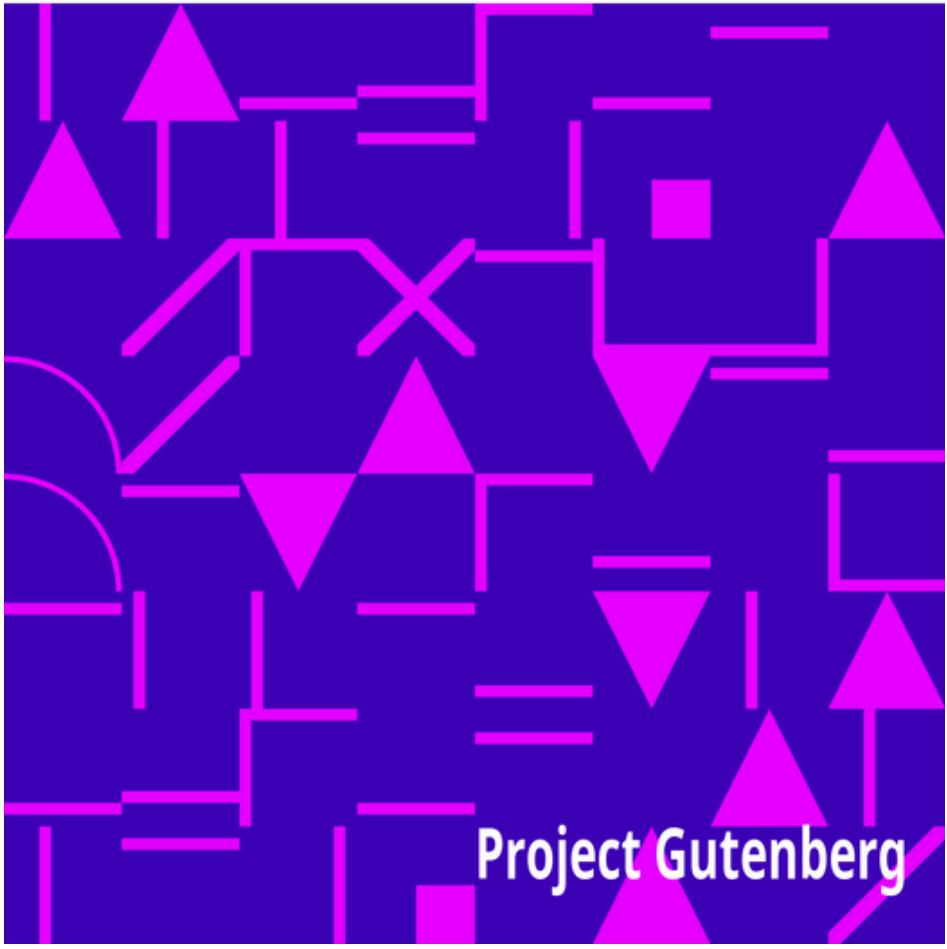
Barford Abbey, a Novel: In a Series of Letters

Mrs. Gunning



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BARFORD ABBEY,

A NOVEL:

IN A

SERIES of LETTERS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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MDCCLXVIII.

LETTER I.

Lady MARY SUTTON, at the German Spaw, to Miss WARLEY, in England.

How distressing, how heart-rending, is my dear Fanny's mournful detail!—It lies before me; I weep over it!—I weep not for the departed saint: no; it is for you, myself, for all who have experienced her god-like virtues!—Was she not an honour to her sex? Did she not merit rewards too great for this world to bestow?—Could the world repay her innocence, her piety, her resignation? Wipe away, my best love, the mark of sorrow from your cheek. Perhaps she may be permitted to look down: if so, will she smile on those that grieve at her entering into the fullness of joy?—Here a sudden death cannot be called dreadful. A life like hers wanted not the admonitions of a sick-bed;—her bosom accounts always clear, always ready for inspection, day by day were they held up to the throne of mercy.—Apply those beautiful lines in the Spectator to her; lines you have so often admir'd.—How silent thy passage; how private thy journey; how glorious thy end! Many have I known more famous, some more knowing, not one so innocent.—Hope is a noble support to the drooping head of sorrow.—Though a deceiver, court her, I counsel you;—she leads to happiness;—we shall bless her deceptions:—baffling our enjoyments here, she teaches us to look up where every thing is permanent, even bliss most exquisite.

Mr. Whitmore you never knew, otherwise would have wonder'd how his amiable wife loiter'd so long behind.—Often she has wish'd to be reunited to him, but ever avoided the subject in your presence.

Keep not from me her rich bequest:—*rich* indeed,—her most valuable treasure.—That I could fold you to my arms!—But hear me at a distance;—hear me call you my beloved daughter,—and suppose what my transports will be when I embrace an only child:—yes, you are mine, till I deliver you up to a superior affection.

Lay aside, I conjure you, your fears of crossing the sea.—Mr. and Mrs. Smith intend spending part of this winter at Montpelier: trust yourself with them; I shall be there to receive you at the Hôtel de Spence.

The season for the Spaw is almost at an end. My physicians forbid my return to England till next autumn, else I would fly to comfort,—to console my dearest Fanny,—We shall be happy together in France:—I can love you the same in all places.

My banker has orders to remit you three hundred pounds;—but your power is unlimited; it is impossible to say, my dear, how much I am in your debt.—I have wrote my housekeeper to get every thing ready for your reception:—consider her, and all my other servants, as your own.—I shall be much disappointed if you do not move to the Lodge immediately.—You shall not,—must not,—continue in a house where every thing in and about it reminds you of so great a loss.—Miss West, Miss Gardner, Miss Conway, will, at my request, accompany you thither.—The Menagerie,—plantations, and other places of amusement, will naturally draw them out;—you will follow mechanically, and by that means be kept from indulging melancholy.—Go an-airing every day, unless you intend I shall find my horses unfit for service:—why have you let them live so long idle?

I revere honest Jenkings—he is faithful,—he will assist you with his advice on all occasions.—Can there be a better resource to fly to, than a heart governed by principles of honour and humanity?

Write, my dear, to Mrs. Smith, and let me know if the time is fixed for their coming over.—Say you will comply with the request my heart is so much set on;—say you will be one of the party.

My health and spirits are better:—the latter I support for your sake;—who else do I live for?—Endeavour to do the same, not only for me, but *others*, that one day will be as dear to you as you are to

Your truly affectionate,

M. SUTTON.

LETTER II.

Miss WARLEY to Lady MARY SUTTON.

Barford Abbey.

BARFORD ABBEY! *Yes*, my dearest Lady,—I date from Barford Abbey: a house I little thought ever to have seen, when I have listened hours to a description of it from Mr. Jenkings.—What are houses,—what palaces, in competition with *that* honour, *that* satisfaction, I received by your Ladyship's last letter!—The honour all must acknowledge;—the satisfaction is not on the surface,—*it centers in the heart*.—I feel too much to express any thing.—One moment an orphan; next the adopted child of Lady Mary Sutton.—What are titles, except ennobled by virtue! *That* only makes a coronet fit graceful on the head;—*that* only is the true ornament of greatness.

Pardon my disobedience.—Can there be a stronger command than your request?—But, my Lady, I must have died,—my life *must* have been the sacrifice, had I gone to the Lodge.—The windows opposite, the windows of that little mansion where I spent nineteen happy years with my angelic benefactress,—could it be borne?—Your Ladyship's absence too;—what an aggravation;—The young ladies you kindly propose for my companions, though very amiable, could not have shut my eyes, or deaden'd my other senses.

Now let me account for being at Barford Abbey.—Was Mr. Jenkings my father, I think I could not love him more; yet when he press'd me to return with him to Hampshire, I was doubtful whether to consent, till your Ladyship's approbation of him was confirmed in so particular a manner.—His son an only one;—the fine fortune he must possess;—these were objections not only of *mine*, but, I believe, of my dear, dear—

Oh! my Lady, I cannot yet write her name.—Often has she check'd Mr. Jenkings, when he has solicited to take me home with him:—her very looks spoke she had something to fear from such a visit.—She loved me;—the dear angel loved me with maternal affection, but her partiality never took place of noble, generous sentiments.—Young people, she has frequently said, are, by a strict intimacy, endeared to each other. This, I doubt not, was her motive for keeping me at a distance.—She well knew my poor expectations were ill suited to his large ones.—I know what was her opinion, and will steadily adhere to it.

Edmund, to do him common justice, is a desirable youth:—such a one as I can admire his good qualities, without another with than to imitate them.—Monday, the tenth, I took my leave of Hillford Down, and, after a melancholy journey, arrived Tuesday evening at Mr. Jenkings's.—Nothing did I enjoy on the road;—in spight of my endeavours, tears stream'd from my eyes incessantly;—even the fine prospects that courted attention, pass'd unnotic'd.—My good conductor strove to draw me off from gloomy subjects, but in vain, till we came within a few miles of his house; then of a sudden I felt a serenity, which, for some time, has been a stranger to my breast;—a serenity I cannot account for.

Mrs. Jenkings!—never shall I forget her humanity. She flew to the chaise the instant it stopp'd, receiv'd me with open arms, and conducted me to the parlour, pouring out ten thousand welcomes, intermingled with fond embraces.—She is, I perceive, one of those worthy creatures, who make it a point to consider their husbands friends as their own; in my opinion, the highest mark of conjugal happiness.

Plac'd in a great chair next the fire, every one was busied in something or other for my refreshment.—One soul,—one voice,—one manner, to be seen in the father,—mother,—son:—they look not on each other but with a smile of secret satisfaction. *To me* their hearts speak the same expressive language;—their house,—their dress,—their words, plainly elegant.—Envy never stops at such a dwelling;—nothing there is fit for

her service:—no pomp,—no grandeur,—no ostentation.—I slept sweetly the whole night;—sweetly!—not one disagreeable idea intruded on my slumbers.

Coming down in the morning, I found breakfast on the table, linen white as snow, a large fire,—every thing that speaks cleanliness, content, and plenty.—The first thing in a house which attracts my notice is the fire;—I conclude from that, if the hearts of the inhabitants are warm or cold.—Our conversation was interesting;—it might have lasted, for aught I know, till dinner, had it not been interrupted by the entrance of Sir James and Lady Powis.—I knew Mr. Jenkings was their steward, but never expected they came to his house with such easy freedom.—We arose as they entered:—I was surprised to see Mr. and Mrs. Jenkings appear confused;—in my opinion, their visitors accosted them more like *equals* than *dependants*.

Your Ladyship cannot imagine how greatly I was prepossessed in their favour even before they spoke.—In their manner was something that struck me excessively;—few—very few—can express the nameless beauties of grace,—never to be seen but in a carriage sweetly humble.

Lady Powis seated herself opposite to me.—We called, said she, addressing Mr. Jenkings, to inquire what was become of you, fearing your Oxfordshire friends had stolen you from us;—but you have made up for your long absence, if this is the young lady, bowing to me, your wife told us was to return with you.—A politeness so unexpected,—so deliver'd,—visibly affected me:—I sat silent, listening for the reply Mr. Jenkings would make.

Pardon me, my Lady! pardon me, Miss Warley! said the good man,—I am a stranger to punctilio;—I see my error:—I should have acquainted your Ladyship before with the name of this dear young Lady; I should have said she is an honour to her friends.—Need I tell Miss Warley, Sir James and Lady Powis are present:—I hope the deportment of their *servant* has confirmed it;—I hope it has.

Sir James kindly took his hand, and, turning to me, said, Don't believe him, Madam, he is not our servant;—he has been our *friend* forty years; we flatter ourselves he deems not *that* servitude.

Not your *servant!*—not your *dependant!*—not your *servant*, Sir James!—and was running on when her Ladyship interrupted him.

Don't make me angry, Jenkings;—don't pain me;—hear the favour I have to ask, and be my advocate:—it is with Miss Warley I want you to be my advocate.—Then addressing herself to me, Will you, Madam, give me the pleasure of your company often at the Abbey?—I mean, will you come there as if it was your home?—Mr. and Mrs. Jenkings have comforts, I have not,—at least that I can enjoy.—Here she sigh'd deeply;—so deep, that I declare it pierced through my heart;—I felt as if turn'd into stone;—what I suppose I was a true emblem of.—The silent friends that trickled down my cheeks brought me back from that inanimate state,—and I found myself in the embraces of Lady Powis, tenderly affectionate, as when in the arms of Mrs. Whitmore.—Judge not, Madam, said I, from my present stupidity, that I am so wanting in my head or heart, to be insensible of this undeserv'd goodness.—With Mr. and Mrs. Jenkings's permission, I am devoted to your Ladyship's service.—*Our* approbation! Miss Warley, return'd the former;—*yes, that* you have:—her Ladyship cannot conceive how happy she has made us.—Sir James seconded his Lady with a warmth perfectly condescending:—no excuse would be taken; I must spend the next day at the Abbey; their coach was to attend me.

Our amiable guests did not move till summoned by the dinner-bell, which is plainly to be heard there.—I thought I should have shed tears to see them going.—I long'd to walk part of the way, but was afraid to propose it, lest I should appear presumptuous.—Her Ladyship perceiv'd my inclinations,—look'd delighted,—and requested my company; on which Mr. Jenkings offer'd his service to escort me back.

How was I surpris'd at ascending the hill!—My feet seem'd leading me to the first garden—the sweet abode of innocence!—Ten thousand beauties broke on my sight;—ten thousand pleasures, before unknown, danced through my heart.—Behold me on the summit;—behold me full of surprise,—full of admiration!—How enchanting the park! how clear the river that winds through it!—What taste,—what elegance, in the plantations!—How charmingly are Nature's beauties rang'd by art!—The trees,—the shrubs,—the flowers,—hold up their heads, as if proud of the spot they grow on!—Then the noble old structure,—the magnificent mansion of this ancient family, how does it fire the beholder with veneration and delight! The very walls seem'd to speak; at least there was something that inform'd *me*, native dignity, and virtues hereditary, dwelt within them.

The sight of a chaise and four, standing at the entrance, hurried me from the charming pair of this paradise, after many good days ecchoed to me, and thanks respectful return'd them by the same messenger.

Mr. Jenkings, in our return, entertain'd me with an account of the family for a century past. A few foibles excepted in the character of Sir James, I find he possesses all the good qualities of his ancestors. Nothing could be more pleasing than the encomiums bestow'd on Lady Powis; but she is not exempt from trouble: the *good* and the *bad* the *great* and the *little*, at some time or other, feel Misfortune's touch. Happy such a rod hangs over us! Were we to glide on smoothly, our affections would be fixed here, and here only.

I could love Lady Powis with a warmth not to be express'd;—but—forgive me, my dear lady—I pine to know why *your* intimacy was interrupted.—Of *Lady Mary's* steadiness and integrity I am convinc'd;—of *Lady Powis* I have had only a transitory view.—Heaven forbid she should be like such people as from my heart I despise, whose regards are agueish! Appearances promise the reverse;—but what is appearance? For the generality a mere cheat, a gaudy curtain.

Pardon me, dear Lady Powis—I am distress'd,—I am perplex'd; but I do not think ill of you;—indeed I cannot,—unless I find—*No*, I cannot find it neither;—something tells me *Lady Mary*, my dear honour'd Lady Mary, will acquit you.

We were receiv'd by Mrs. Jenkings, at our return, with a chearful countenance, and conducted to the dining-parlour, where, during our comfortable, meal, nothing was talk'd of but Sir James and Lady Powis:—the kind notice taken of your Fanny mentioned with transport.

Thus honour'd,—thus belov'd,—dare I repine?—Why look on past enjoyments with such a wistful eye!—Mrs. Whitmore, my dear maternal Mrs. Whitmore, cannot be recall'd!—Strange perversenss!—why let that which would give me pleasure fleet away!—why pursue that which I cannot overtake!—No gratitude to heaven!—Gratitude to you, my dearest Lady, shall conquer this perverseness;—even now my heart overflows like a swoln river.

Good night, good night, dear Madam; I am going to repose on the very bed where, for many years, rested the most deserving of men!—The housekeeper has been relating many of his virtues;—so many, that I long to see him, *though only in a dream*.

Was it not before Mr. Powis went abroad, that your ladyship visited at the Abbey?—Yet, if so, I think I should have heard you mention him.—Merit like his could never pass unnotic'd in a breast so similar—Here I drop my pen, lest I grow impertinent.—Once again, good night,—my more than parent:—to-morrow, at an early hour, I will begin the recital to your Ladyship of this day's transactions—I go to implore every blessing on your head, the only return that can be offer'd by

F. WARLEY.

LETTER III.

Miss WARLEY to Lady MARY SUTTON, in continuation.

Barford Abbey.

I think I have told your Ladyship, I was to be honour'd with the coach to convey me to the Abbey.—About half an hour after one it arriv'd, when a card was deliver'd me from Lady Powis, to desire my friends would not be uneasy, if I did not return early in the evening, as she hop'd for an agreeable party at whist, Lord Darcey being at the Abbey.

Mrs. Jenkings informed me, his Lordship was a ward of Sir James's just of age;—his estate genteel, not large;—his education liberal,—his person fine,—his temper remarkably good.—Sir James, said she, is for ever preaching lessons to him, that he must marry *prudently*;—which is, that he must never marry without an immense fortune.—Ah! Miss Warley, this same love of money has serv'd to make poor Lady Powis very unhappy. Sir James's greatest fault is covetousness;—but who is without fault?—Lord Darcey was a lovely youth, continued she, when he went abroad; I long to see if he is alter'd by travelling.—Edmund and his Lordship were school-fellows:—how my son will be overjoy'd to hear he is at the Abbey!—I detain you, Miss Warley, or could talk for ever of Lord Darcey! Do go, my dear, the family will expect you.—Promise, said I, taking her hand,—*promise* you will not sit up late on my account.—She answer'd nothing, but pressing me to her bosom, seem'd to tell me her heart was full of affection.

The old coachman, as we drove up the lawn, eyed me attentively, saying to the footman, *It will be so, John, you may depend upon it*.—John answer'd only by a shrug.—What either meant, I shall not pretend to divine.—As I came near the house, I met Mr. Jenkings almost out of

breath, and, pulling the string, he came to the coach-side. I was hurrying home, my dear young Lady, said he, to—to—to—Now faith I'm afraid you'll be angry.

Angry with you, Sir!—angry with you, Mr. Jenkings!—is it possible!

Then, to be plain, Madam, I was hurrying home, to request you would wear no cap.—Never shall I forget how pretty you look'd, when I saw you without one!—Of all things, I would *this day* wish you might look your best.

To satisfy him I had taken some little pains in honour to the family, I let back the hood of my cloke.—He examin'd the manner in which my hair was dress'd, and smiled his approbation;—which *smile*, though only seen in the eyes, was more expressive than a contraction of all the other features.—Wishing me a happy day, he bid the coachman drive on.

Coming within sight of the Abbey, my heart beat as if breaking from confinement.—I was oblig'd to call it to a severe trial,—to ask, Why this insurrection,—whence these tumults?—My monitor reply'd, Beware of self-sufficiency,—beware of its mortifying consequences.—

How seasonable this warning against the worst of foes!—a foe which I too much fear was stealing on me imperceptibly,—else why did I not before feel those sensations?—Could I receive greater honour than has been conferr'd on me by the noblest mind on earth!—by *Lady Mary?*—Could I behold greater splendor than *Lady Mary* is possess'd of!—What affection in another can I ever hope for like *Lady Mary's!*—Thus was I arguing with myself, when the coach-door open'd, and a servant conducted me to the drawing-room,—where, I was receiv'd by Sir James and Lady Powis with an air of polite tenderness;—a kind of unreserve, that not only supports the timid mind, but dignifies every word,—every action,—and gives to education and address their highest polish.

Lord Darcey was sitting in the window, a book in his hand;—he came forward as Sir James introduc'd me, who said, *Now*, my Lord, the company of *this* young Lady will make your Lordship's time pass more

agreeably, than it could have done in the conversation of two old people.—My spirits were flutter'd; I really don't recollect his reply; only that it shew'd him master of the great art, to make every one pleas'd with themselves.

Shall I tell you, my dear Lady, what are my thoughts of *this* Lord Darcey?—To confess then, though his person is amazingly elegant, his manners are still more engaging.—This I look upon to be the natural consequence of a mind illumin'd with uncommon understanding, sweetness, and refinement.

A short time before dinner the chaplain made his appearance,—a venerable old man, with hair white as snow:—what renders his figure to be completely venerated, is the loss of sight.—Her Ladyship rising from her seat, led me towards him: Mr. Watson, said she, I am going to introduce a lady whose *brightest charms* will soon be visible to you.—The best man in the world! whisper'd she, putting my hand in his;—which hand I could not avoid putting to my lips.—*Thank* you, Miss Warley, said her Ladyship, *we all* revere this gentleman.—Mr. Watson was affected, some drops stole from their dark prisons, and he bless'd me as if I had been his daughter:—my pleasure was exquisite,—it seem'd as if I had receiv'd the benediction of an angel.

Our subjects turn'd more on the celestial than the terrestrial, till dinner was serv'd up,—when I found that good *knight* which has been so long banish'd to the side-board, replac'd in his original station.

How different *this table* from many others! where genteel sprightly conversations are shut out; *where* such as cannot feast their senses on the genius of a *cook*, must rise unsatisfied.

A similitude of manners between your *Ladyship* and *Lady Powis*, particularly in doing the honours of the table, struck me so much, that I once or twice call'd her *Lady Mary*.—Pray, Miss Warley, ask'd she, who is this Lady Mary?

What could occasion her confusion!—what could occasion the confusion of Sir James!—Never did I see any thing equal it, when I said it was Lady Mary Sutton!—The significant looks that were interchang'd, spoke some mystery;—a mystery it would be presumption in me to dive after. Her Ladyship made no reply,—Sir James was eager to vary the subject,—and the conversation became general.

Though autumn is far advanc'd, every thing here wears the face of spring.—The afternoon being remarkably fine Lady Powis, Lord Darcey, and myself, strolled out amongst the sweets.—We walk'd a considerable time; his Lordship was all gaiety, talk'd with raptures of the improvements; declar'd every thing he had seen abroad fell short of this delightful spot; and *now*, my dear Lady Powis, added he, with an air of gallantry, I can see *nothing* wanting.

Nothing wanting! return'd her Ladyship, sighing:—Ah! my Lord, *you* are not a parent!—you feel nothing of a parent's woe!—*you* do not hourly regret the absence of a beloved and only son! Don't look serious, my dear Lord, seeing him somewhat abash'd, you have hitherto tenderly loved me.—Perhaps I had a mind to augment your affection, by bringing to your recollection I was not happy.—His Lordship made no reply, but, taking her hand, lifted it respectfully to his lips.

Mr. Jenkings is this moment coming up the lawn. I see him from window;—excuse me, my dear Lady, whilst I step to ask him how he does.

I have been accounting to Mr. Jenkings for not coming home last night. Good man! every mark of favour I receive, enlightens *his countenance*.—The reasons I have given him, I shall now proceed to give your Ladyship.

I said we were walking;—I have said the conversation was interesting;—but I have not said it was interrupted by Sir James and Mr. Watson, who join'd us just as Lord Darcey had quitted the hand of Lady Powis.—A visit was propos'd to the Dairy-house, which is about a mile from the Abbey.—In our way thither, I was full of curiosity, full of inquiries about

the neighbourhood, and whose seats *such* and *such* were, that enrich'd adjacent hills?—The neighbourhood, reply'd her Ladyship, is in general polite and hospitable.—*Yes*, said Sir James, and more smart young men, *Miss Warley*, than are to be met with in *every* county.—Yonder, continued he, live Mr. and Mrs. Finch,—very rich,—very prudent, and very worthy;—they have one son, a discreet lad, who seems to promise he will inherit their good qualities.

That which you see so surrounded with woods, is Sir Thomas Slater's, a *batchelor* of fifty-five; and, let me tell you, fair Lady, the pursuit of *every* girl in the neighbourhood;—his estate a clear nine thousand a-year, and —Hold, hold, interrupted Lord Darcey, in compassion to *us* young fellows, say no more of this *redoubtable* batchelor.

Well then, continued Sir James, since my Lord *will* have it so,—let me draw your eye, Miss Warley, from Sir Thomas Slater's, and fix it on Lord Allen's: Observe the situation!—Nothing can be more beautiful, the mind of its owner excepted.

That house on the left is Mr. Winter's.—Chance!—*Strange chance!*—has just put him in possession of an immense fortune, with which he is going to purchase a *coronet* for his daughter.—The fellow does not know what to do with his *money*, and has at last found an *ape* of quality, that will take *it* off his hands.

In this manner was Sir James characterising his neighbours, when a sudden and violent storm descended.—Half a mile from the *Dairy-house*, the rain fell in such torrents, that we were wet through, before a friendly oak offer'd us its shelter.—Never shall I forget my own or Lord Darcey's figure: he stripp'd himself of his coat, and would have thrown it over Lady Powis. Her Ladyship absolutely refusing it, her cloak being thick, mine the reverse, he forc'd it upon me. Sir James a assisting to put my arms into the sleeves.—Nor was I yet enough of the amazon:—they even compell'd me to exchange my hat for his, lapping it, about my ears. —What a strange *metamorphose!*—I cannot think of it without laughing! —To complete the scene, no exchange could be made, till we reach'd the

Abbey.—In this droll situation, we waited for the coach; and getting, in, streaming from head to toe, it more resembled a bathing machine, than any other vehicle.

A gentleman, who, after a chace of ten hours, had taken shelter under the roof of Sir James, was, at our return, stamping up and down, the vestibule, disappointed both in his sport and dinner, shew'd an aspect cloudy as the heavens.—My mortification was scarce supportable, when I heard him roar out, in a voice like thunder, *What the devil have we here?*—I sprang to the top of the stairs in a moment,—there stopp'd to fetch breath; and again the same person, who had so genteelly accosted me, said to Lord Darcey,—*Great* improvements, upon my soul!—*You* are return'd a mighty pretty *Miss*.—What, is *this* the newest dress at Turin? —I heard no more; her Ladyship's woman came and shew'd me to an apartment,—bringing from her Lady's wardrobe a chints négligée, and a suit of flower'd muslin; in which I was soon equipp'd.

Lady Powis sent to desire I would come to her dressing room; and, embracing me as I entered, said, with, an air of charming freedom, If you are not hurt, my dear, by our little excursion, I shall be quite in spirits this evening.

I am only hurt by your Ladyship's goodness. Indeed, return'd she, I have not a close heart, but no one ever found so quick a passage to it as yourself.—Oh! Lady Mary, *this* is surely a *heart* like yours!—A *heart* like Mrs. Whitmore's!—Was you not surpris'd, *my dear*, continued her Ladyship, to be so accosted by the gentleman below?—Take no notice of what is said by Mr. Morgan.—that is his name;—he means well, and never goes into any person's house, but where his oddities are indulg'd. —I am particularly civil to him; he was an old school-fellow of Sir James's, one whose purse was always open to him.—Sir James, Miss Warley, was rather addicted to extravagance in the beginning of his life; —*that*, in some respects, is revers'd latterly.—I have been a sufferer,—yet

is he a tender generous husband. One day you shall know more.—I *had* a son, Miss Warley—Here Sir James interrupted her.—I come to tell you, said he, that Lord Darcey and myself are impatient for our tea.

