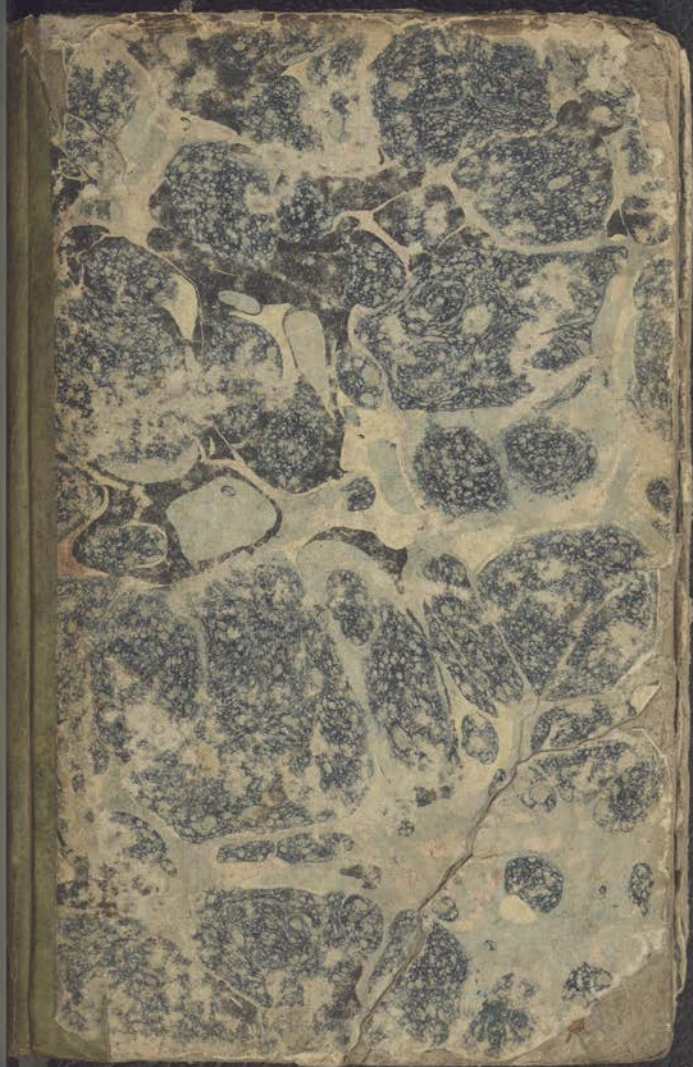
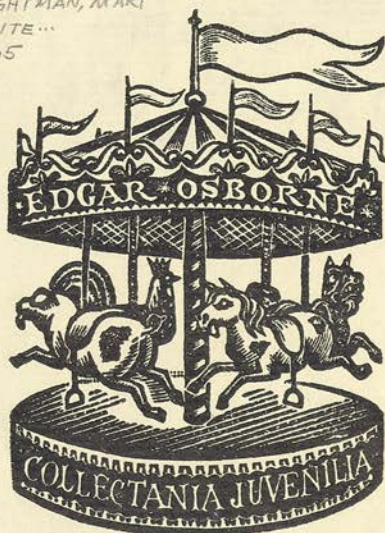




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POLITE...
1805



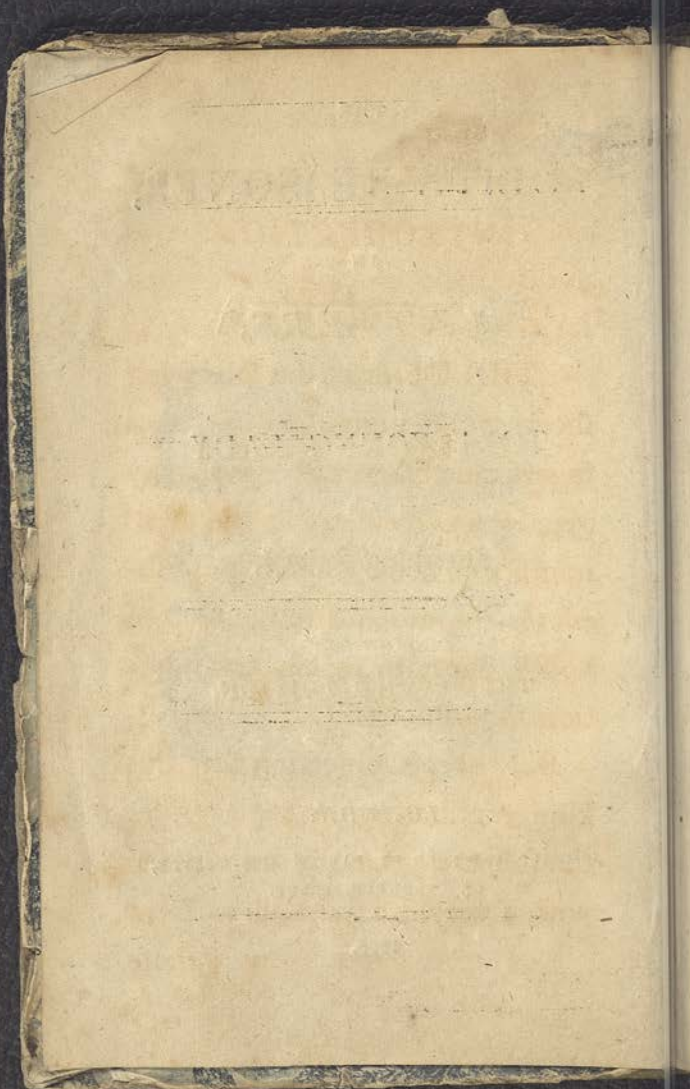
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Edinburgh
THE
POLITE REASONER,
Amelia
IN
LETTERS,
ADDRESSED
TO A YOUNG LADY
AT A
Boarding-School.

~~~~~  
THE SECOND EDITION.  
~~~~~

LONDON:
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—
1805.



INTRODUCTION.

THE Editor of the following sheets is not insensible, that to a superficial observer this work may appear unnecessary, as the great number of books already published, for the use and amusement of youth, seem to render any addition superfluous.

But every objection of this kind vanishes, when we consider the following Letters are written with a very different view from

B 2 those

those numerous publications; the apparent design of these pages being to call forth the early dawn of reason into action: to wake the youthful senses into thought—to teach them to reason from what they see—and to prevent that rust of erroneous education, which makes them look with indifference on every common object, however worthy their attention; as though the liberal hand of nature rendered her works less curious or less wonderful by her bounty. Were they, indeed, like the productions of art, there might

might be some cause for this false estimation of their value, as the produce of such amazing numbers would argue great ease in the execution. But to Him, who with equal ease can speak into being a universe or a flower, we cannot attribute any defect.

It may not be amiss to observe, that the *third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth* Letters, may be more generally useful in schools; while the whole together may be serviceable in the politer seminaries of female education, where they may save some trouble.

trouble to those who wish to cultivate the mind more generally than their numbers will admit. And it is hoped it will teach others, less happy in that particular attention, the great art of thinking and reasoning for themselves.

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THE
POLITE REASONER.

LETTER I.

EVER anxious for the improvement and happiness of my dear girl, my fond heart will dwell upon the subject of your education, whilst busy imagination paints in lively colours the joyful day when I hope to receive you again, not only accomplished, but truly amiable and virtuous; for no accomplishment, however attractive, can atone for the
B breach

breach of any moral virtue; and in my opinion, sincerity and goodness of heart are the only source from which politeness must flow to make it justly admired, and its possessor universally esteemed.

