her dictates, and you will liberally recompence those who serve you; you will be ready to lend, and will know no greater satisfaction, than when you are relieving your neighbour. It is shocking to see men prefer so worthless a possession as money before the life of their brother; or to see them make use of their riches only to feed their vanity and pride: I had rather your house were without furniture, and your wardrobe

CON. IX.  without cloaths, than that you should be insensible of the miseries of the poor. But generosity, which runs not to such excess, but is duly mindful of measure and proportion, will suggest to you the means of reconciling what you owe to your rank, with what you owe to your neighbour; it will give order to your domestic affairs, and an air of greatness to all your actions; so as to enable you to be œconomical and magnificent on proper occasions.

ABRIDGE yourselves as much as possible of those superfluities, which the world esteems fashionable: to be the slave of vanity and folly argues a weak and pusillanimous spirit. A foldier is not allowed to be subject to those trifles, which engross

engross the attention of a *Petit Maître*; nothing is more incompatible with the indulgencies of luxury and pride than a military life; nor does any thing better support the dignity of that character, than a noble, unaffected external appearance. We often have recourse to the world, only because we esteem what is fashionable and specious, in preference to what is really meritorious and praise worthy.

THE different masters who have hitherto had the care of your education, have only taught you to read and speak with propriety; they have instructed you in the elements of some of the sciences; and enabled you to appear with an air of ease and elegance: but *my* business is to furnish your minds with such sentiments

CON. IX.  as may render you worthy of the country in which you live; the rest is no more than meer varnish. When your souls are filled with the love of God, your King, and your country, and with a true sense of your several duties, your character will be compleat, your conduct will be exemplary; you will then give every man his due, and live in such a manner as to render virtue respectable.

THE generosity which I recommend to you being that virtue which particularly belongs to people of quality, is not simply confined to lending or giving: it extends itself much farther, rendering the mind sensible of every thing that is interesting to humanity. What indeed can be more truly great, more worthy

worthy of your illustrious birth, than to be touched with the sight of other's miseries? You will not only sympathize with those who suffer; but you will make every one about you happy: if you have a detachment to command, you will render the foldier's duty as easy to him as you can; you will listen to his complaints; you will comfort him in his sorrows; you will be his protector and his friend. Your father has often told me, that the great *Vendome* could have led his troops even into the midst of the sea; so warmly were they attached to their General. They were ready to sacrifice themselves for the sake of a commander, who treated them with humanity, and who knew how to be good to his foldiers, without being familiar with them.

CON. IX.

OF that multitude of young persons who are ruined by extravagance, none are capable either of friendship or compassion: their life, which is a continual succession of pleasures, of debts, and embarrassments, puts it out of their power to serve and oblige others. Their vanity and their passions demand all they have; and besides what tends to the gratification of these, nothing more is to be expected. You will see the world filled with this sort of people, who being distressed in the midst of large *nominal* estates, enrich only those who plunder them, or who lend them money at an extravagant interest: they insult the wretched; they despise the common people; they make a jest of the public misery; and pay attention

tion only to the instruments of CON. IX.
their pleasures, and the ministers of }
their passions.

THESE are the men, with whom you must never be connected: the company of the wicked is truly pestilential: we insensibly grow familiar with their vices, and we soon begin to imitate them. Engage virtue to find you true friends, and she will procure them for you. There are yet generous minds to be found, whom the world has not corrupted; and who, knowing how to distinguish betwixt the demands of fashion, and those of right reason, would rather abridge themselves, than leave the wretched without consolation and relief. We cannot, to be sure, assist all who suffer; but a well disposed mind makes a-
mends


CON. IX. } mends for this inability, by those expressions of pity and regret, which render its generosity unquestionable.

IT only remains that I recommend it to you not to imitate the folly of those mistaken devotees, who, to make a greater show with their alms, divide into a great number of small portions, what is scarce sufficient to relieve a twentieth part of those among whom it is distributed. By confining your benefactions within a narrower compass, you will be enabled to do more real good; you may perhaps save some distressed families from ruin; whereas alms scattered here and there are like medicines which palliate, but never heal.

GIVE the reins to your natural disposition, which has hitherto appeared excellent, and in the case of
generosity

generosity I know no better guide. CON. IX.
Fear not that you shall lessen your fortune by assisting the necessitous; we only ruin ourselves by being vicious: Virtue keeps every one within proper bounds, who is attentive to her precepts.

WHAT I have neglected to do in this respect I charge *you* to supply; filial affection engages you to do it; and my love demands it of you in the most earnest manner; as the means of enabling me to live even after my death. You cannot but see how nearly it approaches: my eyes are already grown dim; my voice is weakened; and nothing remains to me, but that spirit which a sense of duty inspires. I will keep it alive as much as possible, even to my latest moment, that I may omit nothing

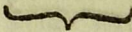
CON. IX.  nothing which can possibly improve your understanding, or exalt your sentiments. As an equal share of attention is due from me to all my children, I shall discourse to-morrow evening with your sister: she is of an age to understand the language of reason; and she is so apt to learn, that I have great cause to hope my advice will not be thrown away upon her.

I am obliged to summon together all the information I have ever received, that I may be the better enabled to furnish you all with the means of conducting yourselves aright. My heart is constantly filled with anxiety on your account; it urges, it conjures me to unfold to you all that it can think of, and all that it desires to secure your happiness.

WHAT

WHAT a comfort will it be to me, if death should leave me time fully to declare my sentiments to you all! There is a wonderful difference betwixt the instructions which we receive from a master, and the advice which is delivered by the mouth of a mother, whose words are every one of them expressive of the tenderest affection. Could you but know what passes in my mind every time I speak to you! it appears, as if you actually resided in my heart; and as tho' my blood, which can hardly any longer circulate through my veins, served only to be employed for your support.

No: nothing can equal the tenderness of sentiment, which your presence excites in my heart: I have
told

CON. IX.  told you so a hundred times, and I shall tell you so again and again, even to my last breath. The more ardent our affection is, the more it delights to repeat its tenderness and transports. Alas! every thing conspires to affect me whenever I behold you: I see your father in every line and feature: when you speak, it is his voice I hear; in short, I see my own heart represented in your's; and this assures me, that when I shall cease to live, I shall be renewed in you: ah! dismal moment of separation both to you and me.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