O fie! Sir James, return'd Lady Powis, talk of impatience before an unmarried Lady!—If you go on at this rate, you will frighten her from any connection with your sex.—Not at all,—not at all, said Sir James; you take us for better for worse.—See there, Miss Warley smiles.—I warrant she does not think my *impatience* unseasonable.—I was going to reply, but effectually stopped by her Ladyship, who said, taking my hand, Come, my dear, let us go down.—I am fond of finding excuses for Sir James; we will suppose it was not he who was impatient:—we will suppose the *impatience* to be Lord Darcey's.

Whilst regaling ourselves at the tea table, Mr. Morgan was in the dining-parlour, brightening up his features by the assitance of the cook and butler.—We were congratulating each other on the difference of our present and late situation, declaring there was nothing to regret, when Mr. Morgan enter'd.—Regret! cry'd he,—what do you regret?—Not, I hope, that I have made a good dinner on a cold sirloin and pickled oysters?—Indeed I do, said Lady Powis:—Had I thought you so poor a caterer, I should have taken the office on myself.—Faith then, reply'd he, you might have eat it yourself:—Forty years, my good Lady, I have made this house my home, and did I ever suffer you to direct *what*, or *when*, I should eat?—

Sir James laugh'd aloud; so did her Ladyship:—I was inclin'd to do the same,—but afraid what next he would say;—However, this caution did not screen me from particular notice.

What the duce have I here! said he, taking one of my hands,—a snow-ball by the colour, and feeling? and down he dropp'd it by the side of Lord Darcey's, which rested on the table.

I was never more confounded.

You are not angry, my pretty Lady, continued he:—we shall know one another better;—but if you displease me,—I shall thunder.—I keep all in subjection, except the *muleish kind*, making a low bow to Sir James. Saying this, he went in pursuit of Mr. Watson.—They soon re-enter'd together; a card-table was produc'd; and we sat down at it, whilst they solac'd themselves by a good fire.

My attention was frequently taken from the cards, to observe how it was possible such opposites as Mr. Watson and Mr. Morgan cou'd be entertain'd by one another's conversation.—Never saw I any two seemingly more happy!—The chearfulness of the former augmented;—the voice of the latter at least three notes lower.—This has been since explain'd to me by Lady Powis.—Mr. Morgan, she says, notwithstanding his rough appearance, is of a nature so compassionate, that, to people defective in person or fortune, he is the gentlest creature breathing.

Our party broke up at nine.—I sat half an hour after supper, then propos'd returning to Mr. Jenkings's.—Lady Powis would not hear me on this subject—I must stay that night at the Abbey:—venturing out such weather would hazard my health.—So said Sir James; so said Lord Darcey.—As for Mr. Morgan, he swore, Was he the former, his horses should not stir out for fifty pieces, unless, said he, Sir James chooses to be a fellow-sufferer with Lord Allen, who I have led such a chace this day, that he was forced to leave poor Snip on the forest.—Saying which, he threw himself back in the chair, and fell into a sound sleep.—About eleven I retir'd to my chamber;—a message first being sent to Mr. Jenkings.—Instead of going immediately to bed, I sat down and indulg'd myself with the satisfaction of writing to my beloved Lady Mary.—This morning I got up early to finish my packet; and though I have spent half an hour with Mr. Jenkings, shall close it before her Ladyship is stirring.

Your commands, my dear Lady, are executed.—I have wrote Mrs. Smith; and as soon as I receive her answer, shall, with a joyful heart, with impatient fondness, prepare to throw at your Ladyship's feet,

Your much honour'd,

and affectionate,

F. WARLEY.

LETTER IV.

Lord DARCEY to the Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH.

Barford Abbey.

Prepare your ten pieces, George!—Upon my honour, I was at Barford Abbey a quarter before three, notwithstanding a detention on the road by Lord Michell and Flecher, driving on Jehu for Bath, in his Lordship's phaeton and fix.—You have seen them before this,—and, I suppose, know their errand.—The girl is an egregious fool, that is certain.—I warrant there are a hundred bets depending.—I ask'd what he intended doing with her if he succeeded?—*Do* with her! said his Lordship; why, she is not more than eighteen; let her go to school: faith, Flecher, that's my advice.—*Let her go* to the devil after I am once sure of her, return'd the lover; and, whipping up the horses; drove away like lightning.

Be serious—Answer me one serious question,—Is it not possible,—*very* possible, to have a regard, a *friendship*, for an amiable girl, without endangering her peace or my own?—If I am further involv'd than *friendship*,—the blame is not mine; it will lie at the door of Sir James and Lady Powis.—Talk no more of Lady Elizabeth's smile, or Miss Grevel's hair—Stuff!—meer stuff! nor keep me up after a late evening, to hear your nonsense of Miss Compton's fine neck and shoulders, or Fanny Middleton's eyes.—Come here next week, I will insure you a sight of all those graces in one form. Come, I say, you will be welcome to Sir James and his Lady as myself.—Miss Warley will smile on you.—What other inducement can you want?—Don't be too vain of Miss Warley's smiles; *for know*, she cannot look without them.

Who is Miss Warley?—What is Miss Warley?—you ask.—To your first question I can only answer, A visitor at Jenkings's.—To the second,—She is what has been so much sought after in every age, perfect harmony of mind and person.—Such a hand, George—

Already have I been here eight days:—was I to measure time, I should call them hours.—My affairs with Sir James will take up longer in settling than I apprehended.—Come therefore this week or the next, I charge you.—Come as you hope to see Miss Warley. What do you think Sir James said to me the other day?—Was Miss Warley a girl of fortune, I should think her born for you, Darcey.—As that is not the case,—take care of your heart, my Lord.—She will never attempt to drag you into scrapes:—your little favourite robin, that us'd to peck from your hand, has not less guile.

No! he will never consent;—I must only think of *friendship*.

Lady Powis doats on this paragon of beauty: scarce within their walls,—when she was mention'd with such a just profusion of praises, as fill'd me with impatience.—Lady Powis is a heavenly woman.—You do not laugh;—many would, for supposing any of that sex *heavenly* after fifty.—The coach is this moment going for Miss Warley;—it waits only for me;—I am often her conductor.—Was *you* first minister of state,—I the humble suitor whose bread depended on your favour,—not one line more, even to express my wants.

Twelve o'clock, at night.

Our fair visitor just gone;—just gone home with Edmund.—What an officious fool, to take him in the carriage, and prevent myself from a pleasure I envy him for.—I am not in spirits;—I can write no more;—perhaps the next post:—but I will promise nothing.

I am, *&c. &c.*

DARCEY.

LETTER V.

The Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH to LORD DARCEY.

Bath.

Confound your friendships!—*Friendship* indeed!—What! up head and ears in love, and not know it.—So it is necessary for every woman you think capable of friendship, to have fine eyes, fine hair, a bewitching smile, and a neck delicately turn'd.—Have not I the highest opinion of my cousin Dolly's sincerity?—Do I not think her very capable of *friendship?*—Yet, poor soul, her eyes are planted so deep, it requires good ones to discover she has any.—Such a hand, George!—Such a hand, Darcey!—Why, Lady Dorothy too has hands; I am often enough squeez'd by them:—though hard as a horse's hoof, and the colour of tanned leather, I hold her capable of *friendship*.—Neck she has none,—smile she has none! yet need I the determination of another, to tell me whether my regard for her proceeds from love or *friendship?*—Awake,—Awake, Darcey,—Awake:—Have you any value for your own peace?—have you any for that of Miss Warley's? If so, leave Barford Abbey.—Should you persist in loving her, for love her I know you do?—Should the quiet of such an amiable woman as you describe be at stake? To deal plainly, I will come down and propose the thing myself.—No sword,—no pistol. I mean not for *myself*, but one whose happiness is dear to me as my *own*.

Suppose your estate is but two thousand a-year, are you so fond of shew and equipage, to barter real felicity for baubles?—I am angry,—so angry, that it would not grieve me to see you leading to the altar an old hobbling dowager without a tooth.—Be more yourself,

And I am yours,

MOLESWORTH.

LETTER VI

Lord DARCEY to the Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH.

Barford Abbey,

Angry!—You are really angry!—Well, I too am angry with myself.—I do love Miss Warley;—but why this to you?—Your penetration has already discover'd it.—Yet, O Molesworth! such insurmountable obstacles:—no declaration can be made,—at least whilst I continue in this neighbourhood.

Sir James would rave at my imprudence.—Lady Powis, whatever are her sentiments, must give them up to his opinion.—Inevitably I lose the affection of persons I have sacredly—promised to obey,—sacredly.—Was not my promise given to a dying father?—Miss Warley has no tye; yet, by the duty she observes to Sir James and Lady Powis, you would think her bound by the strongest cords of nature.

Scarce a moment from her:—at Jenkings's every morning;—on foot if good weather,—else in the coach for the convenience of bringing her with me.—I am under no constraint:—Sir James and her Ladyship seem not the least suspicious: this I much wonder at, in the former particularly.

In my *tête-à-têtes* with Miss Warley, what think you are our subjects?—Chiefly divinity, history, and geography.—Of these studies she knows more than half the great men who have wrote for ages past.—On a taste for the two latter I once prided myself.—An eager pursuit for the former springs up in my mind, whilst conversing with her, like a plant long hid

in the earth, and called out by the appearance of a summer's sun.—This sun must shine at Faulcon Park;—without it all will be dreary:—*yet* how can I draw it thither?—*Edmund*—but why should I fear *Edmund?*

Will you, or will you not, meet your old friend Finch here next Wednesday?—Be determined in your answer.—I have suspence enough on my hands to be excused from any on your account.—Sir James thinks it unkind you have not called on him since I left England;—hasten therefore to make up matters with the baronet,—Need I say the pleasure I shall have in shaking you by the hand?

DARCEY.

LETTER VII.

The Hon. GEORGE MOLESWORTH to Lord DARCEY.

Bath.

Wednesday next you shall see me,—positively you shall.—Bridgman will be of the party.

I propose an immensity of satisfaction from this visit.—Forbid it, heaven! Miss Warley's opposite should again give me a meeting at the Abbey.—After the conversation I am made to expect, how should I be mortified to have my ears eternally dinn'd with catgut work,—painting gauze,—weaving fringes,—and finding out enigmas?—Setting a fine face, Miss Winter is out-done by Fletcher's Nancy.—A-propos, I yesterday saw that very wise girl step into a chaise and wheel off for Scotland, begging and praying we would make the best of it to her mamma.—Not the least hand had I in this affair; but, willing to help out people in distress, at the entreaties of Lord Michell, I waited on the old Lady at her lodging.

I found her in a furious plight,—raving at her servants,—packing up her cloaths, and reflecting on her relations who had persuaded her to come to Bath.—When I entered she was kneeling by a huge travelling trunk, stuffing in a green purse at one corner, which I supposed to be full of gold.

Where is Nancy?—riling from the ground, and accosting me with looks of fury;—Where is Nancy, Mr. Molesworth?

Really, *Madam*, that is a question I cannot positively answer;—but, to be sincere, I believe she is on the road to Scotland.

Believe!—So you would have me think you are not one of Fletcher's clan.—But, tell him from me, running to the trunk after her purse, and shaking it just at my ear,—*tell him*, he shall never be a penny the better for this.

I took my hat, and looked towards the door, as if going.

Stop, Mr. Molesworth, (her voice somewhat lowered) why in so great a hurry?—I once thought you my friend. Pray inform me if Nancy was forced away;—or, if me went willingly.

You have no right, Madam, after the treatment I have received, to expect an answer; but justice bids me declare her going off seemed a matter of choice.

Poor child!—You was certainly trapann'd (and she put a handkerchief to her eyes).

I solemnly protest, Madam, I have seen your daughter but twice since she came to Bath.—Last night, when coming from the Rooms, I saw her step into a chaise, followed by Mr. Fletcher.—They beckoned me towards them, whispered the expedition they were going upon, and requested me to break the matter to you, and intercede for their pardon.—My visit has not answered its salutary purpose—I perceive it *has not*. So saying I turned from her,—knowing, by old acquaintance, how I was to play my cards, me being one of those kind of spirits which are never quell'd but by opposition.

After fetching me from the door, she promised to hear calmly what I had to say;—and, tho' no orator, I succeeded so well as to gain an assurance, she would see them at their return from Scotland.

I left the old Lady in tolerable good humour, and was smiling to myself, recollecting the bout I had passed, when, who should come towards me but Lord Michell,—his countenance full-fraught with curiosity.

Well, George!—dear George!—what success in your embassy?—I long to know the fate of honest Fletcher.—Is he to loll in a coach and six?—or, is the coroner's inquest to bring in their verdict Lunacy?

A sweet alternative!—*As* your Lordship's assiduity has shewn the former is the highest pinnacle to which you would wish to lift a friend, I believe your most sanguine hopes are here answered.

Is it *so!*—Well, if ever Fletcher offers up a prayer, it ought to be for you, Molesworth.

Vastly good, my Lord.—What, before he prays for himself?—*This* shews your Lordship's *very* high notions of gratitude.

We have high notions of every thing.—Bucks and bloods, as we are call'd, —you may go to the devil before you will find a set of honester fellows.

To the *Devil*, my Lord!—That's true, I believe.

He was going to reply when the three choice spirits came up, and hurried him, away to the Tuns.

A word to *you*, Darcey.—Surely you are never serious in the ridiculous design.—Not offer yourself to Miss Warley, whilst she continues in that neighbourhood?—the very spot on which you ought to secure her,—unless you think all the young fellows who visit at the Abbey are blind, except yourself.—*Why*, you are jealous *already*;—*jealous* of *Edmund*.—Perhaps *even I* may become one of your tormentors.—If I like her I shall as certainly tell her *so, as* that my name is

MOLESWORTH.

[Here two Letters are omitted, one from Lady MARY to Miss WARLEY, —and one from Miss WARLEY to Lady MARY.]

LETTER VIII.

Miss WARLEY to Lady MARY SUTTON.

From Mr. *Jenkings's*.

Ah! my dear Lady, how kind,—how inexpressibly kind, to promise I shall one day know what has put an end to the intimacy between the two Ladies I *so* much revere.

To find your Ladyship has still a high opinion of Lady Powis, has filled me with pleasure.—Fear of the reverse often threw a damp on my heart, whilst receiving the most tender caresses.—You bid me love her!—You say I cannot love her too well!—*This* is a command my heart springs forward to obey.

Unhappy family!—What a loss does it sustain by the absence of Mr. Powis?—*No*, I can never forgive the Lady who has occasioned this source of sorrow.—Why is her name concealed?—But what would it benefit me to come at a knowledge of it?

Pity Sir James should rather see such a son *great* than happy.—Six thousand a year, *yet* covet a fortune twice as large!—Love of riches makes strange wreck in the human heart.

Why did Mr. Powis leave his native country?—The refusal of a Lady with whom he only sought an union in obedience to his father, could not *greatly* affect him.—Was not such an overture *without* affection,—*without* inclination,—a blot in his fair character?—Certainly it was.—Your Ladyship seems to think Sir James only to blame.—I dare not have presumed to offer my opinion, had you not often told me, it betray'd a meanness to hide our real sentiments, when call'd upon to declare them.

Lady Powis yesterday obliged me with a sight of several letters from her son.—*I* am not mistress of a stile like *his*, or your Ladyship would have been spar'd numberless tedious moments.—Such extraordinary deckings are seldom to be met with in common minds.

I told Lady Powis, last evening, that I should devote this day to my pen;—so I shall not be sent for;—a favour I am sure to have conferr'd if I am not at the Abbey soon after breakfast.—Lord Darcey is frequently my escort.—I am pleased to see that young nobleman regard Edmund as if of equal rank with himself.

Heavens! his Lordship is here!—full-dressed, and just alighted from the coach,—to fetch me, I fear.—I shall know in a moment; Mrs. Jenkings is coming up.

Even so.—It vexes me to be thus taken off from my agreeable task;—yet I cannot excuse myself,—her Ladyship is importunate.—She sends me word I *must* come;—that I *must* return with Lord Darcey.—Mrs. Finch is accidentally dropp'd in with her son.—I knew the latter was expected to meet two gentlemen from Bath,—one of them an intimate friend of Lord Darcey.—Mrs. Finch is an amiable woman;—it is to her Lady Powis wants to introduce me.

Your Servant, my Lord.—A very genteel way to hasten me down—impatient, I suppose, to see his friend from Bath.—*Well*, Jenny, tell his Lordship it will be needless to have the horses taken out.—I shall be ready in a quarter of an hour.—Adieu, my dear Lady.

Eleven o'clock at night.

Every thing has conspired to make this day more than commonly agreeable.—It requires the pen of a Littelton to paint the different graces which shone in conversation.—As no such pen is at hand, will your Ladyship receive from *mine* a short description of the company at the Abbey?

Mrs. Finch is about seven and forty;—her person plain,—her mind lovely,—her bosom fraught with happiness.—She dispenses it promiscuously.—Every smile,—every accent,—conveys it to all around her.—A countenance engagingly open.—Her purse too, I am told, when occasions offer, open as her heart.—How largely is she repaid for her balsamic gifts,—by seeing those virtues early planted in the mind of her son, spring up and shoot in a climate where a blight is almost contagious!

Mr. Finch is the most sedate young man I have ever seen;—but his sedateness is temper'd with a *sweetness* inexpressible;—a certain mildness in the features;—*a mildness* which, in the countenance of that great commander I saw at Brandon Lodge, appears like *mercy* sent out from the heart to discover the dwelling of *true courage*.—There is certainly a strong likeness between the Marquis and Lord Darcey;—*so strong*, that when I first beheld his Lordship I was quite struck with surprize.

Mr. Molesworth and Mr. Bridgman, the two gentlemen from Bath, are very opposite to each other in person and manner; yet both in a different degree seem to be worthy members of society.

Mr. Molesworth, a most entertaining companion,—vastly chearful,—smart at repartee; and, from the character Lord Darcey has given me of him, very sincere.

Mr. Bridgman has a good deal the air of a foreigner; attained, I suppose, by his residence some years at the court of ——, in a public character.—Very fit he appears for such an employ.—Sensible,—remarkably polite,—speaks all languages with the same fluency as his own; but then a veil of disagreeable reserve throws a dark shade over those perfections.—*Perhaps* I am wrong to spy out faults so early;—*perhaps* to-morrow my opinion may be different.—First prepossessions—Ah! What would I have said of *first prepossessions?*—Is it not to them I owe a thousand blessings?—I, who have nothing to recommend me but being unfortunate.

Somthing lies at my heart.—Yet I think I could not sleep in quiet, was I to drop a hint in disfavour of Mr. Jenkings;—it may not be in his *disfavour* neither:—However, my dear Lady, you shall be the judge, after I have repos'd a few hours.

Seven o'clock in the morning.

Why should I blame Mr. Jenkings?—Is not Edmund his only son?—his only child?—Is he less my friend for suspecting?—Yes, my Lady, I perceive he does *suspect*.—He is uneasy.—He supposes his son encouraging an improper affection.—I see it in his very looks:—he must think me an artful creature.—This it is that distresses me.—I wish I could hit on a method to set his heart at rest.—If I barely hint a design of leaving the neighbourhood, which I have done once or twice, he bursts into tears, and I am oblig'd to sooth him like a child.

How account for this behaviour?—Why does he look on me with the eye of fatherly affection,—yet think me capable of a meanness I *despise?*

I believe it impossible for a human being to have *more* good nature, or *more* good qualities, than Edmund; yet had he the riches of a Mogul, I could never think of a connection with him.—*He*, worthy young man, has never given his father cause for *suspicion*.—I am convinced he has not.—Naturally of an obliging disposition, he is ever on the watch for opportunities to gratify his amiable inclinations:—not *one* such selfish motive as love to push him on.

A summons to breakfast.—Lord Darcey, it seems, is below;—I suppose, slid away from his friends to call on Edmund.—Mr. and Mrs. Jenkings are *all* smiles, *all* good humour, to their son,—I hope it is only I who have been *suspicious*.—Lord Darcey is still with Edmund.—They are at this moment under my window,—counselling perhaps, about a commission he wants his father to purchase for him in the Guards.—I should be glad to see this matter accommodated;—yet, I could wish, in *so* tender a point, his Lordship may not be *too* forward in advising.—Mr.

and Mrs. Jenkings have such an opinion of him,—they pay such deference to what he says,—his advice *must* have weight;—and they *may* be unhappy by giving up their inclinations.

The praises of Lord Darcey are forever sounding in my ears.—To what a height would the partiality of Mrs. Jenkings lift me?—She would have me think,—I cannot tell your Ladyship what she would *have me think*.—My hopes dare not take *such* a flight.—No!—I can perceive what their fall *must* be;—I can perceive *it*, without getting on the top of the precipice to look down.

I shall order every thing for my departure, according to your Ladyship's directions, holding myself in readiness to attend Mr. and Mrs. Smith, at the time proposed.

Oxfordshire I must revisit,—for a few days only;—having some little matters to regulate.

The silks I have purchas'd for your Ladyship are slight, as you directed, except a white and gold, which is the richest and most beautiful I could procure.

How imperceptibly time slides on?—The clock strikes eleven,—in spight of the desire I have of communicating many things more.—An engagement to be with Lady Powis at twelve hastens me to conclude myself

Your Ladyship's

Most honour'd and affectionate,

F. WARLEY.

LETTER IX.

The Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH to LORD DARCEY.

Bath.

What a sacrifice do you offer up to that old dog Plutus!—I have lost *all* patience,—*all* patience, I say.—*Such* a woman!—*such* an angelic woman! —But what has,—what will avail my arguments?—Her peace is gone,—if you persevere in a behaviour so *particular*,—absolutely gone.

Bridgman this morning told me, that unless I assured him you had *pretensions* to Miss Warley, he was determined to offer her his hand;—*that* nothing prevented him from doing it whilst at the Abbey, but your mysterious conduct, which he was at a loss how to construe. —Not to offend *you*, the *Lady* or *family* she is with, he apply'd, he said, to *me*, as a friend of each party, to set him right.

Surely, Bridgman, returned I, you wish to keep yourself in the dark; or how the duce have you been six days with people whose countenances speak so much sensibility, and not make the discovery you seek after?

Though her behaviour to us; continued I, was politeness itself, was there nothing more than *politeness* in her address to Lord Darcey?—Her smiles *too*, in which Diana and the Graces revel, saw you not *them*, how they played from one to another, like sun-beams on the water, until they fixed on him?—Is the nation in debt?—So much is Darcey in love;—and you may as well pay off one, as rival the other with success.

Observe, my friend, in what manner I have answered for you.—Keep her, therefore, no longer in suspence.—Delays of this sort are not only dangerous, but cruel.—Why delight to torture what we most admire?—From a boy you despised such actions.—Often have I known Dick Jones,

when at Westminster, threshed by your hand for picking poor little birds alive.—*His* was an early point;—but for *Darcey*, accoutred with the breast-plate of honour, even before he could read the word that signifies its intrinsic value,—*for him* to be falling off,—falling off at a time *too*, when Virtue herself appears in person to support him!

Can you say, you mean not to injure her?—Is a woman only to be injured, but by an attempt on her virtue?—Is it *no* crime, *no* fault, to cheat a young innocent lovely girl out of her affections, and give her nothing in return but regret and disappointment?

Reflect, what a task is mine, thus to lay disagreeable truths plainly before you.—To hear it pronounced, that Lord and Lady Darcey are the happiest couple on earth, is the hope that has pushed me on to this unpleasing office.

Bridgman is just set out for town.—I am charg'd with a profusion of respects, thanks, &c. &c. &c. which, if you have the least oeconomy, will serve for him, and

Your very humble servant,

MOLESWORTH.

LETTER X.

Lord DARCEY to the Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH.

Barford Abbey.

Bridgman!—Could Bridgman dare aspire to Miss Warley!—*He* offer her his hand!—*he* be connected with a woman whose disposition is diametrically opposite to his own!—*No*,—that would not have done, though I had never seen her.—Let him seek for one who has a heart shut up by a thousand locks.

After his *own* conjectures,—after what *you* have told him,—should he *but* attempt to take her from me, by all that is sacred, he shall repent it dearly.

Molesworth! *you* are my friend,—I take your admonitions well;—but, surely, you should not press thus hardly on my soul, knowing its uneasy situation.—My state is even more perplexing than when we parted:—I did not then know she was going to France.—*Yes*, she is absolutely going to *France*.—Why leave her friends here?—Why not wait the arrival of Lady Mary Sutton in England?

I have used every dissuasive argument *but one*.—That shall be my last.—If *that* fails I go—I positively go with her.—It is your opinion that she loves me.—Would it were mine!—*Not* the least partiality can I discover.—Why then be precipitate?—Every moment she is gaining ground in the affections of Sir James and Lady Powis.—*Time* may work wonders in the mind of the former.—Without his consent never can I give my hand;—the commands of a dying father forbid me.—*Such* a father!—O George! you did not know him;—*so* revered,—*so* honour'd,—*so* belov'd! not more in public than in private life.

My friend, behold your son!—*Darcey*, behold your father!—*As* you reverence and obey Sir James, *as* you consult him on all occasions, *as* you are guided by his advice, receive my blessing.—These were his parting words, hugg'd into me in his last cold embrace.—No, George, the promise I made can never be forfeited.—I sealed it on his lifeless hand, before I was borne from him.

Now, are you convinc'd no mean views with-hold me?—You despise not more than I do the knave and coxcomb; for no other, to satiate their own vanity, would sport away the quiet of a fellow-creature.—Well may you call it cruel.—*Such* cruelties fall little short of those practised by *Nero* and *Caligula*.

Did it depend on myself only, I would tell Miss Warley I love, *every time* I behold her enchanting face; *every time* I hear the voice of wisdom springing from the seat of innocence.

No shadow of gaining over Sir James!—*Efforts* has not been wanting:—I mean *efforts* to declare my inclination.—I have follow'd him like a ghost for days past, thinking at every step how I should bless *this* or *that* spot on which he consented to my happiness.—Pleasing phantoms!—How have they fled at sight of his determin'd countenance!—Methought I could trace *in it* the same obduracy which nature vainly pleaded to remove.—In *other* matters my heart is resolute;—*here* an errant coward.—No! I cannot break it to him whilst in Hampshire.—When I get to town, a letter *shall* speak for me.—Sometimes I am tempted to trust the secret to Lady Powis.—She is compassionate;—she would even risk her own peace to preserve mine.—Again the thoughts of involving her in fresh perplexities determines me against it.

Had my father been acquainted with that part of Sir James's character which concerned his son, I am convinc'd he would have made some restrictions in regard to the explicit obedience he enjoined.—But all was hushed whilst Mr. Powis continued on his travels; nor, until he settled abroad, did any one suspect there had been a family disagreement:—*even* at *this* time the whole affair is not generally known.—The name of

the lady to whom he was obliged to make proposals, is in particular carefully concealed.—I, who from ten years old have been bred up with them, am an entire stranger to it.—*Perhaps* no part of the affair would ever have transpired, had not Sir James made some discoveries, in the first agitation of his passion, before a large company, when he received an account of Mr. Powis's being appointed to the government of ——. No secret can be safe in a breast where every passage is not well guarded against an enemy which, like lightning, throws up all before it.