Think not, my dear Anna, that a fond partiality imposes upon my judgment, or that the pleasing image I have drawn, of uniting refined manners with rational piety, is any way inconsistent; on the contrary, it would be a vain thing to wish you accomplished only for the few years you will be permitted in this world, knowing you must soon be an inhabitant of another to all eternity. No, my
Anna!

Anna! I cannot rest satisfied with your pleasing a few mortals, if at the same time you omit to please and serve that Almighty Power who has blessed you with life and immortality, and of whose goodness I flatter myself you have too just a sense, to permit any thing to make you forget to seek his protection.

This reliance upon a superior power, be assured, my dear girl, will not only be your best guard from evil, but a source of happiness worthy a rational mind, and far from lessening your polite accomplishments: those virtues religion teaches, will adorn and recommend them

Think not that I mean by religion that disagreeable gloom, too frequently, though falsely, depicted as its natural garb, which frightens so many young people from embracing it;—on the contrary, I wish you so firmly to rely on your Heavenly Protector, that the inquietudes of this life may appear trifling, and you may be able to meet its various scenes of anxiety with fortitude and serenity.

“Assured of future bliss, the good man smiles, amid the fall of empires and the crush of worlds.”

Permit me to add, no cheerfulness is so pleasing, nor so much to be wished for, as that which has its foundation

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in religion.—Freed, as the heart is, from various inquietudes, it is at liberty to enjoy every innocent pleasure, while it avoids every guilty one, as destructive to its peace.

That my dear Anna may enjoy the refined pleasures of a well cultivated mind, and the regard and attention ever due to polished manners, is the ardent wish of

Your's, affectionately, &c.

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LETTER II.  
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YOU know, my dear Anna, how sanguine my wishes are for your improvement, and I flatter myself you will not render me miserable, by disappointing those pleasing expectations.

Consider, too, I beg you, how much it is in your power to make your parents happy, in an amiable and accomplished daughter, or a prey to grief and disappointment, in finding their brightest hopes blasted, and themselves

themselves unfortunate in an ignorant and ill-bred child.

If you wish your friends to be happy, and yourself agreeable, a ready and immediate attention to every thing that concerns you is absolutely necessary. But you might as reasonably expect flowers to grow without roots, or fruits without trees, as hope to obtain, without attention, that engaging manner and true politeness, which mark the gentlewoman far beyond the gifts of fortune, and never fail to give them their brightest lustre.

The real difficulties which have been surmounted by attention, are
absolutely

absolutely astonishing; how otherwise shall we account for that surprising degree of perfection, which those who are almost fools frequently arrive at, in any branch they choose to turn the bent of their minds to acquire.

This, then, may serve to prove, that with the advantage of a good understanding, nothing can be wanting but attention and application, to make you a proficient in the various improvements required. Command, then, those qualities so much in your power, and be not insensible to the opportunity you now have, of making a rapid progress in both mental and personal

personal accomplishments; for, anxious as I am that your mind may not be neglected, yet that alone is by no means sufficient to gratify my desires; and I confess I should be shocked more than you can imagine, if you were either to contract, or continue, any vulgar habits or expressions; and in this I should think want of attention very inexcusable, as I am sensible those under whose care you now are, will not omit to point them out; and it will be your fault, if you do not benefit by their observations. —How many worthy people, by a neglect of this sort, when young, have subjected themselves to ridicule, by some

some odd habit, some little vulgarity, in action, or expression, which they are not sensible of in themselves, though perhaps in another they may think it disagreeable.

Reflect, then, I entreat you, how far the subject of your education is interesting to you; and as the figure you will make in future depends upon the present formation of your mind and manners, it is time to choose what character you think most engaging, and the worthiest your pursuit; for, with attention, you may be what you please; but, if careless and inattentive, you will most assuredly be an awkward figure, with
an

an uncultivated mind: and, as I can never regard that stupid ignorance which arises from want of attention, instead of the tender affection I now feel for you, I shall be ashamed to own so near an alliance to rudeness and folly—weeds which always grow in a neglected mind. *Anna Bridges*

Nor can this neglect be deemed your misfortune, but your fault; and a fault of such a nature, as must appear criminal, when we think of its having its foundation in ingratitude; a crime of so black a dye, that no one cares to own it. However, it is an ingratitude which is repaid by being disliked, or laughed at, as I have already

ready observed; and to see the full force of this negligence, figure to yourself a company of ill-bred mortals, who have each some one or more disagreeable habits, and for a moment let your imagination depict them engaged each in her favourite employ. Suppose, then, one scratching her head; another picking her nose; a third with her fingers in her ears; whilst a fourth, pushing forward her chin, is looking as round shouldered, and as like a fool, as if nature had not granted her one grain of sense. With an empty stare of absence, another of this lovely group, without ever looking at you, tells you what a fine day

day

day it is, or that she is glad to see you, though perhaps she is at the same time observing a lazy companion of hers, who, with her toes turned in, is yawning in the corner, and beating time to the company.

How, my dear Anna, do you like these charming creatures? Are you qualified to take a part in their polite circle? Or can you contribute to their stock of awkwardness, by the addition of any other rude, vulgar habit? If you can, you have as good a chance to be laughed at, and a much greater to render yourself disagreeable to

Your's, affectionately, &c.

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LETTER

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LETTER III.  
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IN my last, my dear Anna, I mentioned several disagreeable, though common habits; all which, I flatter myself, it will be your study to avoid, and that you will pay attention to your instructors, as well as to what I write for your benefit; and here I may observe, with the Marchioness de Lambert, "These are not dry lectures, that carry the air of a mother's authority; they are the advice of a friend,

friend, and have this merit, that they come from the heart."

The mind resembles a garden, and requires cultivation, without which it is overrun with weeds; hasten, then, my dear girl, to seek the blossoms of instruction, and they will reward you with the fruits of wisdom and refinement.

Let no opportunity escape you, in your rural walks, of observing the numberless beauties of the vegetable kingdom; mark the curious texture and varied form of each different leaf; the fine tints of each various flower.—What rich colours! what fine shades! what a profusion of ornaments! From

what source could these mingled sweets arise? What dyes can equal those rich and lively hues? Can imagination paint such delicacy, such uniform elegance? What are the finest silks, or the purple of the greatest princes, when compared with the inexpressibly fine texture of each flower? How gross in comparison are all the works of art, and how infinitely inferior in colour? No industry can form, no art can equal, these beauties of the creation! Yet with what profusion they are lavished upon us, to call our attention to the consideration of their beauties, and the contemplation of that Almighty Power, whose

whose grand fiat brought them into existence; continues them in such regular succession, and such luxuriance of varied elegance. How wonderful! how worthy our attention!

Through the same delicate stem, flow the liquid juices, which give one part of this flower a rich purple, another part a bright yellow, whilst the foliage from the roots are universally clothed in green, of wonderfully varied shades. Who directs these opposite dyes to their appointed stations? Who conducts through the same tube those different colours? Who fixes their bounds with such minute exactness, or gives those tints

descriptive of the finest touches of a pencil?—

“ But who can paint
Like nature? Can imagination boast,
Amid its gay creation, hues like her's?
Or can it mix them with that matchless skill,
And lose them in each other, as appears
In every bud that blows?”

Can the eye of reason see, and not
trace the hand divine?

“ Soft roll your incense, herbs, and fruit, and
flowers,
In mingled clouds to Him, whose sun exalts,
Whose breath perfumes you, and whose pencil
paints.”