Let me not forget to tell you, amongst a multiplicity of concerns crowding on my mind, that I have positively deny'd Edmund to intercede with his father regarding the commission.—A bare surmise that he is my rival, has silenced me.—Was I ungenerous enough to indulge myself in getting rid of him, an opportunity now offers;—but I am *as* averse to such proceedings as *he* ought to be who is the friend of Molesworth, and writes the name of

DARCEY.

LETTER XI.

The Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH to Lord DARCEY.

Bath.

Believe me, my dear Lord, I never suspected you capable of designs you justly hold in abhorrence.—If I expressed myself warmly, it was owing to your keeping from me the knowledge of those particulars which have varied every circumstance.—I saw my friend a poor restless being, irresolute, full of perplexities.—I felt for him.—I rejoice now to find from whence this *irresolution*, those *perplexities* arose.—She is,—she must,—by heaven! she shall be yours:—A reward fit only for *such* great—*such* noble resolutions.

You talk of a *last* argument—Forbear *that* argument.—You *must* not use it before you have laid your intentions open to Sir James.—*Neither* follow her to France.—What, as you are situated, would *that* avail?—Prevent her going, *if* you can.—*Such* a woman, under the protection of Lady Mary Sutton, *must* have many advantageous proposals.

I understand *nothing* of features,—I know *nothing* of physiognomy, if you have any uneasiness from Bridgman.—It was not marks of a violent passion he betrayed;—rather, I think, an ambition of having his taste approved by the world;—but we shall know more of the matter when I meet him in town.

Stupidity!—Not see her partiality!—not see that she loves you!—She will some time hence own it as frankly with her lips, as her eyes have told you a thousand times, did you understand their language.—The duce a word could *I* get from them.—Very uncivil, I think, not to *speak* when they were *spoke* to,—They will be ready enough, I suppose, with their

thanks and *applauses*, when I present her hand to be united with her heart. That office shall be *mine*:—*Something* tells me, there is to be an alteration in *your* affairs, sudden as unexpected.

I go to the rooms this evening for the last time.—To-morrow I set out for Slone Hall, in my way to London.—Here I shall spend two or three days happily with my good-natured cousin Lady Dorothy.—Perhaps we may take an airing together as far as your territories.—I shall *now* look on Faulcon-Park with double pleasure.—Neither that or the agreeable neighbourhood round it will be ever bridled over by a haughty dame.—(Miss Warley, forbid it.)—Some such we see in *high* as well as *low* life.—Haughtiness is the reverse of true greatness; therefore it staggers me to behold it in the former.

A servant with a white favour!—What can this mean?—

Upon my word, Mr. Flecher, you return with your fair bride sooner than I expected.—*A card too*.—Things must be *finely* accommodated with the old Lady.—Your Lordship being at too great a distance to partake of the feast, pray regale on what calls me to it.

"Mrs. Moor and Mr. and Mrs. Flecher's compliments to Mr. Molesworth.—My son and daughter are just return'd from Scotland, and hope for the pleasure of Mr. Molesworth's company with eight or ten other friends, to congratulate them this evening on their arrival.—Both the Ladies and Mr. Flecher will be much disappointed, if you do not accept our invitation."

True as I live, *neither added* or *diminished* a tittle,—and wrote by the hand of Flecher's Desdemona.—Does not a man richly deserve thirty thousand pounds with a wife *like this?*—Not for *twice* that sum would I see such nonsense come from her I was to spend my life with.

Pity Nature and Fortune has such frequent bickerings! When one smiles the other frowns.—I wish the gipsies would make up matters, and send us down their favours wrapp'd up together.

Considering the friendship you have honour'd Edmund with, I have no idea he can presume to think of Miss Warley, *seeing* what he must *see*.

I shall expect to find a letter on my arrival in St. James's Street.—Omit not those respects which are due at Barford Abbey.

Yours,

MOLESWORTH.

LETTER XII.

Lord DARCEY to the Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH.

Barford Abbey.

I should be in a fine plight, truly, to let her go to France without me!—Why, I am almost besides myself at the thoughts of an eight days separation.—Was ever any thing so forgetful!—To bring no other cloaths here but mourning!—Did she always intend to encircle the sun with a sable cloud?—Or, why not dispatch a servant?—A journey into Oxfordshire is absolutely necessary.—Some *other* business, I suppose; but I am not enough in her confidence to know of what nature.—Poh! love!—Impossible, and refuse me so small a boon as to attend her!—requested too in a manner that spoke my whole soul.—Yes; I had near broke through all my resolutions.—This I did say, If Miss Warley refuses her dear hand, pressing it to my lips, in the same peremptory manner,—what will become of him who without it is lost to the whole world?—The reply ventur'd no further than her cheek;—there sat enthron'd in robes of crimson.—I scarce dar'd to look up:—her eyes darted forth a ray so powerful, that I not only quitted her hand, but suffered her to leave the room without my saying another word.—This happened at Jenkings's last evening; in the morning she was to set out with the old gentleman for Oxfordshire.—I did not attempt seeing her again 'till that time, fearing my presence might be unpleasing, after the confusion I had occasion'd.

Sick of my bed I got up at five; and taking a gun, directed my course to the only spot on earth capable of affording me delight.—The outer gate barr'd:—no appearance of any living creature, except poor Caesar.—He, hearing my voice, crept from his wooden-house, and, instead of barking,

saluted me in a whining tone:—stretching himself, he jumped towards the gate, licking my hand that lay between the bars.—I said many kind things to this faithful beast, in hopes my voice would awaken some of the family.—The scheme succeeded.—A bell was sounded from one of the apartments; that opposite to which I stood.—A servant opening the window-shutters, I was tempted to keep my stand.—A white beaver with a green feather, and a riding-dress of the same colour, plainly told me this was the room where rested all my treasure, and caused in my mind such conflicts as can no more be described by *me* than felt by *another*.—Unwilling to encrease my tortures I reeled to an old tree, which lay on a bank near;—there sat down to recover my trembling.—The next thing which alarmed me was an empty chaise, driving full speed down the hill.—I knew on *what* occasion, yet could not forbear asking the post-boy.—He answered, To carry some company from yonder house.—My situation was really deplorable,—when I beheld my dear lovely girl walking in a pensive mood, attir'd in that very dress which I espied through the window.—Heavy was the load I dragged from head to heel; yet, like a Mercury, I flew to meet her.—She saw me,—started,—and cry'd, Bless me! my Lord! what brings you hither at this early hour?—The real truth was springing to my lips, when, recollecting her happiness might be the sacrifice, I said, examining the lock of my gun,—I am waiting, Miss Warley, for that lazy fellow Edmund:—he promised to shew me an eye of pheasants.—If you are not a very keen sportsman, returned she, what says your Lordship to a cup of chocolate?—It will not detain you long;—Mrs. Jenkings has some ready prepared for the travellers.

She pronounced *travellers* with uncommon glee;—at least I thought so,—and, nettled at her indifference, could not help replying, *You* are *very* happy, madam;—*you* part with your friends *very* unreluctantly, I perceive.

If any thing ever appeared in my favour, it was now.—Her confusion was visible;—even Edmund observed it, who just then strolled towards us, and said, looking at both attentively, What is the matter with Miss Warley?

With me, Edmund? she retorted,—nothing ails me.—I suppose you think I am enough of the fine lady to complain the whole day, because I have got up an hour before my usual time.

His tongue was *now* silent;—his eyes *full* of enquiries.—He fixed them on us alternately,—wanting to discover the situation of our hearts.—Why so curious, Edmund?—Things cannot go on long at this rate.—*Your* heart must undergo a strict scrutiny before I shall know what terms we are upon.

No words can paint my gratitude for worthy Jenkings.—He went to the Abbey, on foot, before breakfast was ended, to give me an opportunity of supplying his place in the chaise.—At parting he actually took one of my hands, joined it with Miss Warley's, and I could perceive petitions ascending from the seat of purity.—I know to what they tended.—I *felt*, I *saw* them.—The chaise drove off. I could have blessed him.—May my blessings overtake him!—May they light where virtue sits enshrin'd by locks of silver.

Yes, if his son was to wound me in the tenderest part, for the sake of *such* a father, I think,—I know not what to think.—Living in such suspence is next to madness.

She treats him with the freedom of a sister.—She calls him Edmund,—leans on his arm, and suffers him to take her hand.—The least favour conferred on me is with an air *so* reserved, *so* distant, as if she would say, I have not for you the least sentiment of tenderness.

Lady Powis sends to desire I will walk with her.—A sweet companion am I for a person in low spirits!—That her's are not high is evident.—She has shed many tears this morning at parting with Miss Warley.

Instead of eight days mortification we might have suffer'd twenty, had not her Ladyship insisted on an absolute promise of returning at that time.—Farewel till then.

Yours,

DARCEY.

LETTER XIII.

Miss WARLEY to Lady MARY SUTTON.

From the Crown, at ——.

Here am I, ever-honour'd lady, forty miles on the road to that beloved spot, where, for nineteen years, my tranquility was uninterrupted.—Will a serene sky always hang over me?—It will be presumption to suppose it,—when thousands, perhaps, endowed with virtues the most god-like, have nothing on which they can look *back* but dark clouds,—nothing to which they can look *forward* but gathering storms.—Am I a bark only fit to sail in fair weather?—Shall I not prepare to meet the waves of disappointment?

How does my heart bear,—how throb,—to give up follies which dare not hide themselves where a passage is made *by* generosity, *by* affection unbounded.—Yes, my dear Lady, this is the only moment I do not regret being absent from you;—for could my tongue relate what my pen trembles to discover?—No!

Behold *me* at your Ladyship's feet!—behold *me* a supplicant suing for my returning peace!—*You* only, can restore it.—Command that I give up my preference for Lord Darcey, and the intruder is banished from my heart:—*then* shall I no more labour to deceive myself:—*then* shall I no more blindly exchange certain peace for doubtful happiness,—a *quiet* for a *restless* mind.—Humility has not fled me;—my heart has not fallen a sacrifice to title, pomp, or splendor.—Yet, has it not foolishly, unasked, given itself up?—Ah! my Lady, not entirely unask'd neither; or, why, from the first moment, have I seen him shew *such* tender, *such* respectful assiduities?—why *so* ardently solicit to attend me into Oxfordshire?—why ask, if I refused my hand in the same peremptory

manner, what would become of the man who without it was lost to the whole world?—But am I not too vain?—Why should this man be Lord Darcey?—Rather one rising to his imagination, who he might possibly suppose was entrapped by my girlish years.—A few, a very *few* weeks, and I am gone from him forever.—If your Ladyship's goodness can pardon the confession I have made, no errors will I again commit of the kind which now lies blushing before you.

Next to your Ladyship Mr. Jenkings is the best friend I have on earth.—He *never* has suspected, or *now* quite forgets his suspicions.—Not all my entreaties could prevent him from taking this long journey with me.—His age, his connections, his business, every thing is made subservient to my convenience—Whilst I write he is below, and has just sent up to know if I will permit a gentleman of his acquaintance, whom he has met accidentally at this inn, to dine with us.—Why does he use this ceremony?—I can have no objection to any friend of *his*.—Dinner is served up.—I shall write again at our last stage this evening.

From the Mitre at ——.

Past twelve at night!—An hour I used to think the most silent of any:—but *here* so much the reverse, one reasonably may suppose the inhabitants, or guests, have mistaken midnight for mid-day.

I will ring and enquire, why all this noise?

A strange bustle!—Something like fighting!—Very near, I protest.—Hark! bless me, I shall be frightened to death!—The chambermaid not come! Would I could find my way to Mr. Jenkings's room!—Womens voices, as I live!—Begging!—praying!—Ah! ah! now they cry, Take the swords away!—Take the swords away!—Heaven defend us! to be sure we shall be all killed.

One o'clock.

Not kill'd, but terrified out of my senses.—Well, if ever I stop at this inn again—

You remember, Madam, I was thrown into a sad fright by the hurry and confusion without.—I dropped my pen, and pulled the bell with greater violence.—No one came;—the noise increas'd.—Several people ran up and down by the door of my apartment.—I flew and double lock'd it.—But, good God! what were my terrors, when a voice cried out, She cannot be brought to life!—Is there no assistance at hand?—no surgeon near?—I rushed from my chamber, in the first emotions of surprize and compassion, to mix in a confused croud, *unknowing* and *unknown*.—I ventur'd no further than the passage. Judge my astonishment, to perceive there, and in a large room which open'd into it, fifty or sixty well dressed people of both sexes:—*Women*, some crying, some laughing:—*Men* swearing, stamping, and calling upon others to come down and end the dispute below.—I thought of nothing *now*, but how to retreat unobserv'd:—when a gentleman, in regimentals, ran so furiously up the stairs full against me, that I should have been instantly at the bottom, had not his extended arm prevented my flight.

I did not stay to receive his apologies, but hastened to my chamber, and have not yet recovered my trembling.—Why did I leave it?—Why was I so inconsiderate?

Another alarm!—Some one knocks at the door!—Will there be no end to my frights?

If one's spirits are on the flutter, how every little circumstance increases our consternation!—When I heard the tapping at my door, instead of enquiring who was there, I got up and stood against it.

Don't be afraid, *Mame*, said a voice without; it is only the chambermaid come with some drops and water.—With drops and water! replied I, letting her in—who sent you hither?

Captain Risby, *Mame*, one of the officers:—he told me you was frighten'd.

I am oblig'd to the gentleman;—but set down the drops, I do not want any.—Pray tell me what has occasioned this uproar in your house?

To be sure, *Mame*, here has been a terrifying noise this night.—It don't use to be so;—but our *Town's* Gentlemen have such a dislike to *Officers*, I suppose there will be no peace while they are in town.—I never saw the Ladies dress'd so fine in my life; and had the Colonel happen'd to ask one of the *Alderman's* daughters to dance, all would have gone on well.

You have an assembly then in the house?

O yes, *Mame*, the assembly is always kept here.—And, as I was saying, the Colonel should have danced with one of our Alderman's daughters:—instead of that, he engag'd a daughter of Esquire Light, and introduced the Major and a *handsome Captain* to her two sisters.—Now, to be sure, this was enough to enrage the best Trade's-People in the place, who can give their *young Ladies* three times as much as Mr. Light can his daughters.

I saw she was determin'd to finish her harangue, so did not attempt to interrupt her.

One of us chambermaids, *Mame*, continued she, always assist the waiters;—it was my turn this evening; so, as I was stirring the fire in the card-room, I could hear the Ladies whisper their partners, if they let strangers stand above them, they might dance with whom they could get for the future.—They were busy about the matter when the Colonel enter'd with Miss Light, who though she is *very* handsome, *very* sensible, and all that, it did not become her to wear a silver silk;—for what, as *our Ladies* said, is family without fortune?—But I am running on with a story of an hour long.—So *Mame*, as soon as the Colonel and his partner went into the dancing-room,—*one* cry'd, Defend me from French'd hair, if people's heads are to look like towers;—*another*, her gown sleeves were too large;—a *third*, the robeings too high;—a *fourth*, her ruff too deep:—in short, *Mame*, her very shoe-buckles shared the same fate.

This recital put me out of all patience:—I could not endure to see held up a picture, which, though out of the hands of a dauber, presented a true likeness of human nature in her most deprav'd state.—Enough, Mrs. Betty, said I, now pray warm my bed; it is late, and I am fatigued.

O! to be sure, *Mame*; but will you not first hear what was the occasion of the noise?—The country-dances, continued she, not waiting my reply, began; and *our Town's Gentlemen* ran to the top of the room, leaving the *Officers* to dance at the bottom.—This put them in *so* violent a passion, that the Colonel swore, if *our* Gentlemen persisted in their ill manners, not a soul should dance.—So, *Mame*, upon this *our* Gentlemen let some of the Officers stand above them;—and there was no dispute till after ten.—What they quarrelled about then I don't know;—but, when I came into the room, they were all going to fight;—and fight they certainly would, if they could have got *our* Gentlemen down stairs.—Not one of them would stir, which made the others so mad, that they would have pulled them down, had not the Ladies interfered.—Then it was, *Mame*, I suppose, you heard the cries and shrieks; for every one that had *husbands, brothers*, or *admirers* there, took hold of them; begging and praying they would not fight.—Poor Miss Peggy Turner will have a fine rub; for she always deny'd to her *Mamma*, that there was any thing in the affair between her and Mr. Grant the Attorney. Now she has discovered all, by fainting away when he broke from her to go to the other end of the room.

I hope there has been no blood shed?

None, I'll assure you, *Mame*, in this house; what happens out of it is no business of mine. Now, *Mame*, would you please to go to bed? By all means, Mrs. Betty.—So away went my communicative companion. Being much tired, I shall lay down an hour or two, then reassume my pen.

Four o'clock in the morning.

Not able to close my eyes, I am got up to have the pleasure of introducing to your Ladyship the Gentleman who I mention'd was to dine with us at the other inn. Judge my surprize, when I found him to be the worthy Dean of H—— going into Oxfordshire to visit his former flock;—I knew him before Mr. Jenkings pronounced his name, by the strong likeness of his picture.

I even fancied the beautiful pair stood before me, whose hands he is represented joining. It is much to be regretted so fine a piece should be hid from the world.—Why should not *this* be proportion? The *other* portraits which your Ladyship has drawn, are even allowed by Reynolds to be masterly.—Let me therefore entreat, next time he comes to the Lodge, my favourite may *at least* have a chance of being called from banishment.

The Dean was almost discouraged from proceeding on his journey, by hearing of your Ladyship's absence, and the death of Mrs. Whitmore.—He was no stranger to what concern'd me, tho' I could be scarce an inhabitant of Hillford-Down at the time *he* left it.—I suppose his information was from Mr. Jenkings; I could see them from the window deep in discourse, walking in the Bowling-Green, from the moment the Dean got out of his chaise till dinner.

The latter expressed infinite satisfaction when I joined them; looking with such stedfast tenderness, as if he would trace on my countenance the features of some dear friend.—His sincere regard for Mr. and Mrs. Whitmore, and the gratitude he owes your Ladyship, must make him behold me with a favourable eye, knowing how greatly I have been distinguish'd by the two latter.

He had a stool put into his chaise; assuring us we could fit three conveniently—We came from the last inn together, and are to travel so the remainder of the journey.

After your Ladyship's strict commands, that I look on Brandon-Lodge as my home, I shall make it such the few days I stay in Oxfordshire;—and have presumed on your indulgence, to request Mr. Jenkings will do the same.—The Dean's visit is to Mr. Gardener, which will be happy for me, as that Gentleman's house is so near the Lodge.—I hope to see the tops of the chimneys this evening.—

My heart would jump at the sight, if I expected your Ladyship to meet me with open arms.—Extatic thought!—unfit to precede those disappointments which must follow thick on one another. Can there be greater!—to pass the very house, once inhabited by—O my Lady!—Heaven! how will your and her image bring before me past happy scenes!

If this is the Dean's voice, he is got up, early. The horses putting to, and scarce five o'clock! Here comes a messenger, to say they are ready. So rest my pen, till; I again take it up at Brandon-Lodge.

Brandon-Lodge.

I never saw such general joy as appeared through the village at sight of the Dean.—The first person who espy'd him ran with such speed into every house, that by the time we reached Mr. Gardener's gate, the chaise was surrounded by a hundred people.—Mr. and Mrs. Gardener stepping out, were saluted by the Dean. What, our old friend! cried they.—What, our old friend!—Good God!—and Miss Warley too!—This is a joyful surprize, indeed! and would have taken me out by force, if I had not persisted in going to the Lodge.—Your Ladyship is enough acquainted with these good people, to know they would part with any thing rather than their friends.—I have not yet seen Miss Gardener: she was gone on a walk with Miss West and Miss Conway.

The Dean showered a thousand marks of regard on all around him;—the meanest not escaping his notice.—In this tumult of pleasure I did not pass unregarded.—Your Ladyship and Mrs. Whitmore still live in their

hearts; the pure air of Hillford-Down will not mix with the cold blast of ingratitude.

May the soft pillow I am going to repose on, shut not out from my mind the load of obligations which rest on it!—The remembrance is balm to my soul, either in my sleeping or waking hours.

Nine o'clock.

Scarce out of my bed half an hour!—How have I over-slept myself! Mrs. Bennet has prevailed on Mr. Jenkings to have some breakfast.—Good, considerate woman!—indeed, all your Ladyship's domestics are good and considerate.—No wonder, when you treat them so very different from *some people* of high rank. Let those who complain of fraud, guilt, negligence, or want of respect from their dependants, look in here;—where they will see honesty, virtue, and reverence attend the execution of every command.—Flowers must be planted before they can take root.—Few, very few endeavour to improve an uncultivated soil, notwithstanding how great the advantage is to the improver.

I last night receiv'd pleasure inexpressible, by sending for the servants to acquaint them of your Ladyship's returning health; and feasted on the satisfaction they expressed.—In a moment all the live creatures were brought.—I am satisfied, my Lady, if any of them die in your absence, it must be of fat.—My old acquaintances Bell and Flora could hardly waddle in to pay their compliments; the parrot, which used to squall the moment she saw me, is now quite dumb; shewing no mark of her favour, but holding down her head to be scratched;—the turtle-doves are in the same case.—I have taken the liberty to desire the whole crew might be put to short allowance.

John said, he believed it was natural for every thing to grow fat here; and was much afraid, when I saw the coach-horses, I should pronounce the same hard sentence against them, desiring orders to attend me with the

carriage this morning.—I told him my stay would be so short, I should have no time for an airing.

The gardener has just sent me a blooming nosegay; I suppose, to put me in mind of visiting his care, which I intend, after I have acquainted your Ladyship with an incident that till this moment had escaped my memory.—The Dean, Mr. Jenkings, and myself, were drinking a cup of chocolate before we sat out from the inn where I had been so much hurried, when captain Risby sent in his name, desiring we would admit him for a moment. His request being assented to, he entered very respectfully, said he came to apologize for the rudeness he was guilty of the last night.—The Dean and Mr. Jenkings presently guessed his meaning; I had been just relating the whole affair, which I was pleased to find did not disturb their rest.—I assured Captain Risby, far from deeming his behaviour rude, I was obliged to him for his solicitude in sending a servant to my chamber. He said he had not been in bed, determining to watch our setting out, in hopes his pardon would be sealed:—that to think of the accident he might have occasioned, gave him great pain.

Pardon me, Madam, addressing himself to me; and you, Sir, to Mr. Jenkings; if I ask one plain question: Have *you*, or at least has not *that Lady*, relations out of England? I have a friend abroad—I have heard him say his father is still living;—but then he has no sister;—or a certain likeness I discover would convince me.

Undoubtedly he took me for Mr. Jenkings's daughter:—what he meant further I cannot divine.

Mr. Jenkings reply'd, You are mistaken, Sir, if you think me the father of this Lady.—The chaise driving up that moment to the door, he shook him by the hand, and led me towards it; the Captain assisting me in getting in.

I wish I could have satisfied my curiosity.—I wish I had known to whom he likened me.—Perhaps his eyes misinformed him—perhaps he might have taken a cheerful glass after the last night's encounter:—yet he resembled not a votary of Bacchus;—his complexion clear;—hair nicely comb'd;—coat without a spot;—linen extremely fine and clean.—But enough of him.—Here comes the Dean, walking up the avenue escorting a party of my old acquaintances.

Adieu! dearest honour'd Lady, till my return to Hampshire.

F. WARLEY.

LETTER XIV.

The Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH to LORD DARCEY.

London.

Was every any thing so forgetful, to bring no other clothes here but mourning?

Really, my Lord, this favours a good deal of the matrimonial stile. Was you, commenced Benedict, I should think you had received lessons from the famous L——, who takes such pains with his pupils, that those whose attendance is frequent, can, in, the space of three months after the knot is tied, bring their wives to hear patiently the words—*forgetful,—ridiculous,—absurd,—pish—poh*,—and a thousand more of the same significant meaning.—I hear you, my Lord:—*it is true*, I am in jest; and know you would scorn to say even a peevish thing to a wife.

Why fret yourself to a skeleton about an absence of eight days?—How could you suppose she would let you go into Oxfordshire?—Proper decorums must be observed by that sex.—Are not those despicable who neglect them?—What would you have said, had she taken Edmund with her?—Don't storm:—on reflection you will find you had no greater right to expect that indulgence.

I have this morning had a letter from Dick Risby, that unfortunate, but worthy cousin of *mine*, just returned from the West-Indies to take on him the command of a company in Lord ——'s regiment. What a Father his!—to abandon *such* a son.—Leave him to the wide world at sixteen,—without a shilling, only to gratify the pride and avarice of his serpent daughter,—who had art sufficient to get this noble youth disinherited for her waddling brat, whose head was form'd large enough to contain his

mother's mischief and his own.—In vain we attempted to set aside the will:—my brother would not leave England whilst there remained the least hopes for poor Risby.

I always dreaded Dick's going abroad, well knowing what a designing perfidious slut his sister was, from her very infancy.—Her parents drew down a curse by their blind indulgence:—even her nurse was charg'd not to contradict her; she was to have every thing for which she shewed the least inclination.

Lord Eggom and myself being near of an age with our cousins, were sometimes sent to play with them in their nursery; and, though boys of tolerable spirit, that vixen girl has so worried us by her tyrannic and impatient temper, that we have often petitioned, at our return home, to be put to bed supperless.—If sweet-meats were to be divided, she would cry to have the whole; the same in regard to cards,—shells,—money, or whatever else was sent for our entertainment.—When she has pinched us black and blue,—a complaint to her mother has been made by Dick, who could not bear to see us so used, though he was obliged to take such treatment himself, the only redress we should receive was—Poh! she is but a baby.—I thought you had all known better than to take notice of what *such* a *child* as Lucy does—Once, when this was said before her, me flew at me, and cry'd, I will pinch again, if I please;—papa and mamma says I shall,—and so does nurse; and I don't mind what any body else says.—I waited only for my revenge, till the two former withdrew; when sending the latter for a glass of water, I gave *Miss* such a glorious tacking, as I believe she has never tasted the like before or since.—In the midst of the fray, I heard nurse running up, which made me hasten what I owed on *my own* account, to remind her of the *favours* she had conferred on Lord Eggom and her brother.—If such a termagant in her infant state,—judge what she must be at a time of life when her passions are in full vigour, and govern without controul!—I have just shewn the method of rearing this diabolical plant, that you may not wonder at its productions.—I shall see justice overtake her, notwithstanding the long strides she is making to escape.

Dick will be in town with us most part of the winter:—I have wrote him to that purpose, and mention'd your name. He will rejoice to see you:—I have often heard him regret your acquaintance was of so short standing. —Bridgman set out for York the day before I arrived; his servants inform me he is not expected back this three weeks.