Oh! my Anna, lose not such a
field of mental satisfaction: be as-
fured,

fured, this exuberance of beauty and varied fragrance, were not thus lavishly bestowed upon the brute creation, but demand our notice, and claim our thanks; in which we are rewarded by pleasing contemplations, and the highest gratification of a rational creature, gratitude to Heaven. That you may taste these exalted joys, is the ardent wish of

Your's, affectionately, &c.

LETTER

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LETTER IV.  
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FROM the subject of my last, I flatter myself my dear Anna will enrich her mind with a new stock of ideas; which I wish you further to extend, by turning your consideration to that beautiful and pleasing part of the creation, which surrounds you in your walks, whilst their notes of melody form a delightful concert.

“ Up springs the lark,
Shrill voic'd, and loud, the messenger of morn;
Ere yet the shadows fly, he, mounted, sings
Amid

Amid the dawning clouds, and from their
haunts

Calls up the tuneful nations. Every copse
Deep-tangled, tree irregular, and bush
Bending with dewy moisture, o'er the heads
Of the coy choristers that lodge within,
Are prodigal of harmony. The thrush
And woodlark, o'er the kind-contending
throng

Superior heard, run through the sweetest length
Of notes; when listening Philomela deigns
To let them joy, and purposes in thought
Elate, to make her night excel their day.

The blackbird whistles from the thorny brake;
The mellow bullfinch answers from the grove:
Nor are the linnets, o'er the flow'ring furze
Pour'd out profusely, silent. Joined to these
Innum'rous songsters, in the fresh'ning shade
Of new sprung leaves, their modulations mix
Mellifluous. The jay, the rook, the daw,

And

And each harsh pipe, discordant heard alone,
Aid the full concert: while the stock-dove
breathes
A melancholy murmur through the whole."

Whilst you listen with pleasure to the feathered songsters of the grove, stop not your admiration at their sweet harmony, but consider the amazing imitation of reason, so apparent in building their nests, which are as various as the notes they sing; every distinct species having a manner of building peculiar to themselves; and though the situations and materials they chuse are very different, yet the same care and precautions are universal, though shown in such numerous

rous ways. But acts of cruelty, in general, make us acquainted with the astonishing industry and art with which their little nests are constructed; and, as if designed to bring them under our observation, there seems a natural propensity, in every boy, to seek and plunder them of all their treasures; if not for this wise end permitted, why do they not all fly far from the habitation of man? or make choice of lofty trees and eminences, where they might escape the school-boy's relentless hand? Or why does the subtle swallow, who at the appointed time, fearless, wings her flight to distant shores? ah! why does she

she, with such seeming confidence, build under our very roofs, and, by her songs, court our observation of her surprising work? Whilst those, who have not beauty to please the eye, or whose harsh, discordant notes are not grateful to the ear, seek the highest trees, as if fearful of trusting their young to the tenderness of the human species; and in those lofty situations they put their nests together, with the utmost seeming neglect and carelessness, as if they should say, "What need have we to make nests so curious? There are wonders of this kind sufficient, amongst our kindred of the groves, to call the attention

tention of the human race, to rouse their thoughts, and make them declare that wisdom infinite, which has formed us with powers so nearly allied to their reasoning faculties."

Let me now, my Anna, call back your thoughts to the swallow, to which bird of passage I mean to confine my remarks, though there are others not less worthy our admiration; but to avoid being tedious, shall only mention this particular species, which in one part of the year seek our habitations, and with confidence there deposit all their riches; whilst in another season they not only leave our houses, but the very island

D

where

where they were hatched. How do they know where to direct their course? Or what tempts them to seek another country? "He who tempers the wind to the new-shorn lamb," He is their guide! He supports their little wings through the tedious passage! He directs their journey through the trackless air! Are not their appointments from above? Or how do they universally know the time of their general departure, and assemble together previous to their going? But, as if detained by some cause invisible, not one quits the shore till all are ready, nor do any tarry beyond the day of their general destination.

Amongst

Amongst mankind, a summons to such numbers, and at such various distances, would be subject to errors, delays, and accidents; but amongst them no mistake arises, their orders are from above, and admit not of misconstruction or disappointment.

Now for a moment observe those of the feathered tribe destined for the water. Their feet are provided with webs, which speak the element they are intended for. Examine the swan, and mark how beautiful its downy plumage. What eye can see, what ingenuity discover, any repelling power there? Yet this stately bird, after rowing through, or resting upon

the bosom of the penetrating wave,
shall raise its snowy breast, unwet,
from the liquid element.

I might continue these amusing researches to the domestic cares and regulations of the feathered world, but the source is unbounded; and it may humble our vanity to own, they are striking examples of several moral duties, which we but feebly imitate.

May he who provides for the birds be our protector, and guide us to happiness on high.—Adieu.

Your's affectionately, &c.

LETTER

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LETTER V.  
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IN my letters respecting birds, and the inanimate part of the creation, I have confined my account of them to what comes immediately under your observation in your present situation, as I wish you to guard against that vulgar error of viewing with indifference common objects; I mean objects which in themselves are really worthy admiration, and such I esteem those already pointed out to you in the grand school of natural
D 3 wonders,

wonders, where I flatter myself you will find too much entertainment to permit you to be guilty of this gross mistake, which is not less inexcusable for being common. Shun this weed of erroneous education; it is poisonous to the mind; it has its root in ignorance, and its produce is ingratitude to heaven: but the inquiring observer views with pleasure the wonders of creation, and with heart-felt satisfaction beholds the unspeakable profusion with which they are lavished upon our senses. Yet there are amongst the human race, who, regardless of Heaven's bounty, have trod amidst surrounding beauties, insensible

sensible to them all. They now scarce strike their external senses, and when they do, they make not the least impression, nor wake one idea. But this neglect is justly repaid by their loss of entertainment and information. Say, can it be for these that the raiment of the lily surpasses Solomon's? or that the gentle zephyr wafts the refreshing odour from shrub or flower?

O! join ye feathered tribe your loudest notes, rouse their sleeping senses, and call their thoughts to your Creator.

"Ye woodlands all awake; a boundless song
Burst from the groves! and when the restless day
Expiring,

Expiring, lays the warbling world asleep,
Sweetest of birds! sweet Philomela, charm
The list'ning shades, and teach the night his
praise."

Alas! in vain for them you tune
your harmonious notes. Your beauties,
ye flowers, are in vain displayed.
—Your mingled sweets in vain.

These insensibles would lose in vacant
gaze the view, were it possible
to see

"——— in wide landscape all the east
Of Paradise, and Eden's happy plains."

Not so my Anna; pass not through
the range of rural objects insensible
of their beauties, or ignorant of the
power from whence they flow.

Let

Let me entreat you, view them yourself, rely not on foreign aid to fill your thought, but in those scenes of rural wonders, see—examine—think—and thus improve and enrich your mind by actual observation.

Give your thought—your attention—if possible undivided, to each object, and you will imperceptibly catch a habit of thinking for yourself; and thus exercised, the dawn of reason will gain strength and open on your senses.

This gift of heaven, which distinguishes the human race from the brute creation, will thus expand, and all your mental powers improve.

You

You will then see in the vegetable and animal kingdoms a thousand beauties which have escaped your notice, and whilst they excite your attention, will they not prompt you to enquire

“ Why does one climate and one soil endue
The blushing poppy with a crimson hue;
Yet leave the lily pale, and tinge the violet
blue? ”

Why does the fond carnation love to shoot
A various colour from one parent root;
While the fantastic tulip strives to break
In two-fold beauty, and a parted freak?
The twining jasmine, and the blushing rose,
With lavish grace their morning scents disclose:
The smelling tube-rose and jonquille declare
The stronger impulse of an evening air.

Whence

Whence has the tree (resolve me) or the flow'r
A various instinct, or a diff'rent pow'r?
Why should one earth, one clime, one stream,
 one breath,
Raise this to strength, and sicken that to
 death?"

"Of birds, how each according to her kind
Proper materials for her nest can find;
And build a frame, which deepest thought in
 man
Would or amend, or imitate in vain.
How in small flights they know to try their
 young,
And teach the callow child her parents' song.
Why these frequent the plain, and those the
 wood,
Why ev'ry land has her specific brood.
Where the tall crane, or winding swallow goes,
Fearful of gath'ring winds, and falling snows:
 And

And conscious of the coming evil, fly
To milder regions, and a southern sky."

How pleasing those enquiries.—
How worthy a rational being.

One would not think it possible to view these surprising effects, without attributing the cause to some supernatural power.

When this wrong use is made of study, when the effect only is considered, and the grand cause not thought of, this light skim of superficial knowledge may fill with vanity the vacant brain.

But the truly wise will mark the hand divine in these his lower works; and by this just way of reflecting, the
ideas

ideas are enlarged, the thoughts exalted, and the heart refined.

And thus imperceptibly is formed the most amiable character, such as you may be happy to appear, and will promise fair to ensure the felicity of

Your's, affectionately, &c.

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LETTER VI.  
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WHEN I had last the pleasure of walking with my dear Anna, I observed the shepherd's dog in the adjacent field; pray did not you mark his watchful looks, and his apparent impatience to go after any of the poor lambs which he saw straying from the flock?

Not any human being, if deprived of speech, and confined to his form, could more expressly have signified
an

an expectation of being sent to recal the wanderers.

Yet not one foot did this faithful creature move till he had received from his master the expected commission, which he some time waited for; first looking at the shepherd, and then at the stray sheep; then at the shepherd again, and so alternately, with looks which, to outward appearance, spoke his power of thinking.

In this sagacious animal, so universally famed for its fidelity, we see friendship and gratitude in such great and lasting degrees, as must astonish every thinking mind, to find those

appearances of reason, without the principles of it.

A paragraph relative to the above-mentioned animal, has, by mere accident, come under my observation, whilst on this subject, shall therefore copy it for your amusement.

“ At the seat of the late Earl of Lichfield, three miles from Blenheim, there is a portrait, in the dining-room, of Sir Henry Lee, by Johnston, with the mastiff dog which saved his life. It seems, a servant had formed the design of assassinating his master, and robbing the house; but, the night he had fixed on, the dog, which had never been much noticed by Sir Henry,
for

for the first time followed him up stairs, got under his bed, and could not be got from thence by either master or man: in the dead of the night, the same servant entered the room to execute his horrid design, but was instantly seized by the dog, and being secured, confessed his intentions.— There are ten quaint lines in the corner of the picture, which conclude thus:

“ But in my dog, whereof I made no store,
I found more love than those I trusted more.”

Universal Magazine, Jan. 1786.

The above singular account I leave to your reflections.

And now let me ask, has the bat ever come under your observations? It seems to be the link, in nature's chain, between the bird and brute creation, and partakes of the nature of each. For, notwithstanding its strong resemblance of a mouse, yet its wings, &c. speak it an inhabitant of air.

As if sensible of the disagreeableness of its figure, it rarely is to be seen in the day time: when it is, the contrast between it and many beautiful birds is very striking; as few creatures, perhaps in themselves harmless, are in their form so disgusting.

It seems odd, but there are few people who are not subject to disagreeable

able sensations on the sight of some particularly contemptible animal, incapable of hurting them.

The spider, for instance, seems hateful to many, and Thomson has branded it with the epithet of villain. Yet this disagreeable little creature has frequently been the object of my admiration, whilst I viewed its industry and wonderful art in suspending so curiously its delicate lines; fixing them to certain points; joining them all in one centre; never making one of these right lines too many or too few; but all placed at a well-proportioned distance from each other. This business done, it changes its
mode

mode of working, and makes parallel circles with surprising exactness; and to strengthen the whole of this network, it fastens these circular threads to each right line as it crosses them, by extending and pressing with one foot upon the part it wishes to fix there, in a manner, I think, particularly curious. Nor is it much less so to observe the poor fly when caught in this fine net: in the first instant of its embarrassment, it begins to struggle, in hopes of disengaging itself; but the subtle spider darts from the centre of its web, where, from the fineness of its texture, the lightest motion informs him of his unhappy victim, which
with

with cruel haste he glides rapid to secure, first by, embarrassing its wings; and when rendered sufficiently defenceless to permit, it is deprived of any chance of disengaging itself, by having its wings tied to its body, which is done very expertly, by turning the now helpless prey round and round in his thread, which, though very fine, yet, by being many times over them, is too strong for the curiously delicate wing of the unwary fly. The carcass is then removed, which is effected with great ease and expedition, as he runs with it quick along the bending line; though one would sometimes imagine, from their size,

size, that their own weight alone would tear to pieces the slender structure of the web. This removal of the dead victim to a less conspicuous part of the web, must no doubt be to prevent the alarm it would give to others to avoid the fatal snare.

Who has informed this little creature these precautions are necessary toward catching its prey? Who has told it how to retain its conquest? or to remove the slain to prevent suspicion?

But if these observations surprise or entertain us, for the moment the eye is engaged in viewing this curious work, how much more is our reason engaged

engaged in the contemplation of the apparent hope, fear, cunning, and cruelty, which we trace in this little animal!—Adieu, my dear Anna.

Your's, affectionately, &c.

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LETTER VII.  
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PERMIT me, my dear Anna, to recommend to your consideration the labours of the bee, if they have not already attracted your attention.

The regular form and curious texture of their cells, for the reception of their honey; their power of extracting those luscious sweets, without the least injury to the most delicate flowers; their manner of closing those cells when full, are all actions replete with amazing art:

But

But let me ask, is it less astonishing that they know these reservoirs are necessary to receive their honey? Or can we less admire their wonderful industry in laying up provision for the winter? How shall we account for their seeming knowledge of futurity? And if without that knowledge, why do they fill their magazines? Why with laborious art preserve their treasures? Or why forbear, till the flowers are gone, to feast upon their delicious food? Or why do they not even forget they are in possession of this hoard of sweets?

These questions are imperfectly answered, by saying they are taught by

r instinct.

instinct.—Say, can reason do more?
Or what that instinct is, who can justly
define?

The ant, though confined to earth,
bears a near resemblance to this aërial
traveller, the bee, both in respect to
industry, and laying up provision for
the winter. But how in the heats of
summer, amidst surrounding plenty,
they should think of providing for the
frosts and snows of winter, cannot be
resolved, without attributing the cause
to that Almighty Power, who has been
pleased to give the effects and appear-
ances of reason and understanding to
those seemingly contemptible crea-
tures; in which we may find not only
examples

“And, O thou sluggard, tell me why the ant,
’Midst summer’s plenty, thinks of winter’s
want:

By constant journeys careful to prepare
Her stores; and bringing home the corny ear,
By what instruction does she bite the grain,
Lest hid in earth, and taking root again,
It might elude the foresight of her care?
Distinct in either insect’s deed, appear
The marks of thought, contrivance, hope,
and fear.” }

Are not these astonishing truths,
worthy the attention of every rational
creature?

Is not this exercise of thought, this
practical observation, calculated to
enrich and adorn your mind, and to
yield you more pleasing ideas and
reflections

reflections than any other diversion; which is what these researches are intended for, and not to point out these curious objects as a study.