I like our lodgings vastly; but more so as the master and mistress of the family are excessively clean and obliging; two things so material to my repose, that I absolutely could not dispense patiently with either.—This it was which made me felicitous about taking a house; I am now so happily situated, I wish not to have one in town whilst I remain a batchelor. Heaven knows how long that will be!—Your nonpareil has given me a dislike to all my former slight prepossessions.

Lady Elizabeth Curtis!—I did once indeed think a little seriously of her:—but *such* a meer girl!—Perhaps the time she has spent in France, Germany, and the Lord knows where, may have changed her from a little bewitching, smiling, artless creature—to a *vain, designing, haughty*,—I could call a coquet by a thousand names;—but Lady Elizabeth *can*-not, *must* not be a coquet.—Cupid, though, shall never tye a bandage over my eyes.—The charms that must fix me are not to be borrow'd;—I shall look for them in her affection to her relations;—in a condescending behaviour to inferiors;—above all, when she offers up her first duties.—If she shines here, I shall not follow her to the card-table, or play-house:—every thing must be right in a heart where duty, affection, and humility, has the precedence.

The misfortune of our sex is this: when taken with a fine face, we enquire no further than, Is she *polite?*—Is she *witty?* Does she *dance* well?—sing well?—in short, *is* she fit to appear in the *Beau Monde*; whilst good sense and virtues which constitute real happiness, are left out of the question.

How does beauty,—politeness—wit,—a fine voice,—a graceful movement, charm!—But how often are we deceiv'd by them.—An instance of which I have lately seen in our old friend Sir Harry. No man on earth can pity that poor soul more than I do; yet I have laughed hours to think of his

mistake. *So mild—so gentle*—said he, George, a week before his marriage, I should have said *execution*,—it is impossible to put her out of humour.—If I am not the happiest man breathing, it must be my own fault.

What was my astonishment when I call'd on him in my way to town, and found this mild *gentle mate* of his, aided by a houseful of her relations, had not only deprived him of all right and authority in the *Castle*, but almost of his very speech!

I dropt in about one, told the Baronet I came five miles out of my way for the pleasure of saluting his bride, and to drink a bottle of claret with him.—He was extremely glad to see me; and ventured to say so, *before* I was introduced to the *Ladies*:—but I saw by his sneaking look, no such liberty must be taken in *their* presence.—My reception was gracious enough, considering all communication is cut off between him and his former acquaintance.

Scarce was I seated, before the old Dowager asked me, if her daughter had not made *great* alterations in the little time she had been at the Castle.

Alterations, Madam! I reply'd;—upon my honour, they are *so* visible, no person can avoid being struck with them.—How could your father and mother, Sir Harry, bear to live in such an wood? looking and speaking disdainfully.—He smiled obsequious—hemm'd—trembled, and was silent.—I hope, continued she, not to see a tree remaining near this house before the next summer.—We want much, Mr. Molesworth, turning to me with quite a different look and voice, to have the pleasure-ground laid out:—but really her Ladyship has had so much to set in order *within doors*, that it has taken off her attention a good deal from what is necessary to be done *without*.—However, Sir, you shall see our design; so, my dear, speaking to her daughter, let Sir Harry fetch the plan.

It is in my closet, returned her Ladyship, and I don't chuse to send *him* there;—but I'll ring for Sally.

I had like that moment to have vow'd a life of celibacy—I saw him redden;—how could he avoid it, if one spark of manhood remain'd?

The indignation I felt threw such a mist before my eyes, that when the plan was laid on the table, I could scarce distinguish temples from clumps of shrubs, or Chinese seats from green slopes.—Yet this *reptile* of a husband could look over my shoulder, hear the opinion of every one present, without *daring* to give his own.

I was more out of patience at dinner.—Bless me, says her Ladyship, how *aukward* you are when I *bid* you cut up any thing!—the mother and daughter echoing, *Never* was there *such* a carver as *Sir Harry!*—Well, I vow, cry'd the latter, it is a strange thing you will not remember, so often as I have *told you*, to lay the meat handsome in the dish.

Good God! thought I, can this man live out half his days?—And, faith, if I had not drank five bumpers of Madeira, I could not have stood the sight of his fearful countenance.

He perceived I was distress'd, and whisper'd me as I mounted my horse, —You see how it is, Molesworth; breeding women *must* not be contradicted.—

I do, I do see how it is, return'd I; and could not for my soul forbear saying, I shall rejoice to hear of a *delivery*.

This is the day when the important affairs of the m——y are to be settled; the papers will inform you; but can a man in love have any relish for politics?—Pray, divest yourself of that plague, when you attend the house.—I should drop to hear you say you espouse *this* or *that* cause, for the love of *Miss Warley*, instead of your *country*.

Next Friday!—Well, I long to see you after a dreadful, dreadful absence of *eight days*.—There is something confounded ridiculous in all this stuff; nor can I scarce credit that man should pine, fret, and make

himself unhappy, because he is loosed from the apron-strings of his Phillida for a few days.—I see you shrug;—but my fate is not dependent on your prognostications.—Was it so, I know where I should be,—down amongst the *dead* men;—down amongst the *dead* men.—

However, I would consent to be rank'd in the number of Cupid's slain, could I be hit by just such a dart as pierc'd you.

Vulcan certainly has none ready made that will do, unless he sharpens the points of those which have already recoiled.

But hold; I must descend from the clouds, to regale myself on a fine turtle at the Duke of R——d's. What an *epicure!* Talk of feasting my palate, when my eyes are to meet delicacies of a far more inviting nature! —There *was* a time I should have been envy'd *such* a repast:—*that* time is fled;—*you* are no longer a monopolizer of beauty;—can sing but of *one*,—talk but of *one*—dream but of *one*,—and, what is still more extraordinary, love but *one*.—

Give *me* a heart at large;—such confin'd notions are not for

MOLESWORTH.

LETTER XV.

Lord DARCEY to the Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH.

Barford Abbey.

I envy not the greatest monarch on earth!—She is return'd with my peace;—my joy;—my very soul.—Had you seen her restorative smiles! they spoke more than my pen can describe!—She bestow'd them on me, even before she ran to the arms of Sir James and Lady Powis.—Sweet condescension!—Her hand held out to meet mine, which, trembling, stopt half way.—What checks,—what restraint, did I inflict on myself!—Yes, that would have been the decisive moment, had I not perceiv'd the eyes of Argus planted *before, behind*, on *every side* of Sir James.—God! how he star'd.—I suppose my looks made some discovery.—Once more I must take thee up, uneasy dress of hypocrisy;—though it will be as hard to girt on, as the tight waistcoat on a lunatic.

Never has a day appear'd to me so long as *this*.—*Full* of expectation, *full* of impatience!—All stuff again.—No matter; it is not the groans of a sick man, that can convey his pain to another:—to feel greatly, you must have been afflicted with the same malady.

I suppose you would laugh to hear how often I have opened and shut the door;—how often look'd out at the window,—or the multiplicity of times examined my watch since ten this morning!—Needless would it likewise be to recount the impatient steps I have taken by the road-side, attentive to the false winds, which would frequently cheat me into a belief, that my heart's treasure was approaching.—Hark! I should say, that must be wheels;—stop and pause;—walk forwards;—stop again, till every sound have died upon my ear.

Harrass'd by expectation, I saunter'd a back way to Jenkings's;—enquired of Mrs. Jenkings, what time she thought her husband might be home; and taking Edmund with me to my former walk, determined to sound *his* inclinations.—I waved mentioning Miss Warley's name till we had gone near a quarter of a mile from the house; still expecting he would begin the subject, which at this juncture I suppose particularly engaged his attention; but perceiving he led to things quite opposite, I drew him out in the following manner.

So you really think, Edmund, your father will not be out after it is dark?

I have not known, my Lord, that he has for many years; rather than venture, I believe, he would stop the night at Oxford. Very composedly he said this, for I watched his looks narrowly.—

Edmund, confess, confess *frankly*, said I; has not *this* day been the longest you ever knew?

The longest I ever knew! Faith your Lordship was never more out: far from thinking so, I am startled to find how fast the hours have flown; and want the addition of at least three, to answer letters which my father's business requires.

Business, *Edmund!* and does *business* really engross so much of your attention, when you know *who* is expected in the evening? Ah! *Edmund*, you are a sly fellow: never tell me, you want to lengthen out the tedious hours of *absence*.

Tedious hours of absence! Ho! ho! my Lord, I see *now* what you are at; your Lordship can never suppose me *such* a fool as to—

Fool!—My supposition, *Edmund*, pronounces you a man of sense; but you mistake my meaning.

I do not mistake, my Lord; surely it must be the height of folly to lift my thoughts to Miss Warley. Suppose my father can give me a few thousands,—are these sufficient to purchase beauty, good sense, with

every accomplishment?—No, no, my Lord, I am not such a vain fellow;—Miss Warley was never born for *Edmund Jenkings*—She told me *so*, the first moment I beheld her.

Told you so? what then, you have made pretensions to her, and she told you *so?*

Yes, my Lord, she told, me *so*.—That is, her *eyes*, her whole graceful *form*, spoke it.—Was I a man of family,—a man of title, with a proper knowledge of the world,—I would not deliberate a moment.

How comes it then, Edmund, that you are so assiduous to oblige her?—You would not run and fly for every young lady.—

True, my Lord, it is not every one would repay me with smiles of condescension. Suffer me to assure your Lordship, when I can oblige Miss Warley, my ambition is gratified.—Never, *never* shall a more presumptuous wish intrude to make me less worthy of the honour I receive from your Lordship's notice.—

This he spoke with energy;—such energy,—as if he had come at the book of my heart, and was reading its contents. I knew his regard for my dear amiable girl, and the danger of betraying my secret, or should have treated him with unbounded confidence:—I therefore only applauded his sentiments;—told him a man who could think thus nobly,—honour'd me in his friendship;—that mine to him should be unalterable; call'd him brother; and by the joyful perturbations of my soul, I fear I gave him some idea of what I strove to hide.

The curtain of night was dropping by slow degrees, when a distant sound of wheels interrupted our conversation.—We stood listening a moment, as it approach'd nearer. Edmund cry'd out,—They are come; I hear, Caesar's voice; and, taking a hearty leave, ran home to receive them.—I directed my course towards the Abbey, in hopes the chaise had proceeded thither, and found I had steer'd right, seeing it stand at the entrance.

Mr. Jenkings did not get out; Lady Powis refused to part with Miss Warley this night. Whilst I write, I hope she is enjoying a sweet refreshing sleep. O! Molesworth! could I flatter myself she dreams of me!—

To-morrow Lord and Lady Allen, Mr. and Mrs. Winter, dine here; consequently Miss Winter, and her *fond* admirer, Lord Baily.—How often have I laugh'd to see that cooing, billing, pair? It is come home, you'll say, with a vengeance.—Not so neither.—I never intend making such a very fool of myself as Lord Baily.—Pray, Madam, don't sit against that door;—and pray, Madam, don't sit against this window.—I hear you have encreased your cold;—you speak hoarse:—indeed, Madam, you speak hoarse, though you won't confess it.—In this strain has the monkey ran on for two hours.—No body must help him at table but Miss Winter.—He is always sure to eat whatever is next her.—She, equally complaisant, sends her plate to him;—desires he will have a bit of the same.—Excessively high, my Lord;—you never eat any thing so well done.—The appearance of fruit is generally the occasion of great altercation:—What! venture on peaches again, Miss Winter?—Indeed, my Lord, I shall only eat this small one;—that was not half ripe which made me sick yesterday.—No more nuts; I absolutely lay an embargo on nuts,—No more, nonsense: I absolutely lay an embargo on nonsense, says Molesworth to

DARCEY.

LETTER XVI.

Miss WARLEY to Lady MARY SUTTON.

Barford Abbey.

Once more, my dear Lady, I dispatch a packet from this place,—after bidding adieu to the agreeable Dean,—Brandon Lodge,—and my friends in that neighbourhood.

How long I shall continue here, God only knows.—If my wishes could avail, the time would be short; very short, indeed.—I am quite out of patience with Mr. and Mrs. Smith; some delay every time I hear from them.—First, we were to embark the middle of this month;—then the latter end;—now it is put off till the beginning of the next:—perhaps, when I hear next, it will be, they do not go at all.—Such weak resolutions are never to be depended on;—a straw, like a magnet, will draw them from side to side.

I think I am as much an inhabitant of this house as of Mr. Jenkings's:—I lay here last night after my journey, and shall dine here this day; but as a great deal of company is expected, must go to my *other* home to dress.—To-morrow your Ladyship shall command me.

From Mr. *Jenkings's*.

Rejoice with me, my dear Lady.—You *will* rejoice, I know, you *will*. to find my eyes are open to my folly.—How could I be so vain; so presumptuous!—Yes, it must be vanity, it must be presumption to the highest,—gloss it over as I will,—to harbour thoughts which before this your Ladyship is acquainted with.—Did you not blush for me?—did you

not in contempt throw aside my letter?—Undoubtedly you did.—Go, you said.—I am sure, dear Madam, you *must* let me not again behold the weakness of that poor silly girl.—But this is my hope, you are not apt to judge unfavourably, *even* in circumstances that will scarce admit of palliation.—Tell me, my dear Lady, I am pardoned; tell me so, and I shall never be again unhappy.—How charming, to have *peace* and *tranquility* restor'd, when I fear'd they were for *ever* banish'd my breast!—I welcomed the friends;—my heart bounded at their return;—I smiled on them;—soothed them;—and promised never more to drive them out.

Thank you, Lord Allen;—again, I thank you:—can I ever be too grateful?—You have been instrumental to my repose.

The company that dined at the Abbey yesterday were Lord and Lady Allen, Lord Baily, Mr. Mrs. and Miss Winter.—This was the first day I changed my mourning;—a white lutestring, with the fine suit of rough garnets your Ladyship gave me, was my dress on the occasion.—But let me proceed to the incident for which I stand indebted for the secret tranquility, the innate repose I now possess in a *superlative* degree.—

When I went to Mr. Jenkings's to dress for dinner, Lord Darcey attended me, as usual:—the coach was to fetch us.—I thought I never saw his Lordship in such high good humour; what I mean is, I never saw him in such spirits.—To speak the truth, his temper always appears unruffled;—sometimes a little gloomy; but I suppose he is not exempted from the common ills of life.—He entertained me on the way with a description of the company expected, interlarding his conversation with observations tending to raise my vanity. Notwithstanding his seeming sincerity, I was proof against such insinuations.—If he had stopp'd *there*,—well, if he had stop'd *there*;—what then?—Why then, perhaps, I should not have betray'd the weakness of my heart.—But I hope thy confusion pass'd unobserv'd;—I hope it was not seen before I could draw my handkerchief from my pocket: if it should, heavens! the very thought has dyed me scarlet.

I am running on as though your Ladyship had been present in Mr. Jenkings's parlour,—in the coach,—and at table, whither I must conduct you, my dear Lady, if your patience will bear a minute *recital*.—First, then, to our conference in the parlour, after I was dress'd.

My coming down interrupted a *tête-à-tête* between his Lordship and Edmund. The latter withdrew soon after I entered;—*it look'd some-how as if designed;—it vexed me*;—mean it how he would, *it much* disconcerted me:—I *hate*, I *despise* the least appearance of design.—In vain did I attempt to bring him back; he only answer'd he would be with us instantly.

I was no sooner seated, than his Lordship placed himself by me; and fetching a deep sigh, said, I wish it was in my power to oblige Miss Warley as much as it is in hers to oblige me.—

My Lord, I cannot conceive how I have it in my power to oblige you. He took my hand,—Yes, Madam, to make *me* happy,—for ever happy,—to make *Sir James* and *Lady Powis happy*, you have only to determine not to quit your native country.

Stop! my Lord, if you mean my going to *Montpellier*, I am determin'd.—And are you *really* determin'd, Miss Warley?—his face overspread with a dreadful paleness.

I am, my Lord,

But what are you determin'd? Are you determined to distress your friends?

I wish not to distress my friends: nothing would give me so much pain; but I *must* go;—indeed I *must*.

He rose up;—walk'd about the room,—came back to his seat again, looking quite frantic,—Good God! why should that sex practise so many arts? He pray'd,—intreated,—left no argument untried.

I cannot picture his countenance, when I declared myself resolved.—He caught both my hands, fixed his eyes stedfastly upon me.

Then you are inflexible, Madam?—Nothing can move you to pity the most wretched of his sex.—Know you the person living that could prevail?—If you do,—say so;—I will bring him instantly on his knees.

There is not in the world, my Lord, one who could prevent me from paying my *duty*, my *affection*, my *obedience*, to Lady Mary Sutton: if due to a parent, how much more from me to *Lady Mary*;—a poor orphan, who have experienced from her the most maternal fondness? The word *orphan* struck him; he reeled from me and flung himself into a chair opposite, leaning his head on a table which stood near.

I declare he distress'd me greatly;—I know not what my thoughts were at that moment;—I rose to quit the room; he started up.

Don't leave me, Miss Warley;—don't leave me. I *will* keep you no longer in the dark: I *must* not suffer in your opinion,—be the consequence—

Here we were interrupted by Edmund.—I was sorry he just then entered; —I would have given the world to know what his Lordship was about to say.

When we were in the coach, instead of explaining himself, he assumed rather a chearful air; and asked, if my time was fix'd for going to France?

Not absolutely fix'd, my Lord; a month or two hence, perhaps. This I said, that he might not know exactly the time when I shall set out.

A month or *two!* O! that will be just the thing, just as I could wish it.—

What does your Lordship mean?

Only that I intend spending part of the winter in Paris; and if I should not be deemed an *intruder*, perhaps the same yacht may carry us over.

I was never more at a loss for a reply.

Going to France, my Lord! in a hesitating voice.—I never heard,—I never dreamt,—your Lordship had such an intention.

Well, you do not forbid it, Miss Warley? I shall certainty be of your party:

I forbid it, my Lord! *I forbid it!* What right have *I* to controul your Lordship's actions? Besides, we should travel so short a way together, it would be very immaterial.

Give me Leave, Madam, in this respect to be the judge; perhaps every one is not bless'd with that *happy* indifference.—What may be very *immaterial* to *one*,—may be matter of the *highest* importance to *another*.

He pronounced the word *immaterial*, with some marks of displeasure. I was greatly embarrass'd: I thought our conversation would soon become too interesting.

I knew not what to do.—I attempted to give it a different turn; yet it engrossed all my attention.—At length I succeeded by introducing my comical adventure at the inn, in our way to Oxfordshire: but the officer's name had escaped my memory, though I since recollect it to be Risby.

This subject engaged us till we came within sight of the drawing-room windows.—There are the visitors, as I live! said I. Your Lordship not being dress'd, will, I suppose, order the coach to the other door.—To be plain, I was glad of any excuse that would prevent my getting out before them.—Not *I*, indeed, Miss Warley, reply'd he:—Dress is never of consequence enough to draw me two steps out of my way.—If the spectators yonder will fix their eyes on an old coat rather than a fine young Lady, *why* they have it for their pains.

By this time the door was open'd, and Sir James appearing, led me, with his usual politeness, to the company. I was placed by her Ladyship next Miss Winter, whose person I cannot say prejudiced me in her favour,

being entirely dispossessed of that winning grace which attracts strangers at a first glance.

After measuring me with her eye from head to toe, she sent my dimensions in a kind of half smile across the room to Lord Baily; then vouchsafed to ask, how long I had been in this part of the world? which question was followed by fifty others, that shewed she laboured under the violent thirst of curiosity; a thirst never to be conquered; for, like dropsical people, the more they drink in, the more it rages.

My answers were such as I always return to the inquisitive.—Yes, Madam;—No, Madam;—very well;—very good;—not certain;—quite undetermin'd.—Finding herself unsuccessful with *me*, she apply'd to *Lady Powis*; but alas! poor maiden, she could drain nothing from that fountain; the streams would not flow;—they were driven back, by endeavouring to force them into a wrong channel.

These were not certainly her first defeats, by the clever way of hiding her chagrin:—it is gone whilst she adjusts the flower in her bosom,—or opens and shuts her fan twice.—How can *she* be mortified by trifles,—when the *Lord* of *her heart*,—the sweet, simpering, fair-faced, Lord Baily keeps his eyes incessantly fixed on her, like centinels on guard?—They cannot speak, *indeed they cannot*, or I should expect them to call out every half hour, "All is well."

I admire Lord and Lady Allen. I say, I admire them: their manners are full of easy freedom, pleasing vivacity.—I cannot admire all the world; I wish I could.—Mr. and Mrs. Winter happen not to suit my taste;—they are a kind of people who look down on every one of middle fortune;—seem to despise ancestry,—yet are always fond of mixing with the great.—Their rise was too sudden;—they jump'd into life all at once.—Such quick transitions require great equality of mind;—the blaze of splendor was too much for their *weak* eyes;—the *flare* of surprise is still visible.

It was some time before the conversation became general.—First, and ever to have precedence,—the weather;—next, roads;—then houses,—plantations,—fashions,—dress,—equipage;—and last of all, politics in a thread-bare coat.

About ten minutes before dinner, Lord Darcey joined us, dress'd most magnificently in a suit of olive velvet, embroider'd with gold;—his hair without powder, which became him infinitely.—He certainly appear'd to great advantage:—how could it be otherwise, when in company with that tawdry, gilded piece of clay?—And to sit by him, of all things!—One would really think it had been designed:—*some* exulted, *some* look'd mortified at the contrast.—Poor Miss Winter's seat began to grow very uneasy;—she tried every corner, yet could not vary the light in which she saw the *two opposites*.—Why did she frown on *me?*—why cast such contemptuous glances every time I turn'd my eye towards her?—Did *I* recommend the daubed coxcomb;—or represent that her future joys depended on title?—No! it was vanity, the love of grandeur,—that could make her give up fine sense, fine accomplishments, a princely address, and all the noble requisites:—yes, my Lady, such a one, Lord Darcey tells me, she has refused.—Refused, for what? For folly, a total ignorance in the polite arts, and a meaness of manners not to be express'd: yet, I dare say, she thinks, the sweet sounds of *my Lady*, and *your Ladyship* is *cheaply* purchased by such a sacrifice.

When we moved to go into the dining-parlour, Miss Winter bow'd for me to follow Lady Allen and her mother; which after I had declined, Lady Powis took me by the hand, and said, smiling, No, Madam, Miss Warley is one of us.—If *so*, my Lady—and she swam out of the room with an air I shall never forget.

Lord Darcey took his place at table, next Lord Allen;—I sat opposite, with Miss Winter on my right, and Lord Baily on my left.—Sorry I was, to step between the Lovers; but ceremony required it; so I hope they do not hate me on that account.—Lord Allen has a good deal of archness in

his countenance, though not of the ill-natur'd kind.—I don't know how, but every time he look'd across the table I trembled; it seem'd a foreboding of what was to follow.

He admired the venison;—said it was the best he had ever tasted from Sir James's park;—but declared he would challenge him next Monday, if all present would favour him with their company.—Lady Allen seconded the request so warmly, that it was immediately assented to.—

What think you, said his Lordship it is to the *young* folks that I address myself, of seeing before you a couple who that day has been married twenty years, and never frown'd on one another?

Think! said Lord Darcey, it is very possible.

Possible it certainly is, reply'd Lady Powis; but very few instances, I believe—

What say you, Miss Warley? ask'd his Lordship: you find Lord Darcey supposes it very possible.—Good God! I thought I should have sunk: it was not so much the question, as the manner he express'd it in. I felt as if my face was stuck full of needles: however, I stifled my confusion, and reply'd, I was quite of Lady Powis's opinion.

Well, what say you, Miss Winter?

How I rejoiced! I declare I could hardly contain my joy, when he address'd himself to her.

What say I, my Lord? return'd she; why, *truly*, I think it must be your own faults, if you are not treated *civilly*.—The Devil! cry'd he.

O fie! O fie! my Lord, squeaked my left hand neighbour.—And why O fie! retorted his Lordship: Is *civility* all we have to expect?

We can *claim* nothing else said the squeaker.—If the dear creatures condescend to *esteem* us, we ought to consider it a particular indulgence.

And so, Miss Warley, cry'd Lord Allen, we are only to be *esteemed* now-a-days. I thank God my good woman has imbibed none of those modern notions. Her actions have convinced the world of that long ago.

Poh! my Lord, said Lady Allen, we are old-fashion'd people:—you must not talk thus before Gentlemen and Ladies bred in the present age.

Come, come, let me hear Lord Darcey speak to this point, continued his Lordship. He is soon to be *one of us*;—we shall shortly, I am told, salute him *Benedick*.

On this Sir James threw down his knife and fork with emotion, crying, This is news, indeed! This is what I never heard before! Upon my word, your Lordship has been very secret! looking full at Lord Darcey. But you are of *age*, my Lord, so I have no *right* to be consulted; however, I should be glad to know, who it is that runs away with your heart. This was spoke half in jest, half in earnest.

In a moment my neck and face were all over crimson.—I felt the colour rise;—it was not to be suppress'd.—I drew my handkerchief from my pocket;—held it to my face;—hemm'd;—call'd for wine and water;—which, when brought, I could scarcely swallow; spoke in a low voice to Miss Winter;—said she had a poor stomach, or something like it.

Lord Darcey too was confus'd.—Why did I look up to him?—He was pale, instead of red.—I saw his lips move, but could not hear what he said for more than a minute; occasion'd by an uncommon noise which just then rush'd through my head:—at length sounds grew distinct, and I heard this sentence—*every* word is inscribed where it can *never* be erazed—

Upon my honour. Lord Allen, I have never made proposals to any woman; and *further*, it is a matter of doubt, whether I ever shall.

By this time I had lost all my colour;—charming cool—and calm,—no perturbation remaining.

Nothing disagreeable now hung on my mind, except a certain thoughtfulness, occasion'd by the recollection of my folly.—

Miss Winter's eyes sparkled, if it is possible for grey ones to sparkle, at the declaration Lord Darcey had just made; and, of a sudden, growing very fond of *me*, laid her hand on mine, speaking as it were aside,—Well, I was never *more* surprized! I as *much* believed him engaged to a *certain* young Lady,—squeezing my thumb,—as I think I am living.—Nay, I would not have credited the contrary, had I not heard him declare off with my *own* ears.—I see how it is; Sir James must chuse a wife for him.—

To all which I only answered, Lord Darcey, Madam, is certainly the best judge of his actions:—I make no doubt but Sir James will approve his Lordship's choice.

After what I have related, common subjects ensued:—the cloth being removed, I withdrew to the Library, intending to sit with Mr. Watson half an hour, who was confined by a cold. He holds out his hand to take mine the moment he hears my footstep.—I look on him as an angel: his purity, his mildness, his resignation speak him one.—

Lord Darcey entered as I was about to join the company; however, I staid some minutes, that my quitting the room might not seem on *his* account.

I am glad you are come, my Lord, said Mr. Watson; sitting with such a poor infirm man has made Miss Warley thoughtful.—Upon my word, Sir, returned I, it was only the fear of increasing your head-ach that me silent.—I never was in higher spirits.—I could sing and dance this very moment. Well then, dear Miss Warley, cried his Lordship, let me fetch your *guitarre*.