On the contrary, I wish them to be perused for your entertainment, in which I am sensible you will not be disappointed.

The mind will be filled; and if flowers are not planted there, weeds will take root.

Ah, my Anna! may the refinements of your heart and manners keep pace with each other, and may you be in reality what you wish to appear; so will you most agreeably avoid the trouble many people take

of imposing upon their acquaintance, and gain our approbation; whilst your soul rises superior to deceit, and your heart exulting tells you, that you are secure of our affectionate regards, by the strongest ties of virtue and merit.

Add to this, the noblest source of human happiness will be your's, the sunshine of self-approbation, which will gild your days, and brighten every surrounding object.

And thus raised to a consideration of the wisdom, power, and goodness of the Deity, from an attentive consideration of his works, you will trace the effects of his providence in
various

various benefits, which justly claim your grateful praise.—Adieu, my dear Anna.

Your's, affectionately, &c.

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LETTER VIII.  
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THE agreeable recreations I have pointed out to you in the rural scenes of nature, may be extended at your pleasure, as the subject is without bounds.

You will find in Scripture the vegetable and animal kingdoms are intended to furnish us with proofs of the watchful care of Providence over all his creatures, and striking examples of our various duties,

The

The fowls of the air, the lilies, and the grafs of the field, are spoken of by Christ himself, as so many proofs of the universal care of Providence.

Even the sparrow, though of small estimation amongst men, is not there forgot.

There the dull ox, and the stupid ass, are mentioned as excelling in gratitude some of the human species.

What, then, shall we say of other more sagacious animals? Are not their examples worthy our imitation? And is not our attention to these benefits which surround us a necessary duty?

Do

Do they not, in general, contribute to our necessities, our comforts, or our pleasures? And if so, does not the neglect of them render us too much like the creatures we despise?

Shall the sea, the air, the earth, teem with supplies of food and raiment for the human race, and shall they not pay homage and adoration to the great Author of all their blessings?

Does not the grass of the field nourish the cattle which supply us with milk, and the sheep which furnish us with clothing?

And far superior to these, or any exterior gift, are you not in possession of a mind capable of contemplating

ing

ing the works and wonders of creation, and of making returns of prayer and praise?

"These are thy glorious works, parent of good,
Almighty, thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous
then!

Unspeaking, who sitt'st above these heav'ns,
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine."

I have endeavoured, my dear Anna, to call forth your thought into action; and, by confining my observations to objects that surround you, have rendered the subjects of these
letters

letters proper for practical observation, from which I hope you will receive essential benefit, particularly if you use them as I recommend, and that is, by comparing what is said of the objects with the objects themselves, as you meet with them in the field or garden.

In your present situation, you will have many opportunities for researches of this sort, which I flatter myself will be of much greater and more lasting advantage than one would imagine upon a superficial view.

Nor have I the least doubt but the habit of thinking you acquire from this practical exercise of reason, will
in

in a short time extend to what you read: a circumstance of such importance, that the mind requires time to trace the progressive benefit.—For imagination cannot readily form an idea of this essential and lasting advantage.

After what I have said respecting the vulgar error of neglecting common objects, in which I have advised you, as in the great book of nature, to study for entertainment and information, I think it unnecessary to say more on this subject; except that the study of these, in the manner already recommended, will expand your mind, and give you a zest

for information respecting the productions of foreign climates, which are many of them curious and surprising; but the accounts of them are not always to be depended upon, being sometimes described as different as the warmest imagination of a poet ever depicted a pastoral shepherd from the one you so frequently see.

But notwithstanding this, I am tempted to give you some account of the stork, which I think you will admire for the example it offers to mankind.

The stork is a bird of passage, and is reported to live till quite feeble,
through

through age, when they almost lose the use of their limbs, and so many of their feathers, as to be incapable of flying.

But their young ones remove them from place to place, by carrying them on their backs, and supporting them with their wings.—This extraordinary example is thus beautifully expressed in the eastern style.

“From the creatures of God, let man learn wisdom, and apply to himself the instruction they give.

“Go to the desert, my son; observe the young flock in the wilderness: let him speak to thy heart. He beareth on his wings his aged fire; he

lodgeth him in safety, and supplieth him with food.

“The piety of a child is sweeter than the incense of Persia offered to the sun; yea, more delicious than odours wafted from a field of Arabian spices, by the western gales.

“Think on thy helpless infancy, and the frowardness of thy youth, and indulge the infirmities of thy aged parents; assist and support them in the decline of life.”

Adieu, my Anna; may you ever enjoy the felicity of making your parents happy.

Your's affectionately, &c.

LETTER

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LETTER IX.  
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LET me now recommend to my dear Anna, as her constant attendants and most amiable companions, truth and sincerity; to which, if you strictly adhere, you will not only claim respect and attention, but these qualities, inseparable from a good heart, will give you a weight in the grand scale of society, which the baseness of a falsehood would sink you below deserving; whilst a con-

scious sense of your own demerit would most assuredly rob you of that self-approbation, without which there is no possibility of tasting true felicity.

“Of all intellectual pleasures, self-approbation, that sunshine of the soul, is the most strong and the most lasting.”

Remember this, I most earnestly entreat you, and let nothing tempt you to sacrifice a treasure which the world cannot give.

If this sun gild not your days, in vain will the gifts of fortune shine.

Heaven's choicest blessings in vain are showered upon the guilty wretch,
bereft

bereft of this fource of enjoyment, self-approbation.

Let, then, the great aim of your conduct be, to fhun the meannefs of diffimulation, and fly far from the basenefs of hypocrify.

In the following lines, the character of the hypocrite is fo juftly depicted, and fincerity fo well defined, that in tranfcribing them I give you my own sentiments.

“ O thou that art enamoured with the beauties of truth, and haft fixed thy heart on the fimplicity of her charms; hold faft thy fidelity unto her, and forfake her not: the con-
ftancy

stancy of thy virtue shall crown thee with honour.

“The tongue of the sincere is rooted in his heart; hypocrisy and deceit have no place in his words.

“He blusheth at falsehood, and is confounded; but in speaking the truth he hath a steady eye.

“He supporteth, as a man, the dignity of his character; to the arts of hypocrisy he scorneth to stoop.

“He is consistent with himself; he is never embarrassed; he hath courage in truth, but to lie he is afraid.

“He is far above the meanness of dissimulation; the words of his mouth are the thoughts of his heart.

“Yet

“ Yet with prudence and caution he openeth his lips: he studieth what is right, and speaketh with discretion.

“ He adviseth in friendship; he reproveth with freedom; and whatsoever he promiseth, shall surely be performed.

“ But the heart of the hypocrite is hid in his breast. He masketh his words in the semblance of truth, while the business of his life is only to deceive.

“ He laugheth in sorrow; he weepeth in joy; and the words of his mouth have no interpretation.

“ He

“ He worketh in the dark as a mole, and fancieth he is safe: but he blundereth into light, and is exposed to full view with his dirt upon his head.

“ He passeth his days in perpetual constraint; his tongue and his heart are for ever at variance.

“ He laboureth for the character of a righteous man; and huggeth himself in the thoughts of his cunning.

“ O fool, fool! the pains thou takest to hide what thou art, are more than would make thee what thou wouldest seem: the children of wisdom shall mock at thy cunning, and when thy disguise is stripped off,
the

the finger of derision shall point thee to scorn."

These characters are well contrasted: the heart that wants sincerity, must be subject to its own reproach; and was it possible it could reconcile the detested baseness of a lie, it could never answer to itself the folly of being guilty of this abuse of reason and of speech.