With all my heart, my Lord; I am *quite* in tune.—Taking leave of Mr. Watson, I return'd to the company.—His Lordship soon followed. Again repeating his request, in which every person join'd, I sung and play'd several compositions.

Miss Winter was next call'd upon and the guitarre presented to her by Lord Darcey.—A long time she absolutely refused it; declaring she had not learnt any new music this year.—What does that signify, Miss Winter? said her mother; you know you have a sweet voice.

Bless me! Madam! how can you say so?—To be sure, I should sing to great advantage *now*.

Well, Nancy, you'll oblige *Papa?*—says the old Gentleman; I know you'll oblige *Papa*,—stalking over to her on the tops of his toes.

Here the contest ended; *Miss* taking the guitarre, condescended to oblige her *Papa*.

She really sings and plays well:—if her manner had been less affected, we should have been more entertain'd.—The company staid supper, after which Lord Darcey came with me home.—I made *no* objection:—of all things, I would make *none*—after what pass'd at table. Fortunate event! how I rejoice in my recovered tranquillity!

The thoughts, the pleasing thoughts of freedom have kept me from sleep; I could not think of repose amidst my charming reflections. Happy, happy change!

It is past two o'clock!—At all times and all seasons,

I am, my dear Lady,

Yours invariably,

F. WARLEY.

LETTER XVII.

Miss WARLEY to the same.

From Mr. Jenkings's.

Sent for before breakfast!—Nobody in the coach!—Well, I am glad of that, however.—Something very extraordinary must have happen'd.—I hope Lady Powis is not ill.—No other message but to desire I would come immediately.—I go, my dear Lady; soon as I return will acquaint you what has occasion'd me this *early* summons.

Eight o'clock at Night.

No ill news! quite the reverse:—I am escaped from the house of festivity to make your Ladyship a partaker.

My spirits are in a flutter.—I know not where to begin.—I have run every step of the way, till I am quite out of breath.—Mr. Powis is coming home,—absolutely coming home to settle;—married *too*, but I cannot tell all at once.—Letters with an account of it have been this morning receiv'd. He does not say *who* his wife is, only one of the best women in the world.

She will be received with affection;—I know she will.—Lady Powis declares, they shall be folded together in her arms.

It was too much for Sir James, he quite roared again when he held out to me the letter,—I don't believe he has eat a morsel this day.—I never before saw a man so affected with joy.—Thank God! I left him pure and calm.

The servants were like mad creatures, particularly those who lived in the family before Mr. Powis left England.—He seems, in short, to be considered as one risen from the dead.—

I was in such haste on receiving Lady Powis's message, that I ran down to the coach, my hat and cloak in my hand.—Mr. and Mrs. Jenkings were talking to the coachman.—I soon perceived by them something pleasing had happen'd.—They caught me in their arms, and I thought would have smother'd me in their embraces; crying out, Mr. Powis is coming home, my dear;—Mr. Powis is coming home:—for God's sake, Madam, make haste up to the Hall.

In getting into the coach, I stepp'd on my apron, and fell against the opposite door.—My right arm was greatly bruis'd, which I did not perceive till I drew on my glove.

The moment I alighted, I ran to the breakfast-parlour; but finding no one there, went directly to her Ladyship's dressing-room.—She open'd the door, when she heard me coming. I flew to her.—I threw my arms about her neck, and all I could say in my hurry was, Joy, Joy, Joy!

I am all joy, my love, she return'd—I am made up of nothing else. I quitted her to run to Sir James, who was sitting in a great chair with a letter held out. I believe I kiss'd him twenty times before I took it;—there could be no harm in that surely.—Such endearments I should have shewn my father, on the like tender occasion. He wept, as I have said, till he quite roared again.—I laid his head on my shoulder, and it was some time before I would mention his son's name.

Lord Darcey held one of Sir James's hands: he was in the room when I enter'd; but I declare I never saw him till he spoke. He is safe *now*,—after what happened yesterday,—safe from any imputation on *my* account—

Very kind and very civil, upon my word! O! your Ladyship never heard such a fuss as he made about the scratch on my arm.—I affect to look pleased when he speaks to me, that he might not take it into his head I

am mortified.

He must be the happiest creature in the world; I honour him for the grateful affection he shews Sir James and Lady Powis.

Breakfast stood on the table: not a soul had broke their fast.—Her Ladyship was here, there, and every where.—I was sadly afraid they would be all sick; at length I prevailed on them to drink a cup of chocolate.—

Mr. Watson, good man notwithstanding his indisposition, got up at eleven.—I met him coming from his apartment, and had the pleasure of leading him to the happy family.—

His congratulations were delivered with such serene joy,—such warmth of affection,—as if he had cull'd the heart-felt satisfaction of both *parents*.

The word *happy* echoed from every mouth; each sentence began and ended with it.—What the heart feels is seldom to be disguised.—Grief will speak,—if not by the tongue, it will out;—it hangs on the features, sallows the skin, withers the sinews, and is a galling weight that pulls towards the ground.—Why should a thought of grief intrude at this time?—Is not my dear Lady Mary's health returning?—Is not felicity restor'd to this family?—Now will my regret at parting be lessened;—now shall I leave every individual with minds perfectly at ease.

Mr. Powis is expected in less than a month, intending to embark in the next ship after the Packet.—How I long to see him!—But it is very unlikely I should; I shall certainly have taken my leave of this place before he arrives.—By your Ladyship's permission, I hope to look in upon them, at our return to England.

What genteel freedoms men give themselves after *declaring off*, as Miss Winter calls it?—I had never so many fine things said to me before;—I can't tell how many;—quite a superabundance;—and before Sir James

too!—But no notice is taken; he has cleared himself of all suspicion.—He may go to town as soon as he will.—His business is done;—yes, he did it yesterday.

I wish I may not laugh out in the midst of his fine speeches.—

I wish your Ladyship could see this cool attention I give him.—But I have nettled him to the truth this afternoon:—his pride was alarm'd;—it could certainly proceed from *no other* cause, after he has *declared off*.

I was sitting at the tea-table, a trouble I always take from Lady Powis, who with Sir James was walking just without the windows, when Lord Darcey open'd the door, and said, advancing towards me with affected airs of admiration,—How proud should I be to see my house and table so graced!—Then leaning over the back of my chair, Well, my angel! how is the bad arm? Come, let me see, attempting to draw off my glove.

Oh! quite well, my Lord; withdrawing my hand carelessly.

For heaven's sake, take more care of yourself, Miss Warley; this might have been a sad affair.

Depend on that, my Lord, for my own sake.

For your *own sake!* Not in consideration of any *other* person?

Yes; of *Lady Mary Sutton, Sir James* and *Lady Powis, good Mr. Jenkings* and *his wife*, who I know would be concerned was I to suffer much from any accident.

Then there is no *other* person you would wish to preserve your life for?

Not that I know at present, my Lord,

Not that you know at *present!* so you think you may one day or *other?*

I pretend not, my Lord, to answer for what *may* happen; I have never seen the *person* yet. I was going to say something further, I have really forgot what, when he turn'd from me, and walked up and down the room with a seeming discomposure.

If you are sincere in what you have said, *Miss Warley*; *if* you are *really* sincere, I do pronounce—Here he burst open the door, and flew out the instant Sir James and Lady Powis entered.

When the tea was made, a footman was sent to Lord Darcey; but he was no where to be found.

This is very strange, said her Ladyship; Lord Darcey never used to be out of the way at tea-time. I declare I am quite uneasy; perhaps he may be ill.

Oh! cry'd Sir James, don't hurry yourself; I warrant he is got into one of his old reveries, and forgets the time.

I was quite easy. I knew his abrupt departure was nothing but an air:—an air of consequence, I suppose.—However, I was willing to be convinced, so did not move till I saw the Gentleman sauntering up the lawn. As no one perceived him but myself, I slid out to the housekeeper, and told her, if her Lady enquir'd for me, I was gone home to write Letters by to-morrow's post.

You have enough of it now, I believe, my dear Lady; two long letters by the same packet:—but you are the repository of my joy, my grief, the very inmost secrets of my soul.—You, my dear Lady, have the whole heart of

F. WARLEY.

LETTER XVIII.

Lord DARCEY to the Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH.

Barford Abbey.

Ruin'd and undone, as I hope for mercy!—undone too by my own egregious folly!—She is quite lost,—quite out of my power.—I wish Lord Allen had been in the bottom of the sea;—he can never make me amends;—no, if he was to die to-morrow and leave me his whole fortune.—

I told you he was to dine here yesterday.—I cannot be circumstantial.—He did dine here;—to my utter sorrow he did.

Oh what a charming morning I spent!—Tho' my angel persisted in going to France, yet it was in a manner that made me love her, if possible, ten thousand times more than ever.—Good God! had you seen how she look'd!—But no matter now;—I must forget her angelical sweetness.—Forget did I say?—No, by heaven and earth—she lives in every corner of my heart.—I wish I had told her my whole soul.—I was going to tell her, if I had not been interrupted.—It is too late now.—She would not hear me: I see by her manners she would not hear me. She has learnt to look with indifference:—even smiles with indifference.—Why does she not frown? That would be joy to what her smiles afford.—I hate such smiles; they are darts dipp'd in poison.—

Lord Allen said he heard I was going to be marry'd:—*What was that to him?*—Sir James look'd displeased. To quiet *his* fears I assured him—God! I know not what I assured *him*—something very foreign from my heart.

She blushed when Sir James asked, to whom?—With what raptures did I behold her blushes!—But she shrunk at my answer.—I saw the colour leave her cheek, like a rose-bud fading beneath the hoary frost.

I *will* know my fate.—Twill be with you in a few days,—if Sir James should consent.—*What if he should consent?*—She is steeled against my vows—my protestations;—my words affect her not;—the most tender assiduities are disregarded:—she seems to attend to what I say, yet regards it not.

Where are those looks of preference fled,—those expressive looks?—I saw them not till now:—it is their loss,—it is their sad reverse that tells me what they were. She turns not her head to follow my foot-steps at parting;—or when I return, does not proclaim it by advancing pleasure tip-toe to the windows of her soul.—No anxiety for my health! No, she cares not what becomes of me.—I complain'd of my head, said I was in great pain;—heaven knows how true! My complaints were disregarded.—I attended her home. She sung all the way; or if she talked, it was of music:—not a word of *my poor head*;—no charges to draw the glasses up going back.

There was a time, Molesworth—there was a time, if my finger had but ached, it was, My Lord, you look ill. Does not Lady Powis persuade you to have advice? You are really too careless of your health.

Shall she be *another's?*—Yes; when I shrink at sight of what lies yonder,—my sword, George;—that shall prevent her ever being *another's*.

Tell me you believe she will be *mine*:—it may help to calm my disturbed mind.—Be sure you do not hint she will be *another's*.

Have I told you, Mr. Powis is coming home?—I cannot recollect whether I have or not;—neither can I pain myself to look back.

All the world has something to comfort them, but your poor friend.—Every thing wears the face of joy, till I turn my eyes inwards:—*there it is* I behold the opposite;—*there it is* where Grief has fix'd her abode.—Does

the fiend ever sleep? Will she be composed by ushering in the happy prospects of others?—Yes, I will feel, joy.—Joy did I say? Joy I cannot feel.—Satisfaction then?—Satisfaction likewise is forbid to enter.—What then will possess my mind; on recollecting peace is restor'd, where gratitude calls for such large returns?—I'll pray for them;—I'll pray for a continuance of their felicity.—I'll pray, if they have future ills in store, they may light on the head of Darcey.—Yes, he can bear more yet:—let the load be ever so heavy, he will stoop to take up the burthen of his friends;—such friends as Sir James and Lady Powis have been to

DARCEY.

LETTER XIX.

The Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH to LORD DARCEY.

London.

Well, give me the first salute of your fair bride;—*and for your bride* I'll ensure Miss Warley.—Why there is not a symptom but is in your favour.—She is nettled; can't you perceive it?—Once a studied disregard takes place, we are safe:—nothing will hurt you *now*, my Lord.—

You have been stuttering falsehoods.—From what I can gather, you have been hushing the Baronet at the expence of your own and Miss Warley's quiet.—If you have, never mind it; things may not be the worse.—Come away, I advise you; set out immediately.—See how she looks at parting.—But don't distress her;—I charge you not to distress her.—Should you play back her own cards, I will not answer for the pride of the sex.—

Sir James's consent once gained, and she rejects your proposals, lay all your letters to me on the subject before her.—I have them by me.—These cannot fail of clearing every doubt; she will be convinced then how sincerely you have loved her.—

You surprise me concerning Mr. Powis:—I thought he was settled in his government for life;—or rather, for the life of his father.—However, I am convinced his coming over will be no bad thing for you;—he has suffered too much from avarice, not to assist another so hardly beset.—

Was not his settling abroad an odd affair!—If he determined to remain single till he had an opportunity of pleasing himself, why did he leave England?—The mortification could not be great to have his overtures refused, where they were made with such indifference.—

As he has lived so many years a batchelor, I suppose there will be now an end to that great family.—

What a leveller is avarice! How does it pull down by attempting to raise? How miserable, as Seneca says, in the desire?—how miserable in attaining our ends?—The same great man alledges, that as long as we are solicitous for the increase of wealth, we lose the true use of it; and spend our time in putting out, calling in, and passing our accounts, without any substantial benefit, either to the world, or to ourselves.—

If you had ever any uneasiness on Bridgman's account, it must be now at an end.—Married, and has brought his bride to town.—What a false fellow!—From undoubted authority, I am assured the writings have been drawn six months:—so that every thing must be concluded between him and his wife, at the very time he talked to me of Miss Warley.—I wash my hands from any further acquaintance with concealed minds:—there must be something very bad in a heart which has a dark cloud drawn before it.—Virtue and innocence need no curtain:—they were sent to us naked;—it is their loss, or never possessing them,—that makes caution necessary, to hide from the world their destined place of abode.—Without entering a house, and being conversant with its inhabitants, how is it possible to say, if they are worthy or unworthy:—so if you knock, and are not admitted, you still remain doubtful.—But I am grown wise from experience;—and shall judge, for the future, where a heart is closely shut up, there is nothing in it worth enquiring after.

I go on Thursday to meet Risby, and conduct him to town. It would give us great joy, at our return, to shake you by the hand.—What can avail your staying longer in the midst of doubts, perplexities, racks, tortures, and I know-not-what. Have you any more terms to express the deadly disorder?—If you have keep them to yourself; I want not the confounded list compleat:—no; no, not I; faith.—

I go this evening to see the new play, which is at present a general subject of conversation.—Now, was I a vain fellow—a boaster—would I mention four or six of the prettiest women about town, and swear I was

to escort them.—Being a lover of truth, I confess I shall steal alone into an upper box, to fix my attention on the performance of the piece.—Perhaps, after all is over, I may step to the box of some sprightly, chatty girl, such as lady ——,—hear all the scandal of the town, ask her opinion of the play, hand her to her chair, and so home, to spend a snug evening with sir Edward Ganges, who has promised to meet me here at ten.

Yours,

MOLESWORTH.

LETTER XX.

Lady MARY SUTTON to Miss WARLEY.

German Spaw.

No, my dear, *Lord Darcey* is not the man he appears.—What signifies a specious outside, if within there's a narrow heart?—Such must be his, to let a virtuous love sit imprisoned in secret corners, when it delights to dwell in open day.

Perhaps, if he knew my intentions, all concealments would be thrown aside, and he glory to declare what at present he meanly darkly hints.—By my consent, you should never give your hand to one who can hold the treasures of the mind in such low estimation.

When you mention'd your happy situation, the friendly treatment of Sir James and Lady Powis, I was inclined to think for *many* reasons, it would be wrong to take you from them;—*now* I am convinced, the pain *that* must occasion, or the danger in crossing the sea, is not to be compared to what you might suffer in your *peace* by remaining where you are.—When people of Lord Darcey's rank weigh long a matter of this nature, it is seldom the scale turns of the right side;—therefore, let not *Hope*, my dear child, flatter you out of your affections.

Do not think you rest in security:—tender insinuations from a man such as you describe Lord Darcey, may hurt your quiet.

I speak not from experience;—Nature, by cloathing me in her plainest garb, has put all these hopes and fears far from me.

I have been ask'd, it is true, often, for my fortune;—at least, I look upon asking for my heart to be the same thing.—Sure, I could never be such a fool to part with the latter, when I well knew it was requested only to be put in possession of the former!

You think Jenkings suspects his son has a *too* tender regard for you;—*you* think he is uneasy on that account.—Perhaps he is uneasy;—but time will convince you his suspicions, his uneasiness, proceed not from the *cause you imagine*.—He is a good man; you cannot think too well of him.

I hope this letter will find you safe return'd to Hampshire. I am preparing to leave the Spaw with all possible expedition: I should quit it with reluctance, but for the prospect of visiting it again next summer, with my dear Fanny.

At Montpelier the winter will slide on imperceptibly: many agreeable families will there join us from the Spaw, whose good-humour and chearful dispositions, together with plentiful draughts of the Pouhon Spring, have almost made me forget the last ten years I have dragg'd, on in painful sickness.

The family in which I have found most satisfaction, is Lord Hampstead's:—every way calculated to make themselves and others happy;—such harmony is observed through the whole, that the mechanism of the individuals seem to be kept in order by one common wheel.—I rejoice that I shall have an opportunity of introducing you to them.—We have fixed to set out the same day for Montpelier.

Lady Elizabeth, the eldest daughter, has obligingly offer'd to travel in my coach, saying, she thought it would be dull for me to go alone.

It is impossible to say which of the two sisters, was it left to my choice, would be my companion, as both are superlatively pleasing.—They possess, to a degree, what I so much admire in our sex;—a peculiar softness in the voice and manner; yet not quite so sprightly, perhaps, as may be thought necessary for some misses started up in this age; but

sufficient, I think, for those who keep within certain bounds.—It requires an uncommon share of understanding, join'd with a great share of wit, to make a very lively disposition agreeable. I allow, if these two ingredients are happily blended, none can chuse but admire, as well as be entertain'd with, such natural fine talents:—on the contrary, where one sees a pert bold girl apeing such rare gifts, it is not only the most painful, but most absurd sight on earth.

Lady Elizabeth, and her amiable sister Sophia strive to hide every perfection they possess;—yet these I have just mention'd, with all others, will on proper occasions, make their appearance through a croud of blushes.—This timidity proceeds partly from nature,—partly from the education they have received under the best of mothers, whose tenderness for them would not suffer her to assign that momentous task to any but herself; fearing, as she has often told me, they would have had a thousand faults overlook'd by another, which her eye was ever on the watch to discover. She well knew the most trivial might be to them of the worst consequence:—when they were call'd to an account for what was pass'd, or warn'd how to avoid the like for the future, her manner was so determin'd and persuasive, as if she was examining her own conscience, to rectify every spot and blemish in it.

Though Lady Hampstead's fondness for her daughters must cause her to admire their good qualities, like a fine piece of perspective, whose beauties grow upon the eye,—yet she has the art not only to conceal her admiration, but, by the ascendency her tenderness has gain'd, she keeps even from themselves a knowledge of those perfections.—To this is owing the humility which has fortified their minds from the frequent attacks flattery makes against the unstable bulwarks of title and beauty.

Matchless as these sisters appear, they are to be equalled in their own, as well as the other sex.—I hope you will allow it in *one*, when you see Lord Hallum: he is their brother as much by *virtue* as *birth*.—I could find in my heart to say a thousand things of this fine youth;—but that I think such subjects flow easier from a handsome young woman than a plain

old one.—Yet don't be surpriz'd;—unaccountable things happen every day;—if I *should* lend a favourable ear to this Adonis!—Something whispers me I shall receive his proposals.—An excuse, on these occasions, is never wanting; mine will be a good one:—that, at my death, you may be left to the protection of this worthy Lord.—But, first, I must be assured you approve of him in that light;—being so firmly attach'd to my dear Fanny, to your happiness, my Love, that the wish of contributing to it is the warmest of your ever affectionate

M. SUTTON.

LETTER XXI.

Lord DARCEY to the Hon. GEORGE MOLESWORTH.

Barford Alley.

Five days more, and I am with you.—Saturday morning!—Oh that I may support the hour of trial with fortitude!—I tremble at the thought;—my blood freezes in my veins, when I behold the object I am to part from.—

I try in vain to keep out of her sight:—if I attempt to leave the room where she is, my resolutions are baffled before I reach the door.—Why do I endeavour to inflict so hard a penance!—Because I foolishly suppose it would wean me.—Wean me *from what?*—From virtue.—No, Molesworth, it is not *absence*;—it is not *time* itself can deaden the exalted image;—it neither sickens or dies, it blooms to immortality,

Was I only to be parted from beauty, *that* I might meet again in every town and village.—I want you to force me from the house.—Suppose I get up early, and slip away without taking leave.—But that will not do;—Sir James is ceremonious;—Lady Powis may deem it disrespect;—above all, Miss Warley, *that dear, dear Miss Warley*,—if *she* should think me wanting in regard, all then must be at an end.

Ha! Sir James yonder on the terrace, and alone! Let me examine his countenance:—I see no clouds;—this is the time, if ever!—Miss Warley not yet come up from Jenkings's!—If successful, with what transports shall I run to fetch her!—*Yes, I will* venture;—*I will* have one trial, as I hope for mercy.—

As I hope for mercy, I see, were my last words.—I do indeed hope for it, but never from Sir James.

Still perplexed;—still miserable!—

I told you Miss Warley was not come from Jenkings's; but how I started, when I saw her going to Lady Powis's dressing-room!

I was hurried about her in a dream, last night.—I thought I had lost her:—I hinted it when we met;—that moment I fancied she eyed me with regard;—she spoke *too* in a manner very different from what she has done some days past.—Then I'll swear it,—for it was not illusion, George,—her whole face had something of a sweet melancholy spread over it;—a kind of resignation in her look;—a melting softness that droop'd on her cheek:—I felt what it expressed;—it fir'd my whole frame;—it sent me to Sir James with redoubled eagerness.

I found him thoughtful and complaisant: we took several turns, before I could introduce my intended subject; when, talking of my setting out, I said, Now I have an opportunity, Sir James, perhaps I may not have another before I go, I should be glad of your sentiments in regard to my settling in life.—

How do you mean, my Lord; as to the choice of a wife?—

Why, I think, Sir, there's no other way of settling to one's satisfaction.

To be sure, it is very necessary your Lordship should consider on those matters,—especially as you are the last of a noble family:—when, you do fix, I hope it will be *prudently*.

Prudently, Sir James! you may depend on it I will never settle my affections *imprudently*.

Wall, but, my Lord, what are your notions of *prudence?*

Why, Sir, to make choice of a person who is virtuous, sensible, well descended.—*Well descended Jenkings has assured me she is*.

You say nothing, my Lord, of what is *most* essential to happiness;—nothing of the *main point*.

Good-nature, I suppose you mean:—I would not marry an ill-natur'd woman, Sir James, for the world. And is good-nature, with those you have mention'd, the only requisites?

I think they are the chief, Sir.

You and I differ much, my Lord.—Your father left his estate encumbered; it is not yet clear; you are of age, my Lord: pray, spare yourself the trouble of consulting me, if you do not think of *fortune*.

Duty to the memory of my rever'd father, the affection and gratitude I owe you, Sir James, calls for my obedience:—without *your* sanction, Sir, never shall my hand be given.

He seem'd pleas'd: I saw tears starting to his eyes; but still he was resolv'd to distress me.

Look about you, my child; look about you, Darcey;—there's Lady Jane Marshly, Miss Beaden, or—and was going on.

Pardon me, Sir James, for interrupting you; but really, I cannot take any Lady on recommendation: I am very difficult, perhaps *perverse* in this point; my first attachment must be merely accidental.

Ah! these are the notions that ruin half the young fellows of this age.—*Accidental likings—First love*,—and the devil knows what, runs away with half the old family estates.—Why, the least thing men ought to expect, even if they marry for *love*, is six-pence for a shilling.—Once for all, my Lord, I must tell you, your *interest* is to be consulted before your *inclinations*.

Don't be ruffled, Sir James; *don't* let us talk warmly of a matter which perhaps is at a great distance.

I wish it may be at a *great distance*, my Lord.—*If what I conjecture is true*—Here he paus'd, and look'd so sternly, that I expected all would out.

What do you *conjecture*, Sir?—Yes, I ask'd him what.—

Your Lordship must excuse my answering that question. *I hope* I am wrong;—*I hope* such a thing never enter'd your thoughts:—if it has—and he mutter'd something I could not understand; only I heard distinctly the words *unlucky*,—*imprudent*,—*unforeseen*.—I knew enough of their meaning to silence me.—Shaking him by the hand, I said, Well, Sir James, if you please, we will drop this subject for the present.—On which the conversation ended.

What a deal of patience and philosophy am I master of, to be here at my pen, whilst two old men are sucking in the honey which I should lay up for a winter's store?—Like Time, nothing can stand before her:—she mows down all ages.—Even Morgan, that man who us'd to look on a fine woman with more indifference than a horse or dog,—is now new-moulded;—not one oath in the space where I have known twenty escape him:—instead of following his dogs the whole morning, he is eternally with the ladies.

If he rides out with my angel, for he's determin'd, he says, to make her a complete horsewoman, I must not presume to give the least direction, or *even* touch the bridle.

I honour him for the tender regard he shews her:—yes, I go further; *he* and *Mr. Watson* may *love* her;—they do *love* her, and glory in declaring it.—I *love* them in return;—but they are the only two, of all the race of batchelors within my knowledge, that should make *such* a declaration with impunity.

Let me see: I shall be in London Saturday evening;—Sunday, no post;—Monday, *then* I determine to write to Sir James;—Wednesday, I may have an answer;—*Thursday*,—who knows but *Thursday!*—nothing is impossible; who knows but *Thursday* I may return to all my hopes?—How much I resemble a shuttlecock! how am I thrown from side to side by hope and fear; now up, now down; no sooner mounted by one hand than lower'd by another!

This moment a gleam of comfort steals sweetly through my heart;—but it is gone even before I could bid it welcome.—Why so fast!—to what spot is it fled?—Can there be a wretch more in need, who calls louder for its charitable ray than

DARCEY.

LETTER XXII.

Miss WARLEY to Lady MARY SUTTON

From Mr. Jenkings's

Now, my dear Lady, the time is absolutely fix'd for our embarkation; the 22d, without fail.—Mr. Smith intends coming himself, to accompany me to London.—How very good and obliging this!—I shall say nothing of it to Lady Powis, till Lord Darcey is gone, which will be Saturday:—*he* may go to France, if he pleases, but not with *me*.—

When I received Mrs. Smith's letter, he was mighty curious to know who it was from:—I found him examining the seal, as it lay on the table in Mr. Jenkings's parlour.—Here is a letter for you, Miss Warley, a good deal confus'd.—So I see, my Lord: I suppose from Lady Mary Sutton.

I fancy not;—it does not appear to be directed in the same hand with that my servant brought you last from the post-office.—I broke the seal; it was easy to perceive the contents gave me pleasure.

There is something, Miss Warley, which gives you particular satisfaction.

You are right, my Lord, I never was better pleas'd.

Then it is from Lady Mary?