In the fifth chapter of Acts, you may see a dreadful example of the displeasure of Heaven in the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira.

Let me next warn you against a love of money: but in shunning avarice,

rice, learn not a too great neglect of what it is our duty well to use.

Spend not to the utmost ; but spare, from the bounty of your friends, a trifle for the poor.

In pity let us remember their wants ; and that, with compassion and tenderness, it is our duty to relieve them.

"This virtue is, in ev'ry land and age,
With pleasure to relieve the wretch from pain,
To clothe the naked, and to count it gain ;
When to the hungry we extend our food,
Our appetite's indulg'd in doing good."

But never let vanity accompany your gifts ; remember, it is your duty, and never think of it as a merit.

On

On the contrary, I hope you will be truly sensible of the refined pleasure of doing good, and will be thankful to Heaven for putting it in your power.

May you, my dear girl, pay attention to my letters, and thus repay the trouble and anxious care of

Your's, affectionately, &c.

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LETTER X.  
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MY dear Anna will have the pleasure of receiving this, from the hands of our very particular friend ; whom I hope you will not meet with a grave face and formal air, as though you had never before seen him. Or rather, as if you were quite chagrined at the visit.

I mention this, from having observed it to be a common custom amongst those of your age. But it seems

seems impossible to account for so great an absurdity as that of receiving, even a stranger, as though you were insensible of their civility, or sorry to hear from your friends.

If you wish to avoid this very disagreeable manner, it is necessary you should endeavour to attain that easy politeness, which will free you from every foolish, awkward embarrassment, and leave you at liberty to enjoy any opportunity you may have of enquiring after your relations and acquaintance; which no doubt will yield you great satisfaction, whenever you can meet, free from this absurd, embarrassed behaviour, any of our

H 2 friends

friends who may do us the favour to call upon you.

Need I to say that it will add to our happiness, to have you receive our friends as though you really were glad to see them; and notwithstanding we are sensible you are, yet we are equally certain that they will think otherwise, should your cool, reserved behaviour, give them reason for this unfavourable opinion.

And if this be the case, my dear, you must know, to visit you will be very disagreeable: indeed, to those possessed of fine feelings and delicate sentiments, the task would be painful.

Never

Never then, I beg you, lose sight of that innocent freedom of manners, which will make every one easy in your company.

For, next to being happy ourselves, the power of making others so must yield us the greatest felicity : and it is said “most arts require long study and application, yet the most useful art, that of pleasing, requires only the desire.”

This desire, we flatter ourselves, you have ; and we shall rejoice to hear you answer our wishes, by your polite attention to our friend, from whom we expect to hear of your various improvements ; but this you

must naturally imagine, as you cannot be ignorant of our care in placing you in a situation to acquire them, and we have a right to expect you will not disappoint us; for though we know

“How empty learning, and how vain is art,
But as it mends the life, and guides the heart;”

yet the high-wrought hope of receiving you again, amiable and accomplished, and of your equally meriting both these epithets, has taken possession of our hearts; and that they are not incompatible, you may see in various ranks in life.

Your's, affectionately, &c.

LETTER

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LETTER XI.  
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HOW, my dear Anna, shall I express the satisfaction we feel in the knowledge we now have from our friend of your various improvements?

Nor is our pleasure less in hearing you receive your acquaintance in a manner so perfectly agreeable, as to make them happy in every opportunity of calling upon you.

We flatter ourselves, this civility and respect is not only extended to
those

those you rarely see, but practised in common by yourself and companions; otherwise it would not seem so easy and natural as to appear a part of yourself; which reason and good sense will show you is what, in some measure, constitutes good breeding, and not an occasional politeness, which is quickly seen through and despised, as the effects of a contemptible vanity, which is well delineated in the following fable.

The Ant and Caterpillar.

As an ant, of his talents superiorly vain,
Was trotting with consequence over the plain,

A worm,

A worm, in his progress remarkably slow,
Cry'd, "Bless your good worship wherever
you go!

I hope your great mightiness won't take it ill,
I pay my respects with a hearty good will."

With a look of contempt, and impertinent
pride,

"Be gone, you vile reptile!" his antship re-
ply'd;

"Go—go and lament your contemptible state,
But first—look at me—see my limbs how com-
plete!

I guide all my motions with freedom and ease,
Run backward and forward, and turn when I
please.

Of nature, grown weary, you shocking essay!
I spurn you thus from me—crawl out of my
way."

The reptile, insulted, and vex'd to the soul,
Crept onward, and hid himself close in his hole;

But

But nature, determin'd to end his distress,
Soon sent him abroad in a butterfly's dress.

Ere long the proud ant, as repassing the road,
(Fatigu'd from the harvest, and tugging his
load,)

The bean on a violet bank he beheld,
Whose gesture in glory a monarch's excell'd;
His plumage expanded—'twas rare to be-
hold

So lovely a mixture of purple and gold.

The ant, quite amaz'd at a figure so gay,
Bow'd low with respect, and was trudging
away:

"Stop, friend," says the butterfly, "don't be
surpris'd;

I once was the reptile you spurn'd and de-
spis'd;

But now I can mount; in the sun-beams I play,
Whilst you must for ever drudge on in your
way."

MORAL.

MORAL.

A wretch, though to-day he's o'erloaded with
 sorrow,
 May soar above those that oppress'd him—to-
 morrow.

You no doubt observe the absurdity
 of a mean vanity, such as here repre-
 sented in the ant; and you must ob-
 serve this vanity is the effect of igno-
 rance, whilst

“Good breeding is the blossom of good sense,
 The last result of an accomplish'd mind.”

But to make it complete, requires to
 be joined to goodness and sincerity of
 heart.

Then,

Then, indeed, when this pleasing attainment is a real emanation of the mind, it wins our approbation insensibly to those, who, perhaps, without good breeding to recommend them, might be disagreeable. In short, what but this forms the grand contrast we every day meet with?

To the extremes of this contrast, let me for a moment beg your fixed attention, and what two animals will you think more unlike each other.

At the first view, one can scarce realize the possibility of education forming such opposite characters.

Nothing less than the conviction of our own senses, can reconcile us to the

the difference we find betwixt a truly amiable woman of refined manners and delicate sentiments, and the other extreme of a masculine and vulgar being, whose ideas are neither improved by religion nor politeness.

Would one not be tempted to think them a different species of the same creature?

The best bred gentleman and the awkwardest clown, seem less opposite characters; and yet a very transient consideration will evidently show, that were they to change situations, they would be entirely unfit for their new departments in life, and quite unequal

to the society their change of rank must present them with.

If the gentleman be unable to perform the laborious exercise of the clown, how much more unequal will the clown find himself to the task of filling with credit his new situation; though perhaps in the line he was educated for, he might have lived esteemed and respected by his neighbours.

But in one so opposite, he cannot fail of being ridiculous, and frequently disagreeable; whilst a conscious sense of his own inability of acting with propriety must deprive him of enjoyment.

Is not this a proof of the necessity of early attention, to render ourselves amiable and polite, when we are sensible nothing less will make us agreeable to our friends?

In a good and benevolent heart, we may trace an innate wish to please the worthy part of our species.

And this truly laudable desire creates, though not constitutes, the essence of good breeding. Your own reason and observation must alone inform you, on many occasions, how to act with propriety and politeness.

To cringe, fawn, and be ceremonious, is to be mean and disagreeable,

and would sink you in your own estimation ; a sacrifice which perfect good breeding will not require, and you ought never to stoop to.

But I know no rule that can be laid down to regulate your conduct in this particular, except that grand one of life—to do as we would be done by.