No, not from Lady Mary.

From Mrs. Smith, *then?*—Do I guess *now?*—You say nothing; oh, there it is.—I could not forbear smiling.

Pray tell me, only *tell me*, and he caught one of my hands, if this letter does not fix the *very* day of your setting out for France?

I thought him possest with the spirit of divination.—What could I do, in this case?—Falshoods I despise;—evasions are low, *very* low, indeed:—yet I knew he ought not to be trusted with the contents, even at the expence of my veracity—I recollected myself, and looked grave.

My Lord, you must excuse me; this affair concerns only myself; even Lady Powis will not be acquainted with it yet.

I have done, if Lady Powis is not to be acquainted with it.—I have no right—I say *right*.—Don't look so, Miss Warley—*believe I did flare a little*—Time will unfold,—will cast a different light on things from that in which you now see them.

I was confus'd;—I put up my letter, went to the window, took a book from thence, and open'd it, without knowing what I did.

Complete Pocket-Farrier; or, A Cure for all Disorders in Horses, read his Lordship aloud, looking over my shoulder; for such was the title of the book.

What have you here, my love?

My love, indeed! Mighty free, mighty free, was it not, my Lady? I could not avoid laughing at the drollery of this accident, or I should have given him the look he deserved.—I thank God I am come to a state of *indifference*; and my time here is so short, I would willingly appear as little reserv'd as possible, that he might not think I have chang'd my sentiments since his *declaring off*: though I must own I have; but my pride will not suffer me to betray it to him.

If he has distress'd me,—if he has led my heart a little astray,—I am recovered now:—I have found out my mistake.—Should I suffer my eye to drop a tear, on looking back, for the future it will be more watchful;—it will guard, it will protect the poor wanderer.

He is very busy settling his affairs with Sir James:—three hours were they together with Mr. Jenkings in the library;—his books all pack'd up and sent away, to be sure he does not intend returning *here* again soon.

I suppose he will settle;—he talks of new furnishing his house;—has consulted Lady Powis upon it.—If he did not intend marrying, if he had no Lady in his eye—

But what is all this to me? Can he or his house be of any consequence to my repose?—I enjoy the thoughts of going to France without him:—I suppose he will think me very sly, but no matter.—

That good-natur'd creature Edmund would match me to a prince, was it in his power.—He told me, yesterday, that he'd give the whole world, if I was not to go to France.—Why so, Edmund?—I shall see you again, said I, at my return to England.

Ay, but what will *somebody do*, in the mean time?

Who is *somebody?*

Can't you guess, Miss Warley?

I do guess, Edmund. But you was never more mistaken; the person you mean is not to be distress'd by *my* absence.

He is, upon my honour;—I know *he is*.—Lord Darcey loves you to distraction.

Poh! Edmund; don't take such things into your head: I know *you* wish me well; but don't be so sanguine!—Lord Darcey stoop to think of *me!*

Stoop to think of *you*, Miss Warley!—I am out of all patience: stoop to think of *you!*—I shall never forget *that*.—Greatly as I honour his Lordship, if he conceals his sentiments, if he trifles in an affair of such importance,—was he the first duke in the kingdom, I hold him below the regard even of such a one as *I* am.—Pardon my curiosity, madam, I mean no ill; but surely he has made proposals to you.

Well, then, I will tell you, Edmund;—I'll tell you frankly, he never *has* made proposals:—and further, I can answer for him, he never *will*.—His belief was stagger'd;—he stood still, his eyes fixed on the ground.

Are you *really* in earnest, Miss Warley?

Really, Edmund.

Then, for heaven's sake, go to France.—But how can you tell, madam, he never intends to make proposals?

On which I related what passed at table, the day Lord Allen dined at the Abbey.—Nothing could equal his astonishment; yet would he fain have persuaded me that I did not understand him;—call'd it misapprehension, and I know not what.

He *will* offer you his hand, Miss Warley; he certainly *will*.—I've known him from a school-boy;—I'm acquainted with every turn of his mind;—I know his very looks;—I have observ'd them when they have been directed to you:—he will, I repeat,—he will offer you his hand.

No! Edmund:—but if he *did*, his overtures should be disregarded.

Say not so, Miss Warley; for God's sake, say not so again;—it kills me to think you *hate* Lord Darcey.

I speak to you, Edmund, as a friend, as a brother:—never let what has pass'd escape your lips.

If I do, madam, what must I deserve?—To be shut out from your confidence is a punishment only fit for such a breach of trust.—But, for heaven's sake, do not *hate* Lord Darcey.

Mr. Jenkings appeared at this juncture, and look'd displeas'd.—How strangely are we given to mistakes!—I betray'd the same confusion, as if I had been really carrying on a clandestine affair with his son.—In a very angry tone he said, I thought, Edmund, you was to assist me, knowing how much I had on my hands, before Lord Darcey sets out;—but I find business is not *your* pursuit:—I believe I must consent to your going into the army, after all.—On which he button'd up his coat, and went towards the Abbey, leaving me quite thunderstruck. Poor Edmund was as much chagrined as myself.—A moment after I saw Mr. Jenkings returning with

a countenance very different,—and taking me apart from his son, said, I cannot forgive myself, my dear young Lady;—can you forgive me for the rudeness I have just committed?—I am an old man, Miss Warley;—I have many things to perplex me;—I should not,—I know I should *not*, have spoke so sharply to Edmund, when you had honour'd him with your company.

I made him easy by my answer; and since I have not seen a cloud on his brow.—I shall never think more, with concern, of Mr. Jenkings's suspicions.—Your Ladyship's last letter,—oh! how sweetly tender! tells me *he* has *motives* to which *I* am a stranger.

We spent a charming day, last Monday, at Lord Allen's. Most of the neighbouring families were met there, to commemorate the happy festival.—Mr. Morgan made one of the party, and return'd with us to the Abbey, where he proposes waiting the arrival of his godson, Mr. Powis.—If I have any penetration, most of his fortune will center *there*,—For my part, I am not a little proud of stealing into his good graces:—I don't know for what, but Lady Powis tells me, I am one of his first favourites; he has presented me a pretty little grey horse, beautifully caparison'd; and hopes he says, to make me a good horsewoman.

As I have promis'd to be at the Abbey early, I shall close this letter; and, if I have an opportunity, will write another by the same packet.—Believe me ever, my dearest Lady, your most grateful and affectionate

F. WARLEY.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

BARFORD ABBEY,

A NOVEL:

IN A

SERIES of LETTERS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

MDCCLXVIII.

LETTER XXIII.

Miss WARLEY to Lady MARY SUTTON.

from Mr. Jenkings's.

Oh what a designing man is Lord Darcey!—He loves me not, yet fain would persuade me that he does.—When I went yesterday morning to the Abbey, I met him in my way to Lady Powis's dressing-room.—Starting as if he had seen an apparition, and with a look which express'd great importance, he said, taking my hand, Oh! Miss Warley, I have had the most dreadful night!—but I hope *you* have rested well.

I have rested very well, my Lord; what has disturb'd your Lordship's rest?

What, had it been *real* as it was *visionary*, would have drove me to madness.—I dreamt, Miss Warley,—I dreamt every thing I was possess'd of was torn from me;—but now—*and here stopt.*

Well, my Lord, and did not the pleasure of being undeceiv'd overpay all the pain which you had been deceiv'd into?

No, my angel!—*Why does he call me his angel?*

Why, no: I have such a sinking, such a load on my mind, to reflect it is possible,—only possible it might happen, that, upon my word, it has been almost too much for me.

Ah! my Lord, you are certainly wrong to anticipate evils; they come fast enough, one need not run to meet them:—besides, if your Lordship had been in reality that very unfortunate creature, you dreamt you were, for

no rank or degree is proof against the caprice of Fortune,—was nothing to be preserv'd entire?—Fortune can require only what she gave: fortitude, peace, and resignation, are not her gifts.

Oh! Miss Warley, you mistake: it was not riches I fancied myself dispossess'd of;—it was, oh my God!—what my peace, my *very* soul is center'd in!—and his eyes turn'd round with so wild a stare, that really I began to suspect his head.

I trembled so I could scarce reach the dressing-room, though just at the door.—The moment I turn'd from him, he flew like lightning over the stairs; and soon after, I saw him walking with Sir James on the terrace. By their gestures I could discover their conversation was not a common one.

Mr. Morgan comes this instant in sight;—a servant after him, leading my little horse.—I am sorry to break off, but I must attend him;—he is so good, I know your Ladyship would be displeas'd, was I to prolong my letter at the expence of his favour.—Yours, my much honour'd,—my much lov'd Lady,—with all gratitude, with all affection,

F. WARLEY.

LETTER XXIV.

Miss WARLEY to the same.

From Mr. Jenkings's.

Now, my dearest Lady, am I again perplex'd, doubting, and embarrass'd:—yet Lord Darcey is gone,—gone this very morning,—about an hour since.

Well, I did not think it would evermore be in his power to distress me;—but I have been distress'd,—greatly distress'd!—I begin to think Lord Darcey sincere,—that he has always been sincere—He talks of next *Thursday*, as a day to unravel great mysteries:—but I shall be far enough by that time; sail'd, perhaps.—Likely, he said, I might know before Thursday.—I wish any body could, tell me:—I fancy Sir James and Lady Powis are in the secret.

Mr. Jenkings is gone with his Lordship to Mr. Stapleton's,—about ten miles this side London, on business of importance:—to-morrow he returns; then I shall acquaint him with my leaving this place.—Your Ladyship knows the motive why I have hitherto kept the day of my setting out a secret from every person,—even from Sir James and Lady Powis.

Yesterday, the day preceding the departure of Lord Darcey, I went up to the Abbey, determin'd to exert my spirits and appear chearful, cost what it would to a poor disappointed heavy heart.—Yes, it was disappointed:—but till then I never rightly understood its situation;—or perhaps would not understand it;—else I have not examin'd it so closely as I ought, of late;—Not an unusual thing neither: we often stop to enquire, what fine feat *that?*—whose magnificent equipage *this?*—long to see and converse

with persons so surrounded with splendor;—but if one happen to pass a poor dark cottage, and see the owner leaning on a crutch at the door, we are apt to go by, without making any enquiry, or betraying a wish to be acquainted with its misery.—

This was my situation, when I directed my steps to the Abbey.—I saw not Lord Darcey in an hour after I came into the house;—when he join'd us, he was dress'd for the day, and in one hand his own hat, in the other mine, with my cloak, which he had pick'd up in the Vestibule:—he was dreadfully pale;—complain'd of a pain in his head, which he is very subject to;—said he wanted a walk;—and ask'd, if I would give him the honour of my company.—I had not the heart to refuse, when I saw how ill he look'd;—though for some days past, I have avoided being alone with him as much as possible.

We met Lady Powis returning from a visit to her poultry-yard.—Where are my two runabouts going *now?* she said.—Only for a little walk, madam, reply'd Lord Darcey.

You are a sauce-box, said she, shaking him by the hand;—but don't go, my Lord, *too far* with Miss Warley, nodding and smiling on him at the same time.—She gave me a sweet affectionate kiss, as I pass'd her; and cried out, You are a couple of pretty strollers, are you not!—But away together; only I charge you, my Lord, calling after him, remember you are not to go *too far* with my dear girl.

We directed our steps towards the walk that leads to the Hermitage, neither of us seeming in harmony of spirits.—His Lordship still complaining of his head, I propos'd going back before we had gone ten paces from the house.

Would Miss Warley then prevent me, said he, from the last satisfaction! might ever enjoy?—You don't know, madam, how long—it is impossible to say how long—if ever I should be so happy again—I look forward to Wednesday with impatience;—if that should be propitious,—*Thursday*

will unravel *mysteries*; it will clear up *doubts*;—it will perhaps bring on an event which you, my dearest life, may in time reflect on with pleasure;—you, my dearest life!—pardon the liberty,—by heaven! I am sincere!

I was going to withdraw my hand from his: I can be less reserv'd when he is less free.

Don't take your hand from me;—I will call you miss Warley;—I see my freedom is depleasing;—but don't take your hand away; for I was still endeavouring to get it away from him.

Yes, my angel, I will call you *Miss Warley*.

Talk not at this rate, my Lord: it is a kind of conversation I do not, nor wish to understand.

I see, madam, I am to be unhappy;—I know you have great reason to condemn me:—my whole behaviour, since I first saw you, has been one riddle.

Pray, my Lord, forbear this subject.

No! if I never see you more, Miss Warley,—this is my wish that you think the worst of me that appearances admit;—think I have basely wish'd to distress you.

Distress me, my Lord?

Think so, I beseech you, if I never return.—What would the misfortune be of falling low, even to the most abject in your opinion, compared with endangering the happiness of her whole peace is my ardent pursuit?—If I fail, I only can tell the cause:—you shall never be acquainted with it;—for should you regard me even with pity,—cool pity,—it would be taking the dagger from my own breast, and planting it in yours.

Ah! my Lady, could I help understanding him?—could I help being moved?—I was moved;—my eyes I believe betrayed it.

If I return, continued he, it is you only can pronounce me happy.—If you see me not again, think I am tossed on the waves of adverse fortune:—but oh think I again intreat *you*,—think me guilty. Perhaps I may outlive—no, that will never do;—you will be happy long before that hour;—it would be selfish to hope the contrary. I *wish* Mr. Powis was come home;—I wish—All my wishes tend to one great end.—Good God, what a situation am I in!—That the Dead could hear my petitions!—that he could absolve me!—What signifies, whether one sue to remains crumbled in the dust, or to the ear which can refuse to hear the voice of reason?

I thought I should have sunk to see the agony he was work'd up to.—I believe I look'd very pale;—I felt the blood thrill through my veins, and of a sudden stagnate:—a dreadful sickness follow'd;—I desir'd to sit;—he look'd on every side, quite terrified;—cry'd, Where will you sit, my dearest life?—what shall I do?—For heaven's sake speak,—speak but one word;—speak to tell me, I have not been your murderer.

I attempted to open my mouth, but in vain; I pointed to the ground, making an effort to sit down:—he caught me in his arms, and bore me to a bench not far off;—there left me, to fetch some water at a brook near, but came back before he had gone ten steps.—I held out my hand to his hat, which lay on the ground, then look'd to the water.—Thank God!—thank God! he said, and went full speed, to dip up some;—he knelt down, trembling, before me;—his teeth chatter'd in his head whilst he offer'd the water.

I found myself beginning to recover the moment it came to my lips.—He fix'd his eyes on me, as if he never meant to take them off, holding both my hands between his, the tears running down his face, without the contraction of one feature.—If sorrow could be express'd in stone, he then appear'd the very statue which was to represent it.

I attempted to speak.

Don't speak yet, he cried;—don't make yourself ill again: thank heaven, you are better!—This is some sudden chill; why have you ventur'd out without clogs?

How delicate,—how seasonable, this hint! Without it could I have met his eye, after the weakness I had betrayed?—We had now no more interesting subjects; I believe he thought I had *enough* of them.

It was near two when we reach'd the Abbey. Sir James and Mr. Morgan were just return'd from a ride;—Lady Powis met us on the Green, where she said she had been walking some time, in expectation of her strollers,—She examin'd my countenance very attentively, and then ask'd Lord Darcey, if he had remember'd her injunctions?

What reason, my Lady, have you to suspect the contrary? he returned—Well, well, said she, I shall find you out some day or other;—but her Ladyship seem'd quite satisfied, when I assured her I had been no farther than the Beach-walk.

Cards were propos'd soon after dinner: the same party as usual.—Mr. Morgan is never ask'd to make one;—he says he would as soon see the devil as a card-table.—We kept close at it 'till supper.—I could not help observing his Lordship blunder'd a little;—playing a diamond for a spade,—and a heart for a club,—I took my leave at eleven, and he attended me home.

Mr. and Mrs. Jenkings were gone to bed,—Edmund was reading in the parlour; he insisted on our having a negus which going out to order, was follow'd by Lord Darcey:—I heard them whisper in the passage, but could distinguish the words, *if she is ill, remember, if she is ill*—and then Edmund answer'd, You may depend on it, my Lord,—as I have a soul to be saved:—does your Lordship suppose I would be so negligent?

I guess'd at this charge;—it was to write, if I should be ill, as I have since found by Edmund,—who return'd capering into the room, rubbing his hands, and smiling with such significance as if he would have said, Every thing is as it should be.

When his Lordship had wish'd us a good night, he said to me,—*To-morrow*, Miss Warley!—but I will say nothing of *to-morrow*;—I shall see you in the morning. His eyes glisten'd, and he left the room hastily.—Whilst Edmund attended him out, I went to my chamber that I might avoid a subject of which I saw his honest heart was full.

On my table lay the Roman History; I could not help giving a peep where I had left off, being a very interesting part:—from one thing I was led to another, 'till the clock struck three; which alarm made me quit my book.

Whilst undressing, I had leisure to recollect the incidents of the pass'd day; sometimes pleasure, sometimes pain, would arise, from this examination; yet the latter was most predominant.

When I consider'd Lord Darcey's tender regard for my future, as well as present peace,—how could I reflect on him without gratitude?—When I consider'd his perplexities, I thought thus:—they arise from some entanglement, in which his heart is not engag'd.—Had he confided in me, I should not have weaken'd his resolutions;—I would no more wish him to be guilty of a breach of honour, than surrender myself to infamy.—I would have endeavour'd to persuade him *she* is amiable, virtuous, and engaging.—If I had been successful, I would have *frown'd* when he *smil'd*;—I would have been *gay* when he seem'd *oppress'd*—I would have been *reserv'd, peevish, supercilicus*;—in short, I would have counterfeited the very reverse of what was likely to draw him from a former attachment.

To live without him must be my fate; since that is almost inevitable, I would have strove to have secur'd his happiness, whilst mine had remain'd to chance.—These reflections kept me awake 'till six; when I fell into a profound sleep, which lasted 'till ten; at which time I was awaken'd by Mrs. Jenkings to tell me Lord Darcey was below; with an apology, that she had made breakfast, as her husband was preparing, in great haste, to attend his Lordship.

This was a hint he was not to stay long; so I put on my cloaths with expedition; and going down, took with me my whole stock of resolution; but I carried it no farther than the bottom of the stairs;—there it flew from me;—never have I seen it since:—that it rested not in the breast of Lord Darcey, was visible;—rather it seem'd as if his and mine had taken a flight together.

I stood with the lock of the door in my hand more than a minute, in hopes my inward flutterings would abate.—His Lordship heard my footstep, and flew to open it;—I gave him my hand, without knowing what I did;—joy sparkled in his eyes and he prest it to his breast with a fervour that cover'd me with confusion.

He saw what he had done,—He dropp'd it respectfully, and inquiring tenderly for my health, ask'd if I would honour him with my commands before he sat out for Town?—What a fool was I!—Lord bless me!—can I ever forget my folly? What do you think, my Lady! I did not speak;—no! I could not answer;—I was *silent*;—I was *silent*, when I would have given the world for one word.—When I did speak, it was not to Lord Darcey, but, still all fool, turn'd and said to Mr. Jenkings, who was looking over a parchment, How do you find yourself, Sir? Will not the journey you are going to take on horseback be too fatiguing? No, no, my good Lady; it is an exercise I have all my life been us'd to: to-morrow you will see me return the better for it.

Mrs. Jenkings here enter'd, follow'd by a servant with the breakfast, which was plac'd before me, every one else having breakfasted.—She desir'd I would give myself the trouble of making tea, having some little matters to do without.—This task would have been a harder penance than a fast of three days;—but I must have submitted, had not my good genius Edmund appear'd at this moment; and placing himself by me, desir'd to have the honour of making my breakfast.

I carried the cup with difficulty to my mouth. My embarrassment was perceiv'd by his Lordship; he rose from his seat, and walk'd up and down.—How did his manly form struggle to conceal the disorder of his

mind!—Every movement, every look, every word, discover'd Honour in her most graceful, most ornamental garb: *when* could it appear to such advantage, surrounded with a cloud of difficulties, yet shining out and towering above them all?

He laid his cold hand on mine;—with precipitation left the room;—and was in a moment again at my elbow.—Leaning over the back of my chair, he whisper'd, For heaven's sake, miss Warley, be the instrument of my fortitude; whilst I see you I cannot—there stopt and turn'd from me.—I saw he wish'd me to go first,—as much in compassion to myself as him. When his back was turn'd, I should have slid out of the room;—but Mr. Jenkings starting up, and looking at his watch, exclaim'd, *Odso*, my Lord! it is past eleven; we shall be in the dark. This call'd him from his reverie; and he sprang to the door, just as I had reached it.—Sweet, generous creature! said he, stopping me; and you will go *then?*—Farewell, my Lord, replied I.—My dear, good friend, to Mr. Jenkings, take care of your health.—God bless you both I—My voice faulter'd.

Excellent Miss Warley! a thousand thanks for your kind condescension, said the good old man.—Yet one moment, oh God! yet one moment, said his Lordship; and he caught both my hands.

Come, my Lord, return'd Mr. Jenkings; and never did I see him look so grave, something of disappointment in his countenance;—come, my Lord, the day is wasting apace. Excuse this liberty:—your Lordship has been *long* determin'd,—have *long* known of leaving this country.—My dearest young Lady, you will be expected at the Abbey.—I shall, indeed, replied I;—so God bless you, Sir!—God bless you, my Lord! and, withdrawing my hands, hasten'd immediately to my chamber.

I heard their voices in the court-yard:—if I had look'd out at the window, it might not have been unnatural,—I own my inclinations led to it.—Inclination should never take place of prudence;—by following one, we are often plung'd into difficulties;—by the other we are sure to be conducted safely:—instead, then, of indulging my curiosity to see how he look'd—how he spoke at taking leave of this dwelling;—whether his eyes

were directed to the windows, or the road;—if he rid slow or fast;—how often he turn'd to gaze, before he was out of sight:—instead of this, I went to Mrs. Jenkings's apartment, and remain'd there 'till I heard they were gone, then return'd to my own; since which I have wrote down to this period. Perhaps I should have ran on farther, if a summons from Lady Powis did not call me off. I hope now to appear before her with tolerable composure.—I am to go in the coach alone.—Well, it will seem strange!—I shall think of my *late* companion;—but time reconciles every thing.—*This* was my hope, when I lost my best friend, the lov'd instructress of my infant years.—*Time*, all healing *Time!* to *that* I fear I must look forward, as a lenitive against many evils.

Two days!—only two days!—and then, adieu, my dear friends at the Abbey;—adieu, my good Mr. and Mrs. Jenkings!—and you *too*, my friendly-hearted Edmund, adieu!

Welcome,—doubly welcome, every moment which brings me nearer to that when I shall kiss the hands of my honour'd Lady;—when I shall be able to tell you, in person, ten thousand things too much for my pen;—when you will kindly say, Tell me all, my Fanny, tell me every secret of your heart.—Happy sounds!—pleasing sounds! these will be to your grateful and affectionate

F. WARLEY.

LETTER XXV.

Miss WARLEY to the same.

From Mr. Jenkings's.

Now, my dear Lady, am I ready for my departure:—Sir James and Lady Powis reconciled to my leaving them;—yet how can I call it reconciled, when I tear myself from their arms as they weep over me?—Heavens! how tenderly they love me!—Their distress, when I told them the day was absolutely fix'd; when I told them the necessity of my going, *their* distress nothing could equal but my *own*.—I thought my heart would have sunk within me!—Surely, my Lady, my affection for them is not a common affection;—it is *such* as I hear your dear self;—it is *such* as I felt for my revered Mrs. Whitmore.—I cannot dwell on this subject—indeed I cannot.

I almost wish I had not kept the day so long a secret.—But suppose I had not,—would their concern have been lessen'd?

I would give the world, if Mr. Jenkings was come home:—his wife is like a frantic woman; and declares, if I persist in going, I shall break the heart of her and her husband.—Why do they love me so well?—It cannot be from any deserts of mine:—I have done no more than common gratitude demands;—the affection I shew them is only the result of their own kindness.—Benevolent hearts never place any thing to their own account:—they look on returns as presents, not as just debts:—so, whether giving or receiving, the glory must be their's.

I fancy Mr. Smith will not be here 'till to morrow, his Lady having wrote me, he intended spending the evening with an acquaintance of his about six miles from the Abbey.

How I dread the hour of parting!—Poor Mr. Watson!—I fear I shall never see *him* more.—Mr. Morgan *too!* but he is likely to live many years.—There is something in this strange man excessively engaging.—If people have roughness, better to appear in the voice, in the air and dress, than in the heart: a want of softness *there*, I never can dispense with.—What is a graceful form, what are numberless accomplishments, without humanity? I love, I revere, the honest, plain, well-meaning Mr. Morgan.

Hark! I hear the trampling of horses.—Mr. Jenkings is certainly return'd.—I hasten down to be the first who shall inform him of my departure.

How am I mortified to see Aaron return without his master!—Whilst Mrs. Jenkings was busied in enquiries after the health of her good man, I was all impatience for the contents of a letter she held in her hand, unopen'd: having broke the seal, and run her eye hastily over it, she gave it me.—I think my recollection will serve to send it verbatim to your Ladyship.

Mr. JENKINGS to Mrs. JENKINGS.

"My Dear,

I dispatch Aaron to acquaint you it is impossible for me to be home till Wednesday. Mr. Stapleton is gone to London: I am obliged to attend Lord Darcey thither. I love his Lordship *more* and *more*.—He has convinc'd me *our* conjectures were not without foundation.—Heaven grant it may end to *our* wishes!—There are, he thinks, difficulties to be overcome. Let him think it:—his happiness will be more exquisite when he is undeceiv'd.—Distribute my dutiful respects to Sir James, Lady Powis, and Miss Warley; next to yourself and our dear Edmund, they are nearest the heart of your truly affectionate husband

JENKINGS."

I will make no comments on this letter; it cannot concern *me*,—What can I do about seeing Mr. Jenkings before I go?—

Lord bless me! a chaise and four just stopp'd; Mr. Smith in it.—Heavens! how my heart throbs!—I did not expect him 'till to-morrow: I must run to receive him.—How shall I go up to the Abbey!—how support the last embrace of Sir James and Lady Powis!

Ten at Night, just come from the Abbey.

Torn in pieces!—my poor heart torn in pieces!—I shall never see them more;—never again be strain'd to their parental bosoms.—Forgive me, my dearest Lady, I do not grieve that I am coming to *you*; I grieve only that I go from *them*.—Oh God! why must my soul be divided?

Another struggle too with poor Mrs. Jenkings!—She has been on her knees:—yes, thus lowly has she condescended to turn me from my purpose, and suffer Mr. Smith to go back without me,—I blush to think what pain, what trouble I occasion.—She talks of some *important event* at hand. She says if I go, it will, end in the destruction of us all.—What can she mean by an *important event?*—Perhaps Lord Darcey—but no matter; nothing, my dear Lady, shall with-hold me from you.—The good woman is now more calm. I have assured her it is uncertain how long we may be in London: it is only that has calm'd her.—She says, she is *certain* I shall return;—she is *certain*, when Mr. Powis and his Lady arrives, *I must* return.—Next Thursday they are expected:—already are they arrived at Falmouth:—but, notwithstanding what I have told Mrs. Jenkings, to soften her pains at parting, I shall by Thursday be on my voyage;—for Mr. Smith tells me the Packet will sail immediately.—Perhaps I may be the messenger of my own letters:—but I am determin'd to write on 'till I see you;—that when I look them over, my memory may receive some assistance.—Good night, my dearest Lady; Mrs. Jenkings and Mr. Smith expects me.