Aim but to please, and you will soon learn the method.

Observe who most generally pleases, and whose manners most wins upon you ; and if their easy respectful behaviour engages the attention of others, make them your copy.

Mark

Mark them, too, who are most disagreeable, and see what in them occasions general disgust or dissatisfaction, and I have no doubt you will find them directly opposite to what engaged your attention, and won your approbation, in the person you may think worthy of imitation.

But in this choice, as you are perhaps too young to judge for yourself, you will do well to observe who is esteemed the politest, and at the same time the most amiable, amongst your companions.

This, and every possible attention to your instructors, is necessary for your improvement.

And I hope your behaviour will be such as may likewise be thought worthy imitation.

On this account, you ought to avoid every disagreeable or vulgar habit, lest you give others cause to reproach you with having taught them what you may be ashamed to own.

For, though good breeding cannot be confined to rules, yet there are trifling things that are universally allowed to offend, against what every one must subscribe to as good manners, they being in themselves disagreeable and disgusting; consequently, opposite to every idea we have formed

ed

ed in our wishes, of your uniting refined manners with rational piety.

Think of this, my dear girl, and thus make yourself the object of our regard, and render happy

Your's, affectionately, &c.

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LETTER XII.  
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SINCE I had last the pleasure of addressing you, my dear Anna, have had very frequent opportunities of seeing the A——'s of M——. They are fine girls; but so outshone by their cousin, who is there on a visit, that they appear to the greatest disadvantage.

You will no doubt be surprised at this, when I tell you she is not so old as the youngest of the A——'s.

They,

They, I think, have the advantage in person; but they are perfect strangers to that innate politeness—that desire to please, which seems rooted in the amiable heart of Sophia, and which has made her the object of general regard.

If the A——’s be requested by their parents or friends to do any trifle, no matter what, there is such a tardiness in their manner, that their unwillingness rather disobligees than pleases the person they mean thus to favour.

But Sophia’s obliging haste adds weight to any little service, and makes us sensible of a much greater obligation

tion than we can feel for a more important service, unwillingly or ungracefully granted.

Her uncle B—— observes the difference, and says he prefers the child that wants not twice asking to oblige you.

The other day we were in their garden, when she begged of her aunt permission to pluck a flower to present me with; which she did in so polite and obliging a manner, that I was truly sensible

“The little rose, that laughs upon its stem,
One of the sweets with which the gardens teem,
In value soars above an eastern gem,
If tender'd as the token of esteem.”

Indeed,

Indeed, this apparent desire to please has rendered her progress in every branch of learning superior to her cousins', and promises fair to make her in future very far excel them.

The A——'s affect a neglect of those little attentions. But how many gratifications must be lost to those who cannot condescend to offer and receive them; by a source which evidently shows a wish to oblige, and ought more particularly to please, as strongly marking a desire to gratify, in those minutiae of attention, which are generally regarded as a pleasing proof of respect, and as such, they add much to our enjoyment.

But

But in this, caution is necessary, to prevent being troublesome.

However, there is no danger of the A——s' ever disobliging this way, as they seem only to regard pleasing themselves; though you know this ought to be the last gratification they should think of when in company.

Their youth, indeed, may plead their apology in many instances; but it is much to their discredit, to be either ignorant or negligent in observing such things as follow.

They in common are inattentive to the person speaking to them, which is a fault not readily excused, as it argues an unbecoming carelessness
or

or contempt of the person addressing them.

To contradict, is perhaps still more rude and offensive; yet they do it when unnecessary, though they ought never to be guilty of this rudeness, if to be avoided; and if not, they should show they mean not to displease, by speaking less abrupt than they usually do.

But they even forget themselves so far, as to interrupt any person speaking; though one cannot suppose them ignorant, how very disgusting it must be to the company, who must naturally think them not only conspicuously rude, but that they in all probability

bability deprive them of part of their conversation, which loss they are not qualified to make good. And such an unexpected interruption frequently turns the current of discourse into a less agreeable channel; and the party they are thus troublesome to, may never have an opportunity of resuming the subject.

You cannot, I imagine, think it possible for them to be so extremely vulgar as to whisper in company.

This is a rudeness for which no apology is sufficient, and which one might expect they would never be guilty of, except they wished to disoblige every one present.

But

But we never see Sophia thus disoblige the company; nor does she follow their example in looking into the garden, street, or any other way, when she is addressing you: though her cousins frequently offend the person they are speaking to, by this very ungenteel habit; yet in this they perhaps offend but one, though they display their ill manners to all who observe them; but whispering in company may be deemed an insult to every one present.

In eating, they are not only vulgar, but troublesome to their friends: one of them, by being uncommonly slow, and the other, by eating with that de-

gree of quickness, which may with justice be styled devouring. Each of these extremes appears unthankful, consequently disagreeable.

With minds thus uncultivated, can we wonder to see that contemptible, silly vanity, which makes them pride themselves upon exterior advantages? "There are some mean souls that are always crouching and grovelling before riches." Yet of this sort I cannot think the A——'s; but my Anna, the garden of the mind must be well cultivated, or the light weeds of vanity will take root. I must add, they have good natural abilities, and not bad dispositions upon the whole;

whole; yet has their vanity so far got the ascendancy over their reason, that they think themselves superior to any of their companions, whose friends do not keep a carriage.

But of this empty folly they would be ashamed, were they to consider that few are guilty of this false pride, who from birth or family have had any right to expect to be the favourites of fortune.

Dress, too, is frequently a subject for their idle vanity to dwell upon. This I hope you, my dear Anna, will guard against.

The most studied dress, must be the most offensive in the eye of Heaven.

Therefore less of your time is taken up in this article (beyond what is absolutely necessary) and less the danger of your making a false estimation of any external advantage; for

“It is neither birth nor riches that distinguish men: the only real and true superiority among them is merit.”

In this, then, aim at superiority, and be assured the worthy part of mankind will with pleasure assent to your advancement.

This is the only true greatness, and not any accidental difference of fortune.

Remember,

Remember, the attainment of virtue is the grand treasure worthy your pursuit. - And the riches of the mind are far more valuable, and yield more happiness, than those of the mine.

“ Behold the vain man, and observe the arrogant; he clotheth himself in rich attire; he walketh in the public street; he casteth round his eyes, and courteth observation.

“ He tosseth up his head, and overlooketh the poor; he treateth his inferiors with insolence, and his superiors in return look down on his pride and folly with laughter.

“ But

“But if the rich man rejoice in his wealth, the poor man is thankful, and with reason, for

“He limiteth his desires with humility; and the calm of contentment is sweeter to his soul, than the acquirements of wealth and grandeur.

“Let not the rich presume on his riches, nor the poor despond in his poverty; for the providence of God dispenseth happiness to them both; and the distribution thereof is more equally made than the fool can believe.”

— Hasten then, my dear Anna, to secure the blossoms of instruction, which now blow around you, and suffer them not to wither, nipped by the frost of neglect;

neglect: their fruits are the fruits of virtue and conscious worth.

Various accidents in life may deprive you of riches, or want of health may rob you of their enjoyment. But virtue and innocence lead to the paths of happiness, and are ever attended by self-approbation.

With these companions, and a well cultivated mind, may we not hope you will taste true felicity, and that contentment which may justly be called happiness below.

“To pomp or proud titles she ne’er did aspire;
The damsel’s of humble descent:
The cottager Peace is well known for her fire,
And shepherds have nam’d her Content.”

That

That these tranquil paths may be
destined for my Anna to walk in, is
the sincere wish of

Your's affectionately, &c.