F. Warley.

LETTER XXVI.

Lord DARCEY to Sir JAMES POWIS.

London.

Even whilst I write, I see before me the image of my expiring father;—I hear the words that issued from his death-like lips;—my soul feels the weight of his injunctions;—*again* in my imagination I seal the sacred promise on his livid hand;—and my heart bows before Sir James with all that duty which is indispensable from a child to a parent.

Happiness is within my reach, yet without *your* sanction I *will* not, *dare* not, bid it welcome;—I *will* not hold out my hand to receive *it*.—Yes, Sir, I love Miss Warley; I can no longer disguise my sentiments.—On the terrace I should not have disguis'd them, if your warmth had not made me tremble for the consequence.—You remember my arguments *then*; suffer me now to reurge *them*.

I allow it would be convenient to have my fortune augmented by alliance; but then it is not *absolutely* necessary I should make the purchase with my felicity.—A thousand chances may put me in possession of riches;—one event only can put me in possession of content.—Without *it*, what is a fine equipage?—what a splendid retinue?—what a table spread with variety of dishes?

Judge for me, Sir James; *you* who *know*, who *love* Miss Warley, judge for me.—Is it possible for a man of my turn to see her, to talk with her, to know her thousand *virtues*, and not wish to be united to them?—It is to your candour I appeal.—*Say* I *am* to be happy, *say* it only in one line, I come immediately to the Abbey, full of reverence, of esteem, of gratitude.

Think, dear Sir James, of Lady Powis;—think of the satisfaction you hourly enjoy with that charming woman; then will you complete the felicity of

DARCEY.

LETTER XXVII.

Sir JAMES POWIS to Lord DARCEY.

Barford Abbey.

I am not much surpris'd at the contents of your Lordship's letter, it is *what* Lady Powis and I have long conjectur'd; yet I must tell, you, my Lord, notwithstanding Miss Warley's great merit, I should have been much better pleas'd to have found myself mistaken.

I claim no right to controul your inclinations: the strict observance you pay your father's last request, tempts me to give my opinion very opposite to what I should otherwise have done.—Duty like yours ought to be rewarded.—If you will content yourself with an incumber'd estate rather than a clear one, why—why—why—faith you shall not have my approbation 'till you come to the Abbey. Should you see the little bewitching Gipsy before I talk with you, who knows but you may be wise enough to make a larger jointure than you can afford?

I am glad your Lordship push'd the matter no farther on the terrace: I did not then know how well I lov'd our dear girl.—My wife is *so* pleas'd,—*so* happy,—*so* overjoy'd,—at what she calls your noble disinterested regard for her Fanny, that one would think she had quite forgot the value of *money*.—I expect my son to-morrow.—Let me have the happiness of embracing you at the same time;—you are both my children, &c. &c.:

J. Powis.

LETTER XXVIII.

Lord DARCEY to the Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH.

Barford Abbey.

Full of joy! full of surprize! I dispatch a line by Robert.—Fly, Molesworth, to Mr. Smith's, in *Bloomsbury-Square*:—tell my dearest, dear Miss Warley, but tell her of it by degrees, that Mr. Powis is her *father!*—Yes! her *father*, George;—and the most desirable woman on earth, her mother!—Don't tell her of it neither; you will kill her with surprise.—Confounded luck! that I did not know she was in London.

I shall be with you in less than two hours, after Robert:—I send him on, with orders to ride every horse to death, lest he should be set out for Dover.

Jenkings is now on the road, but he travels too slow for my wishes.—If she is gone, prepare swift horses for me to follow:—I am kept by force to refresh myself.—What refreshment can I want!—Fly, I say, to Miss Powis, now no longer Miss Warley.—Leave her not, I charge you;—stir not from her;—by our friendship, Molesworth, stir not from her 'till you see

DARCEY.

LETTER XXIX.

The Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH to RICHARD RISBY, Esq;

Dover.

Oh Dick! the most dreadful affair has happen'd!—Lord Darcey is distracted and dying; I am little better—Good God! what shall I do?—what can I do?—He lies on the floor in the next room, with half his hair torn off.—Unhappy man! fatigue had near kill'd him, before the melancholy account reach'd his ears.—Miss Warley, I mean Miss Powis, is gone to the bottom.—She sunk in the yacht that sailed yesterday from Dover for Calais.—Every soul is lost.—The fatal accident was confirm'd by a boat which came in not ten minutes before we arriv'd.—There was no keeping it from Lord Darcey.—The woman of the Inn we are at has a son lost in the same vessel: she was in fits when we alighted.—Some of the wreck is drove on shore.—What can equal this scene!—Oh, Miss Powis! most amiable of women, I tremble for your relations!—But Darcey, poor Darcey, what do I feel for you!—He speaks:—he calls for me:—I go to him.

Oh, Risby! my heart is breaking; for once let it be said a man's heart can break.—Whilst he rav'd, whilst his sorrows were loud, there was some chance; but now all is over. He is absolutely dying;—death is in every feature.—His convulsions how dreadful!—how dreadful the pale horror of his countenance!—But then so calm,—so compos'd!—I repeat, there can, be no chance.—

Where is Molesworth? I heard him say as I enter'd his apartment: come to me, my friend,—*holding out his hand*—come to me, my friend.—Don't weep—don't let me leave you in tears.—If you wish me well, rejoice:—think how I should have dragg'd out a miserable number of days, after—

oh, George! after—Here he stopp'd.—The surgeon desir'd he would suffer us to lift him on the bed.—No, he said, in a faultering accent, if I move I shall die before I have made known to my friend my last request. —Upon which the physician and surgeon retir'd to a distant part of the room, to give him an opportunity of speaking with greater freedom.

He caught hold of my hand with the grasp of anguish, saying, Go, go. I entreat you, by that steady regard which has subsisted between us,—*go* to the unhappy family:—if they can be comforted; ay, if they *can*, you must undertake the task.—*I* will die without you.—Tell them I send the thanks, the duty, of a dying man;—that they must consider me as their own. A few, a *very* few hours! and I shall be their own;—I shall be united to their angel daughter.—Dear soul, he cried, is it for this,—for this, I tore myself from you!—But stop, I will not repine; the reward of my sufferings is at hand.

Now, you may lift me on the bed;—*now*, my friend, pointing to the door, —*now*, my dear Molesworth, if you wish I should die in—*there fainted.*— He lay without signs of life so long, that I thought, all was over.—

I cannot comply with his last request;—it is his last I am convinc'd;—he will never speak more, Risby!—he will never *more* pronounce the name of Molesworth.

Be yours the task he assign'd me.—Go instantly to the friends you revere; —go to Mr. and Mrs. Powis, the poor unfortunate parents.—Abroad they were to you as tender relations;—in England, your first returns of gratitude will be mournful.—You have seen Miss Powis:—it could be no other than that lovely creature whom you met so accidentally at ——: the likeness she bore to her father startled you. She was then going with Mr. Jenkings into Oxfordshire:—you admired her;—but had you known her mind, how would you have felt for Darcey!

Be cautious, tender, and circumspect, in your sad undertaking.—Go first to the old steward's, about a mile from the Abbey; if he is not return'd, break it to his wife and son.—They will advise, they will assist you, in the

dreadful affair;—I hope the poor old gentleman has not proceeded farther than London.—Write the moment you have seen the family; write every melancholy particular: my mind is only fit for such gloomy recitals.—Farewel! I go to my dying friend.

Yours,

MOLESWORTH.

LETTER XXX.

Captain RISBY to the Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH,

Barford Abbey.

What is the sight of thousands slain in the field of battle, compar'd with the scene I am just escap'd from!—How can I be circumstantial!—where am I to begin!—whose distress shall I paint first!—can there be precedence in sorrow!

What a weight will human nature support before it sinks!—The distress'd inhabitants of this house are still alive; it is proclaim'd from every room by dreadful groans.—You sent me on a raven's message:—like that ill-boding bird I flew from house to house, afraid to croak my direful tidings.

By your directions I went to the steward's;—at the gate stood my dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. Powis, arm in arm.—I thought I should have sunk;—I thought I should have died instantly.—I was turning my horse to go back, and leave my black errand to be executed by another.

They were instantly at my side;—a hand was seiz'd by each,—and the words Risby!—captain Risby!—ecchoed in my ears.—What with their joyous welcomes,—and transported countenances, I felt as if a flash of lightning had just darted on my head.—Mrs. Powis first perceiv'd the alteration and ask'd if I was well;—if any thing had happen'd to give me concern?

Certainly there has, said Mr. Powis, or *you* are not the same man you *was*, Risby.—It is true, Sir, return'd I;—it is true, I am not *so* happy as when I last saw *you*;—my mind is disagreeably situated;—could I receive joy, it would be in knowing this amiable woman to be Mrs. Powis.

You both surprise and affect us, replied he.

Indeed you do, join'd in his Lady; but we will try to remove your uneasiness:—pray let us conduct you to the Abbey; you are come to the best house in the world to heal grievances.—Ah, Risby! said my friend, all there is happiness.—Dick, I have the sweetest daughter: but Lord Darcey, I suppose, has told you every thing; we desir'd he would; and that we might see you immediately.—Can *you* tell us if his Lordship is gone on to Dover?

He is, returned I.—I did not wait his coming down, wanting to discover to you the reason of my perplexities.

What excuse after saying this, could I make, for going into the steward's? —For my soul, I could not think of any.—Fortunately it enter'd my head to say, that I had been wrong directed;—that a foolish boy had told me this was the strait road to the Abbey.

Mr. and Mrs. Powis importun'd me to let the servant lead my horse, that I might walk home with them.—*This* would never do.—I could not longer trust myself in *their* company, 'till I had reconnoitred the family;—'till I had examin'd who *there* was best fitted to bear the first onset of sorrow. —I brought myself off by saying, one of my legs was hurt with a tight boot.

Well then, go on, Risby, said Mr. Powis: you see the Abbey just before you; my wife and I will walk fast;—we shall be but a few minutes behind.

My faculties were quite unhing'd, the sight of the noble structure.—I stopp'd, paus'd, then rode on; stopp'd again, irresolute whether to proceed.—Recollecting your strict injunctions, I reach'd the gate which leads to the back entrance; there I saw a well-looking gentleman and the game-keeper just got off their horses:—the former, after paying me the compliment of his hat, took a brace of hares from the keeper, and went into the house.—I ask'd of a servant who stood by, if that was Sir James Powis?

No, Sir, he replied; but Sir James is within.

Who is that gentleman? return'd I.

His name is Morgan, Sir,

Very intimate here, I suppose—is he not?

Yes, very intimate, Sir.

Then *he* is the person I have business with; pray tell him *so*.

The servant obey'd.—Mr. Morgan came to me, before I had dismounted; and accosting me very genteely, ask'd what my commands were with him?

Be so obliging, Sir, I replied; to go a small distance from the house; and I will unfold an affair which I am sorry to be the messenger of.

Nothing is amiss, Sir, I hope: you look strangely terrified; but I'll go with you this instant.—On that he led me by a little path to a walk planted thick with elms; at one end of which was a bench, where we seated ourselves.—*Now*, Sir, said Mr. Morgan, you may *here* deliver what you have to say with secrecy.—I don't recollect to have had the honour of seeing *you* before;—but I wait with impatience to be inform'd the occasion of this visit.

You are a friend, I presume, of Sir James Powis?

Yes, Sir, I am: he has *few* of longer standing, and, as times go, *more* sincere, I believe.—But what of that?—do you know any harm, Sir, of me, or of my friend?

God knows I do not;—but I am acquainted, Mr. Morgan, with an unfortunate circumstance relative to Sir James.

Sir James! Zounds, do speak out:—Sir James, to my knowledge, does not owe a shilling.

It is not money matters, Sir, that brought me here:—heaven grant it was!

The devil, Sir!—tell me at once, what is this damn'd affair? Upon my soul, you must tell me immediately.

Behold!—read, Sir—what a task is mine! (*putting your letter into his hands*.)

Never was grief, surprize, and disappointment so strongly painted as in him.—At first, he stood quite silent; every feature distorted:—then starting back some paces, threw his hat over the hedge:—stamp'd on his wig;—and was stripping himself naked, to fling his clothes into a pond just by, when I prevented him.

Stop, Sir, I cried: do not alarm the family before they are prepar'd.—Think of the dreadful consequences;—think of the unhappy parents!—Let us consult how to break it to them, without severing their hearts at one blow.

Zounds, Sir, don't talk to me of breaking it; I shall go mad:—you did not know her.—Oh! she was the most lovely, gentle creature!—What an old blockhead have I been!—Why did I not give her my fortune?—*then* Darcey would have married her;—*then* she would not have gone abroad;—*then* we should have sav'd her. Oh, she was a sweet, dear soul!—What good will my curst estates do me *now?*—You shall have them, Sir;—any body shall have them—I don't care what becomes of *me*.—Do order my horse, Sir—I say again, do order my horse. I'll never see this place more.—Oh! my dear, sweet, smiling girl, why would you go to France?

Here I interrupted him.

Think not, talk not, Sir, of leaving the family in such a melancholy situation.—Pray recollect yourself.—You *ought* not to run from your friends;—you *ought* to redouble your affection at this hour of trial.—Who *can* be call'd friends, but those who press forward, when all the satisfactions of life draw back.—You are not;—your feeling heart tells me you are not one of the many that retire with such visionary enjoyments.

—Come, Sir, for the present forget the part you bear in this disaster:—consider,—pray, consider her poor parents; consider what will be their sufferings:—let it be our task to prepare them.

What you say is very right, Sir, return'd he.—I believe you are a good christian;—God direct us,—God direct us.—I wish I had a dram:—faith, I shall be choak'd.—Sweet creature!—what will become of Lord Darcey!—I never wanted a dram so much before.—Your name, Sir, if you please.—I perceive we shall make matters worse by staying out so long.

I told him my name; and that I had the honour of being intimately acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Powis.

He continued,—You will go in *with me*, Sir.—How am I to act!—I'll follow your advice—We must expect it will be a dreadful piece of work.—

Caution and tenderness, Mr. Morgan, will be absolutely necessary.

But where is my hat?—where is my wig?—have I thrown them into the pond?

It is well the poor distress'd man recollected he had them not; or, bare-headed as he was, I should have gone with him to the house.—I pick'd them up, all over dirt; and, well as I could, clean'd them with my handkerchief.

Now, Sir, said I, if you will wipe your face,—for the sweat was standing on it in large drops,—I am ready to attend you.

So I must *really* go in, captain.—I don't think I can stand it;—you had better go without me.—Upon my soul, I had sooner face the mouth of a cannon—If you would blow my brains out, it would be the kindest thing you ever did in your life.

Poh! don't talk at this rate, Sir.—Do we live only for ourselves?—

But *will* you not leave us, captain;—*will* you not run from us, when all is out?

Rather, Sir, suspect me of cowardice.—I should receive greater satisfaction from administering the smallest consolation to people in distress, than from whole nations govern'd by my nod.

Well, captain, I *will* go;—I *will* do any thing you desire me, since you are so good to say you will not leave us.

But, notwithstanding his fair promise, I never expected to get him within the doors.—He was shifting from side to side:—sometimes he would stand still,—sometimes attempt to retreat.—When we were just at the house, a servant appear'd:—of whom he enquir'd, if Mr. and Mrs. Powis were return'd; and was inform'd the latter was within;—the former gone out in pursuit of us. We likewise found the Ladies were with Sir James in the library. I sent in my name: it was in vain for me to expect any introduction from my companion.

Mrs. Powis flew to meet me at the door:—Mr. Morgan lifted up his eyes, and shook his head.—I never was so put to it:—I knew not what to say; or how to look.—Welcome, Mr. Risby, said the amiable, unfortunate, unsuspecting mother;—doubly welcome at this happy juncture.—Let me lead you to parents, introducing me to Sir James and Lady Powis, from whom I have receiv'd all my felicity.

You need not be told my reception:—it is sufficient that you know Sir James and her Ladyship.—My eyes instantly turn'd on the venerable chaplin: I thought I never discover'd so much of the angel in a human form.

Mrs. Powis ask'd me a thousand questions;—except answering *them*, I sat stupidly silent.—It was not so with Mr. Morgan: he walk'd, or rather ran up and down;—his eyes fix'd on the floor,—his lips in motion.—The Ladies spoke to him: he did not answer; and I could perceive them look on each other with surprize.

Mr. Powis enter'd:—the room seem'd to lift up:—I quite rambled when I rose to receive his salute.—Mr. Morgan was giving me the slip.—I look'd at him significantly,—then at Mr. Watson,—as much as to say, Take him

out; acquaint him with the sorrowful tidings.—He understood the hint, and immediately they withdrew together.

Come, dear Risby, pluck up, said Mr. Powis:—do not you, my friend, be the only low-spirited person amongst us.—I fear Mr. Risby is not well, return'd Lady Powis.—We must not expect to see every one in high spirits, because *we* are:—*our* blessings must be consider'd as *very* singular.—You have not mention'd Fanny to your friends.

Indeed, Madam, I have, replied he.—Risby knows, I every minute expect my belov'd daughter.—But tell me, Dick;—tell me, my friend;—all present are myself;—fear not to be candid;—what accident has thrown a cloud of sadness over your once chearful countenance?—Can I assist you?—My advice, my interest, my purse are all your own.—Nay, dear Risby, you must not turn from me.—I did turn, I could hold it no longer.—

Pray Sir, said Mrs. Powis, do speak;—do command us; and she condescended to lay her hand on mine—Lady Powis, Sir James too, both intreated I would suffer them to make me happy.—Dear worthy creatures, how my heart bled! how it still bleeds for them!—

I was attempting some awkward acknowledgment, when Mr. Watson enter'd, led by Mr. Morgan.—I saw he had executed the task, which made me shudder.—Never did the likeness of a being celestial shine more than in the former! He mov'd gently forward,—plac'd himself next Lady Powis;—pale,—trembling,—sinking.—Mr. Morgan retir'd to the window.—

Now,—now,—the dreadful discovery was at a crisis.—Mr. Watson sigh'd.—Lady Powis eyed him with attention; then starting up, cried, Bless me! I hear wheels: suppose, Mr. Watson, it should be Fanny!—and after looking into the lawn resum'd her chair.

Pardon me, Lady Powis said. Mr. Watson in a low-voice; why *this* impatience?—Ah Madam! I could rather wish you to check than encourage *it*.

Hold, hold, my worthy friend, return'd Sir James; do you forget four hours since how you stood listening at a gate by the road-side, saying, you could hear, tho' not see?

We must vary our hopes and inclinations, reply'd Mr. Watson.—Divine Providence—there stopp'd;—not another word.—He stopp'd;—he groan'd;—and was silent.—Great God! cried Mr. Powis, is my child ill?—Is my child dead? frantickly echoed Mrs. Powis—Heaven forbid! exclaim'd Sir James and his Lady, arising.—Tell us, Mr. Watson;—tell us, Mr. Ruby.

When you are compos'd,—return'd the former—Then, our child is dead,—really dead! shriek'd the parents.—No, no, cried Lady Powis, clasping her son and daughter in her arms,—she is, not dead; I am sure she is not dead.

Mr. Watson, after many efforts to speak, said in a faultering voice,—Consider we are christians:—let that bless'd name fortify our souls.

Mrs. Powis fell on her knees before him,—heart-rending sight!—her cap torn off,—her hair dishevell'd,—her eyes fix'd;—not a tear,—not a single tear to relieve the bitter anguish of her soul.

Sir James had left the room;—Lady Powis was sunk almost senseless on the sopha;—Mr. Powis kneeling by his wife, clasping her to his bosom;—Mr. Morgan in a corner roaring out his affliction;—Mr. Watson with the voice of an angel speaking consolation.—I say nothing of my own feelings.—God, how great!—how inexpressible! when Mrs. Powis, still on her knees, turn'd to me with uplifted hands,—Oh Mr. Risby! cried she,—can *you,*—can *you* speak comfort to the miserable?—Then again addressing Mr. Watson,—Dear, saint, only say she lives:—I ask no more; only say she lives.—My best love!—my life!—my Fanny! said Mr. Powis, lifting her to the sopha;—live,—live,—for my sake.—Oh!—Risby, are *you* the messenger?—his head fell on my shoulder, and he sobb'd aloud.

Lady Powis beckon'd him towards her, and, looking at Mrs. Powis with an expressive glance of tenderness,—said Compose yourself, my son;—what will become of *you, if*—He took the meaning of her words, and wrapping his arms about his wife, seem'd for a moment to forget his own sorrow in endeavours to.

What an exalted woman is Lady Powis!

My children, said she; taking a hand from each,—I am thankful: whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.—Let us follow his great example of patience,—of resignation.—What is a poor span?—*Ours* will be eternity.

I whisper'd Mr. Morgan, a female friend would be necessary to attend the Ladies;—one whom they lov'd,—whom they confided in, to be constantly with them in their apartments.—He knew just such a woman, he said; and went himself to fetch Mrs. Jenkings.—Lady Powis being unable longer to support herself, propos'd withdrawing.—I offered my arm, which she accepted, and led her to the dressing-room.—Mrs. Powis follow'd; almost lifeless, leaning on her husband: there I left them together, and walk'd out for a quarter of an hour to recover my confus'd senses.

At my return to the library, I found Sir James and Mr. Watson in conversation.—The former, with a countenance of horror and distraction,—Oh Sir! said he, as I came near him,—do I see you again?—are you kind enough not to run from our distress?

Run from it, Sir James! I reply'd;—no, I will stay and be a partaker.

Oh Sir! he continued, you know not *my* distress:—death only can relieve *me*—I am without *hope*, without *comfort*.

And is this, Sir James, what you are arriv'd at? said the good chaplain—Is this what you have been travelling sixty years after?—Wish for death yet say you have neither hope or comfort.—Your good Lady, Sir, is full of both;—*she* rejoices in affliction:—*she* has long look'd above this world.

So might I, he reply'd,—had I no more to charge myself with than she has.—*You* know, Mr. Watson,—*you* know how faulty I have been.

Your errors, dear Sir James, said he, are not remember'd.—Look back on the reception you gave your son and daughter.

He made no reply; but shedding a flood of tears, went to his afflicted family.

Mr. Watson, it seems, whilst I had been out, acquainted him with the contents of your letter;—judging it the most seasonable time, as their grief could not then admit of increase.

Sir James was scarce withdrawn, when Lady Powis sent her woman to request the sight of it.—As I rose to give it into her hand, I saw Mr. Morgan pass by the door, conducting an elderly woman, whom I knew afterward to be Mrs. Jenkings.—She had a handkerchief to her eyes, one hand lifted up;—and I heard her say, Good God! Sir, what shall I do?—how can I see the dear Ladies?—Oh Miss Powis!—the amiable Miss Powis!

Mr. Morgan join'd us immediately, with whom and Mr. Watson I spent the remainder of this melancholy evening: at twelve we retir'd.

So here I sit, like one just return'd from the funeral of his best friend;—alone, brooding over every misery I can call together.—The light of the moon, which shines with uncommon splendor, casts not one ray on my dark reflections:—nor do the objects which present themselves from the windows offer one pleasing idea;—rather an aggravation to my heart-felt anguish.—Miserable family!—miserable those who are interested in its sad disaster!—

I go to my bed, but not to my repose.

Nine o'clock in the morning.

How sad, how gloomy, has been the approach of morning!—About six, for I had not clos'd my eyes,—somebody enter'd my chamber. I suppos'd it Mr. Morgan, and drew aside my curtain.—It was not Mr. Morgan;—it *was* the poor disconsolate father of Miss Powis, more agitated, if possible, than the preceding night.—He flung himself on my bed with agony not to be express'd:—

Dear Risby, said he, *do* rise:—*do* come to my apartment.—Alas! my Fanny—

What new misfortune, my friend? ask'd I, starting up.—My wife! return'd! he!—she is in fits;—she has been in fits the whole night.—Oh Risby! if I should lose *her*, if I should lose my *wife!*—My parents *too*, I shall lose them!—

Words could not lessen his affliction. I was silent, making what haste I could to huddle on my clothes;—and at his repeated intreaties follow'd him to his wife,—She was sitting near the fire drowned; in tears, supported by her woman. I was pleas'd to see them drop so plentifully.—She lifted up her head a little, as I enter'd.—How alter'd!—how torn to pieces with grief!—Her complexion once so lovely,—how changed in a few hours.

My husband! said she, in a faint voice, as he drew near her.—Then looking at me,—Comfort him, Mr. Risby;—don't let him sob so.—Indeed he will be ill;—indeed he will.—Then addressing him, Consider, she who us'd to be your nurse is now incapable of the task.—His agitation was so much increas'd by her words and manner, that I attempted to draw him into another apartment.—Your intentions are kind, said she, Mr. Risby;—but I *must* not lose my husband:—you see how it is, Sir, shaking her head;—try to sooth him;—talk to him *here* but do not take him from *me*.—

Then turning to Mr. Powis,—I am better, my love,—don't frighten yourself:—we must learn to be resign'd.—Set the example, and I will be resign'd, said he,—wiping away the tears as they trickled down her

cheek;—if my Fanny supports herself, I shall not be quite miserable. In this situation I left them, to close my letter.

What is become of poor Lord Darcey? For ever is he in my thoughts.—*His* death will be an aggravation to the general sorrow.—Write instantly:—I wait your account with impatience; yet dread to receive it.

LETTER XXXI.

The Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH to RICHARD RISBY, Esq;

Dover.

Say not a word of it;—no, not for the world;—the body of Miss Powis is drove on shore.—If the family choose to have her brought down, it may be done some time hence.—I have order'd an undertaker to get a lead coffin, and will take care to have her remains properly deposited.—It would be an act of cruelty at present to acquaint her friends with this circumstance.—I have neither leisure or spirits to tell you in what manner the body was found, and how I knew it to be miss Powis's.

The shore is fill'd with a multitude of people.—What sights will they gaze on to satisfy their curiosity!—a curiosity that makes human nature shrink.

I have got three matronly women to go with the undertaker, that the body may be taken up with decency.

Darcey lives;—but *how* does he live?—Without sense; almost without motion.

God protect the good old steward!—the worthy Jenkings!—He is with you before this;—he has told you everything. I could not write by him:—I thought I should never be able to touch a pen again.—He had left Dover before the body was found.—What conflicts did he escape! But as it is, I fear his grey hairs will go down with sorrow to the grave.—God support us all!

MOLESWORTH.

LETTER XXXII

Captain RISBY to the Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH.

Barford Abbey.