LETTER

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LETTER XIII.  
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MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

MY mind is deeply impressed with a desire to guard you from the pernicious consequences resulting from reading improper books.

In reading those recommended by your friends, you will certainly find more safety than in depending upon your own judgment in the choice, or in trusting to the approbation of others who may not perhaps be particular in respect to the morals they convey.

But

But I beg you keep to those pointed out by such of your acquaintance as you know with your mind to remain pure and untainted, and look upon books which have not their sanction, as at best an uncertain good, but which may prove the worst companions, tending to weaken those moral virtues and religious principles, which are the best foundation for your present and future happiness.

Not that we see every person happy who may possess and practise with sincerity the most exalted piety; no, my dear girl, we must not imagine any thing so contrary to our reason and observation; but we may rest assured

assured the virtuous have a satisfaction superior to their affliction, and are many times thankful for the effects produced by their sorrows; being enabled to view with firmer eye the eternal blessings frequently and truly depicted by the lively faith and humble hope of a sincere Christian.

“Faith builds a bridge from this world to the next.” At the foot of this bridge how many authors have made a pause, and, repenting, owned their heart-felt conviction of the harm they thought might result from their writings.

What misused abilities have mourned out their anguish on the subject of

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dis-

diffeminated evil! Ought we not, then, to fly from a source that has to the authors themselves been so painful?

Who can refine the pure spring of an innocent mind, when tainted by immoral writings.

Books are our companions; and we should be as careful not to keep bad company in private, as in public; and always to fly from them as from certain destruction, as an address to the eye or the ear from the living or the dead may be equally dangerous.

I was once much shocked at what I was obliged to hear repeated by one whose exterior appearance seemed to
promise

promise more delicate sentiments. How many beautiful pieces might have been placed in her memory! Surely a retentive memory is a great blessing; never let us abuse this gift of Heaven, by placing there any thing we may blush to own to any human being. The mind is the jewel, the body only the clay casket that contains it: and may it be your care to keep this treasure so highly polished, that it may shine with angelic lustre, “when the hand that now writes, and the eye which now reads,” shall moulder in the dust; or, in the language of Scripture, “when we shall sleep with our fathers.”

May we ever keep that period in view, and may we be wiser and better for the prospect.

Your's, affectionately, &c.

LETTER

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LETTER XIV.  
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I HAVE already informed my ever dear Anna, how anxious we are for her improvement, well knowing, not only the figure she is to make in life, but her future happiness, in a great measure, depends upon the present cultivation of her mind and manners.

“ Horace, a celebrated Roman poet, relates, that a countryman, who wanted to pass a river, stood

loitering on the banks of it, in the foolish expectation, that a current, so rapid, would soon discharge its waters. But the stream still flowed, increased, perhaps, by fresh torrents from the mountains; and it must for ever flow, because the sources from which it is derived are inexhaustible.

“ Thus the idle and irresolute trifle over their books, or waste in play their precious moments; deferring the task of improvement, which at first is easy to be accomplished, but which will become more and more difficult, the longer it be neglected.”

But

But we are happy in the idea of your meriting at present a very different character; and hope you will not, either by idleness or irresolution, follow the example here given by Horace.

Truth and sincerity cannot be too earnestly recommended: they are the grand basis for refined manners and rational piety.

While a firm reliance on that Almighty Power, who has blessed you with life and immortality, will free you from various inquietudes—leave you at liberty to enjoy every innocent pleasure, and warn you to avoid every

every guilty one, as destructive to your peace.

But you know no attainment in virtue—no improvement, either mental or personal, can be hoped for, without attention; and as it is in your power to command this essential quality, the want of it must appear criminal, when it has its foundation in ingratitude.

This weed of barren soil—this base passion banish from your breast—let gratitude ever be the inmate of your heart. Forget not to pay this tribute to Heaven, and there will be little danger of your omitting this duty, to
those

those who have, by their services, a just claim upon a worthy mind.

“ Artabanes was distinguished with peculiar favour, by a wife, powerful, and good prince. A magnificent palace, surrounded with a delightful garden, was provided for his residence. He partook of all the luxuries of his sovereign’s table, was invested with extensive authority, and admitted to the honour of a free intercourse with his gracious master. But Artabanes was insensible of the advantages which he enjoyed; his heart glowed not with gratitude and respect; he avoided the society of his benefactor, and abused his bounty.

“ I detest

“ I detest such a character, said Alexis, with generous indignation! It is your own picture which I have drawn, replied Euphronius. The great potentate of heaven and earth has placed you in a world, which displays the highest beauty, order, and magnificence, and which abounds with every means of convenience, enjoyment, and happiness. He has furnished you with such powers of body and mind, as give you dominion over the fishes of the sea, the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field: and he has invited you to hold communion with him, and to exalt your own nature, by the love and imitation of
his

his divine perfections. Yet have your eyes wandered, with brutal gaze, over the fair creation, unconscious of the mighty hand from which it sprung. You have rioted in the profusion of nature, without one secret emotion of gratitude to the sovereign dispenser of all good: and you have slighted the glorious converse, and forgotten the presence of that Omnipotent Being, who fills all space, and exists through all eternity."

Percival's Moral Tales.

That you may not be guilty of this neglect of the gifts of Providence, their beauties, their wonders, and their benefits

nefits have been pointed out to your observation, as the source of the most pleasing amusement and highest mental satisfaction.

The contemplation of the vegetable kingdom—the examples worthy our imitation in the animal race, with the surprising appearance of reason to be traced in many of their actions, are all observations calculated to enlarge your ideas, refine your heart, and to direct both to the great fountain of eternal happiness.

You, my dear Anna, have been most earnestly entreated to remember, nothing should tempt you to sacrifice so great a treasure as self-approbation;
without

without which, there can be no felicity.

That the great aim of your conduct ought to be, to shun the meanness of dissimulation, and fly from the baseness of hypocrisy.

To spare from the bounty of your friends a trifle for the poor; to remember their wants, and that with compassion and tenderness it is our duty to relieve them.

As a proof of the necessity of early attention to your improvements, the grand contrast which education forms, has been offered to your consideration; while those rudenesses, which we trace in neglected and unculti-

vated minds, have been noticed in their common consequences, of being not only troublesome, but disgusting.

The grand treasure recommended as most worthy your pursuit, is virtue; and the riches of the mind, more valuable than those of the mine.

Thus, my dear girl, have I endeavoured to refresh your memory, in respect to the subjects of my letters. Accept my sincere wish, that they may answer the design with which they were wrote, by leading you to a consideration of that Almighty Being, who formed the universe, and whose

whose goodness has blessed you with the powers of reason and reflection, to contemplate these his lower works.

Why should the profusion of Heaven make us insensible to its bounty, or ungrateful for its blessings.

I have frequently thought, could all these scenes, which lavish Nature pours upon our senses—at once rush upon our sight—never beheld before—and could this be when the powers of reason and reflection were mature, how should we be lost in admiration and astonishment; whilst every faculty of the soul would be engaged in contemplation, gratitude, and praise.

“ But

"But wand'ring oft, with brute unconscious gaze,
Man marks not thee; marks not the mighty hand
That, ever busy, wheels the silent spheres;
Works in the secret deep; shoots steaming, thence,
The fair profusion that o'erspreads the spring;
Flings from the sun direct the flaming day;
Feeds ev'ry creature; hurls the tempest forth;
And, as on earth this grateful change revolves,
With transport touches all the springs of life."

Adieu, my dear Anna,

Your's affectionately, &c.

THE END.

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