My heart bleeds afresh—Her body found! Good heaven!—it *must* not,—*shall* not come to the knowledge of the family.—At present they submit with a degree of resignation.—Who knows but a latent hope might remain?—Instances have been known of many saved from wrecks;—but her body is drove on shore.—Not a glimmering;—possibility is *now* out of the question.—The family are determin'd to shut themselves out from the world;—no company ever more to be admitted;—never to go any where but to the church.—Your letter was deliver'd me before them.—I was ask'd tenderly for poor Lord Darcey.—What could I answer?—Near the same; not worse, on the whole.—They flatter themselves he will recover;—I encourage all their flattering hopes.

Mrs. Jenkings has never been home since Mr. Morgan fetch'd her;—Mr. Jenkings too is constantly here;—sometimes Edmund:—except the unhappy parents, never was grief like theirs.

Mr. Jenkings has convinc'd me it was Miss Powis which I saw at ——. Strange reverse of fortune since that hour!

When the family are retir'd I spend many melancholy hours with poor Edmund;—and from him have learnt the reason why Mr. Powis conceal'd his marriage,—which is *now* no secret.—Even Edmund never knew it till Mr. and Mrs. Powis return'd to England,—Take a short recital:—it will help to pass away a gloomy moment.

When Mr. Powis left the University, he went for a few months to Ireland with the Lord-Lieutenant; and at his return intended to make the Grand Tour.—In the mean time, Sir James and Lady Powis contract an intimacy with a young Lady of quality, in the bloom of life, but not of beauty.—By what I can gather, Lady Mary Sutton is plain to a degree,—with a mind—But why speak of her mind?—let that speak for itself.

She was independent; her fortune noble;—her affections disengag'd.—Mr. Powis returns from Ireland: Lady Mary is then at the Abbey.—Sir James in a few days, without consulting his son, sues for her alliance.—Lady Mary supposes it is with the concurrence of Mr. Powis:—*his* person,—*his* character,—*his* family, were unexceptionable; and generously she declar'd her sentiments in his favour.—Sir James, elated with success, flies to his son;—and in presence of Lady Powis, tells him he has secur'd his happiness.—Mr. Powis's inclinations not coinciding,—Sir James throws himself into a violent rage.—Covetousness and obstinacy always go hand in hand:—both had taken such fast hold of the Baronet, that he swore—and his oath was without reservation—he would never consent to his son's marrying any other woman.—Mr. Powis, finding his father determin'd,—and nothing, after his imprecation, to expect from the entreaties of his mother,—strove to forget the person of Lady Mary, and think only of her mind.—Her Ladyship, a little chagrin'd Sir James's proposals were not seconded by Mr. Powis, pretended immediate business into Oxfordshire.—The Baronet wants not discernment: he saw through her motive; and taking his opportunity, insinuated the violence of his son's passion, and likewise the great timidity it occasion'd—he even prevail'd on Lady Powis to propose returning with her to Brandon Lodge.

The consequence of this was, the two Ladies set out on their journey, attended by Sir James and Mr. Powis, who, in obedience to his father, was still endeavouring to conquer his indifference.—

Perhaps, *in time*, the amiable Lady Mary might have found a way to his heart,—had she not introduc'd the very evening of their arrival at the Lodge, her counter-part in every thing but person:—there Miss Whitmore outshone her whole sex.—This fair neighbour was the belov'd friend of Lady Mary Sutton, and soon became the idol of Mr. Powis's affections, which render'd his situation still more distressing.—His mother's disinterested tenderness for Lady Mary;—her own charming qualifications;—his father's irrevocable menace, commanded him one way:—Miss Whitmore's charms led him another.

Attached as he was to this young Lady, he never appear'd to take the least notice, of her more than civility demanded;—tho' she was of the highest consequence to his repose, yet the obstacles which surrounded him seem'd insurmountable.

Sir James and Lady Powis retiring one evening earlier than usual,—Lady Mary and Mr. Powis were left alone. The latter appear'd greatly embarrass'd. Her Ladyship eyed him attentively; but instead of sharing his embarrassment,—began a conversation of which Miss Whitmore was the subject.—She talk'd *so* long of her many excellencies, profess'd *such* sincerity, *such* tenderness, *for her*, that his emotion became visible:—his fine, eyes were full of fire;—his expressive features spoke what she, had long wish'd to discover.—You are silent, Sir, said she, with a smile of ineffable sweetness; is my lovely friend a subject that displeases you?—

How am I situated! replied he—Generous Lady Mary, dare I repose a confidence in your noble breast?—*Will* you permit me that honour?—*Will* you not think ill of me, if I disclose—No, I cannot—presumption—I *dare* not. She interrupted him:

Ah Sir!—you hold me unworthy,—you hold me incapable of friendship.—Suppose me your sister:—if you had a sister, would you conceal any thing from *her?*—Give me then a *brother*;—I can never behold *you* in any other light.

No, my Lady;—no, return'd he, I deserve not *this* honour.—If you knew, madam,—if you knew all,—you *would*, you *must* despise me.

Despise you, Mr. Powis!—she replied;—despise you for loving Miss Whitmore!

Exalted goodness! said he,—approaching her with rapture: take my heart;—do with it as you please;—it is devoted to your generosity.

Well then, said she, I command *it*,—I command *it* instantly to be laid open before me.—*Now* let it speak,—*now* let it declare if I am not the bar to its felicity:—if—

No, my good angel, interrupted he, dropping on his knees,—and pressing her hand to his lips;—I see it is through you,—through you only,—I am to expect felicity.

Before Lady Mary could prevail on Mr. Powis to arise, Sir James, whom they did not expect,—and who they thought was retir'd for the night, came in quest of his snuff-box;—but with a countenance full of joy retir'd precipitately, bowing to Lady Mary with the same reverence as if she had been a molten image cast of his favourite metal.

In this conversation I have been circumstantial, that you might have a full view of the noble, disinterested Lady Mary Sutton:—you may gather now, from whence sprang her unbounded affection for the incomparable, unfortunate Miss Powis.

You will not be surprised to find a speedy marriage took place between Mr. Powis and Miss Whitmore, to which none were privy but the Dean of H——, who perform'd the ceremony,—Lady Mary,—Mrs. Whitmore (the mother of Mrs. Powis),—Mr. and Mrs. Jenkings.—Perhaps you think Lady Powis ought to have been consulted:—I thought so *too*; but am *now* convinc'd she would have been the wretchedest woman in the world, had she known her son acting diametrically opposite to the will of his father in so material a point.

To put it out of the power of every person intrusted with this momentous secret to divulge it,—and to make Mr. Powis perfectly easy,—each bound themselves at the altar where the ceremony was perform'd, never to make the least discovery 'till Mr. Powis thought fit to declare his marriage.

What an instance have I given you of *female* friendship!—Shew me such another:—our sex are a test of *their* friendships.

How many girls have I seen,—for ever together arm in arm,—whispering their own, perhaps the secrets of all their neighbours;—when in steps a young fellow of our cloth,—or any other, it signifies not the colour,—and down tumbles the tottering basis.—Instead of *my dear* and *my love*, it is *sly creature, false friend*, could any one have thought Miss Such-a-one possess'd of so much art?—then out comes intrigues, family-affairs, losses at cards,—in short, every thing that has been treasur'd up by two industrious fair ones seven years before.

Don't think me satyrical:—I am nice;—*too* much so, perhaps.—The knowledge of *such* as constitute this little narrative, and *some* other minds like *theirs*, has made me rather *too* nice, as I said before;—a matter of little consequence, as I am situated.—Can I look forward to happy prospects, and see how soon the fairest felicity is out of sight?—This afflicted family, Molesworth, has taught me to forget,—that is, I ought to forget.—But no matter;—never again let me see Lady Sophia;—never lead me a second time into danger:—she is mortal; like Miss Powis.—Lord Darcey! poor Lord Darcey!

If recollection will assist me, a word or two more of Mr. and Mrs. Powis.

Lady Sophia—the deuce is in me! you know who I mean;—why write I the name of Lady Sophia?—upon my honour, I have given over all thoughts of that divinity—Lady Mary I should have said, a few months after the nuptials of her friends, wrote to Mr. Powis, who was then at Barford Abbey, an absolute refusal, in consequence of a preconcerned

plan of operation.—Immediately after this, she set out with Mrs. Powis for London, whose *situation* made it necessary for her to leave Hillford Down.

You will suppose, on the receipt of this letter, how matters were at the Abbey:—Sir. James rav'd; even Lady Powis thought her son ill us'd; but, in consideration of their former intimacy, prevail'd on Sir James never to mention the affair, though from this time all acquaintance ceas'd between the families.

In order to conceal the marriage, it was inevitable Mr. Powis must carry his wife abroad;—and as he intended to travel before the match was thought of with Lady Mary,—his father now readily consented that he should begin his tour.—This furnish'd him with an excuse to go immediately to town,—where he waited 'till the angel that we all weep for, made her appearance.

But what, you ask, was Mrs. Powis's excuse to leave England, without being suspected?—Why, I'll tell you: by the contrivance of Lady Mary, together with Mrs. Whitmore, it was believ'd she had left the world;—that she died in town of a malignant fever;—that—but I cannot be circumstantial—Miss Powis, after her parents went abroad, was brought down by Lady Mary, and consign'd to the care of her grandmother, with whom she liv'd as the orphan child of some distant relation.

Whilst Mr. and Mrs. Powis were travelling through Italy, he apply'd to his friend the Lord-Lieutenant,—and by *that* interest was appointed to the government of ——. It was here my acquaintance with them commenc'd: not that I suspected Miss Glinn to be Mrs. Powis, though I saw her every day.—*Glinn* was a name she assum'd 'till she returned to England.—A thousand little circumstances which render'd her character unsuspected, I want spirits to relate.—Suffice it to say,—the death of Mrs. Whitmore;—a daughter passing on the world for an orphan;—and the absence of Lady Mary Sutton;—made them resolve to hazard every thing rather than leave their child unprotected.—Alas! for what are they come home?

Nothing is impossible with a Supreme Being.—Lord Darcey *may* recover.—But why this ray of hope to make the horrors of my mind more dreadful?—He is *past* hope, you say.—

RISBY.

LETTER XXXIII.

The Honourable George Molesworth to Richard Risby, Esq;

Dover.

Risby, I am lifted above myself!—I am overcome with surprise!—I am mad with joy!—Is it possible!—can it be!—But Lord Darcey's servant has swore it;—yes, he has swore, a letter directed in Miss Powis's *own* hand, lay on the counter in a banker's shop where he went to change a bill: the direction was to Lady Mary Sutton:—he has put many for the same Lady into the post-office.—I *run*, I *ride* or rather *fly* to town.

You may jump, you may sing, but command your features before the family.—Should it be a mistake of John's, we kill them twice.

If I live to see the resurrection of our hopes, John shall be with you instantly.—On second thought, I will not dispatch this, unless we have a bless'd certainty.

Molesworth.

LETTER XXXIV.

The Honourable George Molesworth to the same.

London.

Are you a mile from the Abbey, Dick?—Are you out of sight,—out of hearing?—John, though you should offer to kill him, dare not deliver letter or message 'till you are at a proper distance.

Miss Powis lives!—Restore peace within the walls.—As I hope to be pardon'd for my sins, I have seen, I have spoke to her.—She lives!—Heavenly sound! it should be convey'd to them from above.—She lives! let me again repeat it.—Proclaim the joyful tidings:—but for particulars have patience 'till I return to the man, to the friend my life is bound up in.—I have seen him in every stage. Brightest has he shone, as the taper came nearer to an end.—The rich cordial must be administered one drop at a time.—Observe the caution.

Molesworth.

LETTER XXXV.

Captain Risby to the Honourable George Molesworth.

Barford Abby.

Well, Molesworth,—well—I can go no farther;—yet I *must;—John*, poor faithful *John*, says I *must*;—says he shall be sent back again.—But I have lost the use of my fingers:—my head bobs from side to side like a pendulum. Don't stamp, don't swear: they have a few drops of your cordial more than I intended.—It operates well.—I long to administer a larger potion.—Could you see how I am shifted—now here—now there—by the torrent of joy, that like a deluge almost drives reason before it;—I say, could you see me, you would not wonder at the few unconnected lines of

Yours,

Risby.

LETTER XXXVI.

The Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH to RICHARD RISBY, Esq;

Dover.

Darcey bears the joyful surprise beyond imagination:—it has brought him from death to life.—

Hear in what manner I proceeded;—You may suppose the hurry in which I left Dover:—I took no leave of my friend;—his humane apothecary promis'd not to quit him in my absence:—I gave orders when his Lordship enquir'd for me, that he should be told particular business of my *own* had call'd me to town express.—It happen'd very convenient that I left him in a profound sleep.

Away I flew,—agitated betwixt *hope* and *fear*:—harrass'd by fatigue;—not in a bed for three nights before;—nature was almost wore out, when I alighted at the banker's.

I accosted one of the clerks, desiring to speak with Mr. or Mrs. Delves[A]:—the former not at home, I was immediately conducted to the latter, a genteel woman, about forty.—She receiv'd me politely; but before I could acquaint her with the occasion of my visit, the door open'd, and in stepp'd a pretty sprightly girl, who on seeing me was going to retire.—Do you want any thing, my love? said Mrs. Delves. Only, Madam, she replied, if you think it proper for Miss Warley to get up.

[A]

The name of the banker.

Miss Warley! exclaim'd I.—Great God! Miss Warley!—Tell me, Ladies, is Miss Warley *really* under your roof?—Both at once, for *both* seem'd equally dispos'd to diffuse happiness, answer'd to my wishes.

I threw myself back in my chair:—the surprise was more than I could support.—Shall I tell you all my weakness?—I even shed tears;—yes, Dick, I shed tears:—but they were drops of heart-felt gladness.

The Ladies look'd on each other,—Mrs. Delves said in a tone that shew'd she was not without the darling passion of her sex,

Pardon me, Sir; I think I have heard Miss Warley has *no* brother,—or I should think *your* emotion I saw him before me.—But whoever you are, this humanity is noble.—Indeed, the poor young Lady has been extremely ill.

I am not her brother, Madam, return'd I.—It is true, she has *no* brother;—but *she has* parents, *she has* friends, who lament her dead:—*their* sorrow has been *mine*.

I fear, Sir, return'd she, it will not end here.—I grieve to tell you, the Miss Warley you speak of is not with me;—I know nothing of that Lady:—my Miss Warley has no parents.

I still persisted it was the same; and, to the no small gratification of both mother and daughter, promis'd to explain the mystery.—But before I began, Miss Delves was sent to desire Miss Warley would continue in bed an hour longer, on account of some visitors that had dropp'd in accidentally.

Soon as Miss Delves return'd, I related every particular.—I cannot tell you half that pass'd;—I cannot describe their astonishment:—but let me *tell* you Miss Powis is just recover'd from the small-pox;—that this was the second day of her sitting up:—let me *tell* you *too* her face is as beautiful as ever.—On mature deliberation, it was determin'd, for the sake of Miss Powis's health, she must some time longer think her name Warley.

I din'd with my new acquaintance, on their promising to procure an interview for me with Miss Powis in the afternoon.

It was about five when I was admitted to her presence.—I found her in an elegant dressing-room, sitting on a sopha: her head a little reclin'd.—I stepp'd slow and softly: she arose as I enter'd.—I wonder not that Darcey adores her, never was a form so perfect!

My trembling knees beat one against another.—My heart,—my impatient heart flew up to my face to tell its joyful sensations.—I ventur'd to press her hand to my lips, but was incapable of pronouncing a syllable.—She was confus'd:—she certainly thought of Darcey, when she saw his friend. —I took a chair next her.—I shall not repeat our conversation 'till it became interesting, which began by her asking, if I had heard lately any accounts from Barford Abbey?—Lord Darcey, Madam, I reply'd, has receiv'd a letter from Sir James.

Lord Darcey! she repeated with great emotion.—Is Sir James and Lady Powis well. Sir?

His Lordship, reply'd I, awkwardly, did not mention particulars.—I believe,—I suppose.—your friends are well.

I fear, said she sighing, they will think me an ungrateful creature.—No person, Mr. Molesworth, had ever *such* obligations to their friends as *I have*—This family, looking at the two Ladies, must be rank'd with my best.—Their replies were polite and affectionate—Can you tell me, Sir, continued she, if Lord—here her face was all over crimson—heavens! I mean, if Mr. Powis and his Lady are at the Abbey?—Why did she not say Lord Darcey? I swear the name quiver'd on her lips.

I answer'd in the affirmative;—and sitting silent a moment,—she ask'd how I discover'd her to be still in England.—I said by means of a servant: —true enough, Dick:—but then I was oblig'd to add, this servant belonged to Mr. Delves, and that he accidentally happen'd a few hours since to mention her name whilst I was doing business in the shop.—She was fond of dwelling on the family at the Abbey;—on Mr. and Mrs.

Jenkings;—and once when I mention'd my friend, when I said how happy I should make him at my return;—pleasure, the most difficult to be conceal'd of any sensation, sprang to her expressive eyes.

I suppose she will expect a visit from his Lordship.—If she is angry at being disappointed, no matter: the mistake will be soon clear'd up.

The moment I left her, I stepp'd into a chaise that waited for me at the door, and drove like lightning from stage to stage, 'till I reach'd this place;—my drivers being turn'd into Mercuries by a touch more efficacious than all the oaths that can be swore by a first-rate blood.

I did not venture into Darcey's apartment 'till he was inform'd of my return.—I heard him impatiently ask to see me, as I stood without the door. This call'd me to him;—when pulling aside the curtain he ask'd, Who is that?—Is it Molesworth?—Are you come, my friend? But what have you seen?—what have you heard?—looking earnestly in face.—*I* am past joy,—past feeling pleasure even for you, George;—yet tell me why you look not so sorrowful as yesterday.—

I ask'd what alteration it was he saw:—what it was he suspected.—When I have griev'd, my Lord, it has been for you.—If I am now less afflicted, you must be less miserable.—He started up in the bed, and grasping both my hands in his, cry'd. Tell me, Molesworth, is there a possibility,—a bare possibility?—I ask no more;—only tell me there is a possibility.

My Lord,—my friend,—my Darcey, nothing is impossible.

By heaven! he exclaim'd, you would not flatter me;—by heaven she lives!

Ask me not farther, my Lord.—What is the blessing you most wish for?—Suppose that blessing granted.—And you, Risby, suppose the extasy,—the thankfulness that ensued.—He that is grateful to man, can he be ungrateful to his Maker?

Yours,

MOLESWORTH.

LETTER XXXVII.

Miss Powis to Lady Powis.

London.

Think me not ungrateful, my ever-honour'd Lady, that I have been silent under the ten thousand obligations which I receiv'd at Barford Abbey.—But indeed, my dear Lady, I have been *very* ill.—I have had the small-pox:—I was seiz'd delirious the evening after my arrival in Town.—My God! what a wretch did I set out with!—Vile man!—Man did I say?—*No*; he is a disgrace to *manhood*.—How shall I tell your Ladyship all I have suffer'd?—I am weak,—*very* weak;—I find myself unequal to the task.—

This moment I have hit on an expedient that will unravel all;—I'll recall a [A] letter which I have just sent down to be put into the post-office;—a letter I wrote Lady Mary Sutton immediately on my arrival here;—but was seiz'd so violently, that I could not add the superscription, for which reason it has lain by ever since.—I am easy on Lady Mary's account:—Mr. Delves has acquainted her of my illness:—like wise the prospect of my recovery.

[A]

This was the same Lord Darcey's servant saw on the counter.

Consider then, dear Lady Powis, the inclos'd as if it was address'd to yourself.

I cannot do justice to the affection,—the compassion,—the tender assiduity I have experienc'd from Mr. Delves's family:—I shall always love them; I hope too I shall always be grateful.

God grant, my dear Lady;—God grant, dear Sir James, that long ere this you may have embrac'd Mr. and Mrs. Powis.—My heart is with *you*:—it delights to dwell at Barford Abbey.

In a few days I hope to do myself the honour of writing to your Ladyship again.—One line from your dear hand would be most gratefully receiv'd by your oblig'd and affectionate

F. WARLEY.

P.S. My good friends Mr. and Mrs. Jenkings shall hear from me next post.

LETTER XXXVIII.

Miss Powis to Lady MARY SUTTON.

Oh my dear Lady! what a villain have I escap'd from?—Could your Ladyship believe that a man, who, to all appearance, has made a good husband to your agreeable neighbour upwards of twelve years, and preserv'd the character of a man of honour;—could you believe in the decline of life he would have fallen off? No, he cannot have fallen: such a mind as his never was exalted.—It is the virtues of his wife that has hitherto made his vices imperceptible;—that has kept them in their dark cell, afraid to venture out;—afraid to appear amidst her shining perfections.—Vile, abandon'd Smith!—But for the sake of his injur'd, unhappy wife, I will not discover his baseness to any but yourself and Lady Powis.—Perhaps Mrs. Smith may not be unacquainted with his innate bad principles;—perhaps she conceals her knowledge of them knowing it vain to complain of a disorder which is past the reach of medicine.—What cure is there for mischief lurking under the mask of hypocrisy?—It must be of long standing before that covering can grow over it:—like a vellum on the eye, though taken off ever skillfully, it will again spread on the blemish'd sight.

How am I running on!—My spirits are flutter'd:—I begin where I should end, and end where I should begin.—Behold me, dearest Madam, just parted from my Hampshire friends,—silent and in tears, plac'd by the side of my miscreant conductor.—You know, my Lady, this specious man *can* make himself vastly entertaining: he strove to render his conversation particularly so, on our first setting out.

We had travell'd several stages without varying the subject, which was that of our intended tour, when I said I hop'd it would conquer Mrs. Smith's melancholy for the death of her brother.—How did his answer change him in a moment from the *most* agreeable to the *most* disgustful of his sex!

My wife, Miss Warley, with a leer that made him look dreadful, wants your charming sprightliness:—it is a curs'd thing to be connected with a gloomy woman:—

Gloomy, Sir! casting at him a look of disdain; do you call mildness, complacency, and evenness of temper, *gloomy?*

She is much altered, Madam;—is grown old and peevish;—her health is bad;—she cannot live long.

Mrs. Smith can never be *peevish*, Sir;—and as to her *age*, I thought it pretty near your *own*.

No, no, Madam, you are quite mistaken; I am at least five years younger.

Five years, Sir! what are five years at *your* time of life!

Come, come, Miss Warley, laying his huge paw on my hand, and in a tone of voice that shew'd him heartily nettled;—even at *my* time of life I can admire a beautiful young Lady.—If my wife should die,—*old as I am* —men *older* than myself, with half my estate, have married some of the finest women in the kingdom.

Very likely, Sir;—but then it is to be suppos'd the characters of *such* men have been particularly amiable,—No man or woman of honour can esteem another whose principles are doubtful.

This was a pretty home-thrust; it put him more on his guard for the present; but had he behav'd like an angel, I must have hated him. He was *very* respectful, *very* ceremonious, and *very* thoughtful, 'till we arrived at the inn where we were to stop the night; and had so much art not to seem displeas'd, that I refus'd giving him my company at supper,

under pretence of indisposition.—Indeed, I was far from well: a child which I had seen a few hours before fresh in the small-pox, a good deal disconcerted me.—After fixing on my room, not to appear suspicious, I went down at his request, to eat a bit of cake and drink a glass of wine, before I retired for the night.—I had scarce swallow'd it when he left me, as he said, to speak to the drivers. I wished him a good night as he went out, and took an opportunity a few moments after to go to my chamber. —When there I lock'd the door, and sat myself down to undress; but I began to be greatly alarm'd by something that mov'd under the bed.—Judge my surprize,—judge my horror,—on taking the candle and examining, to see there a man!—But how was that surprize,—that horror increased, on discovering, him to be the vile Smith!—I gave a loud scream, and ran towards the door; but had not power to turn the key, before he caught me in his arms.—

Be calm, Miss Warley, cried the monster;—hear what I have to say.—Suffer me to tell you, that I love you to distraction;—that I adore you.

Adore me, vile man! said I, breaking from him:—leave me this instant—begone:—leave me, I say, instantly.—Again I scream'd.

No, by heaven! he reply'd, I will not go 'till you have heard and pardon'd me.—Here I stand *determin'd* to be heard:—*hear* me, or this moment is my last.—With that he drew out a pistol, and held it to his breast.

And *dare* you, said I, collecting all my resolution,—*dare* you rush into eternity, without one virtue to offer up with your polluted soul?—I pronounc'd these words with steadiness.—*He* trembled, he look'd like a criminal at the hour of execution.—Letting the pistol drop from his hand, the base dissembler fell on his knees before me.—Nobody hearing my cries,—nobody coming to my assistance, I was oblig'd to hear, and pretend to credit his penitential protestations. God knows how my ears might have been farther shock'd with his odious passion;—what indignities I might have suffer'd,—had I not heard some person passing by the door of my apartment:—on which I ventur'd to give another scream.—The door was instantly burst open; and whilst an elderly

Gentleman advanc'd towards me, full of surprize, the detested brute slipp'd away.—This Gentleman, my good deliverer, was no other than your Ladyship's banker, who when he was acquainted with my name, insisted on taking me to Town in his own coach, where he was returning from a visit he had made at Salisbury—I did not ask, neither do I know what became of Smith; but I suppose he will set out with his wife immediately for Dover.—Thank God! I am not of the party—How I pity poor Miss Frances Walsh, a young Lady who, he told me, was waiting at his house in Town to go over with them.—I am but just arriv'd at Mr. Delves's house.—Mr. and Mrs. Delves think with me, that the character of the *unworthy* Smith should not be expos'd for the sake of his *worthy* wife.—The family here are all amiable.—I could say a great deal more; but my head aches dreadfully.—This I must add, I have consented, at the tender intreaties of Mr. and Mrs. Delves, to remain with them 'till a proper opportunity offers to throw myself at your Ladyship's feet.—My head grows worse;—I must lay down my pen.—This bad man has certainly frighten'd me into a fever.

[The following lines were added after Miss Powis's recovery]

I hope, my dear Lady, before this you have Mr. Delves's letter;—if so, you know I have had the small-pox.—You know too I am out of danger.—How can I be thankful enough for so many escapes!—This is the first day I have been able to hold a pen.—I am permitted to write no more than the name of your honour'd and affectionate

F. WARLEY.

LETTER XXXIX

Captain RISBY to the Honourable GEORGE

Barford Abbey.

Will all the thanks,—all the gratitude,—the parents blessings,—their infinity of joy, be contain'd in one poor sheet?—No:—Was I to repeat half,—only half of what they send, you, I might write on for ever.—One says you shall be their son;—another, their brother;—a third, that you are a man most favour'd of heaven—but all agree, as a reward for your virtues you are impower'd to heal afflictions—in short, they want to make me think you can make black white—But enough for the vanity of one man.

I dread your coming to the Abbey.—We that are here already, shall only, then, appear like pismires:—but let me caution my friend not to think his head will touch the clouds.

What man can bear to be twice disinherited?—Mr. Morgan's estate, which the other day I was solely to possess, is now to devolve on the Honourable George Molesworth.—*But mark me*:—As I have been disinherited for you,—*you* as certainly will be disinherited for Lord Darcey.

See what a man of consequence I am.—Does Captain Risby say *this?*—Does Captain Risby say *that?*—Does Captain Risby think well of it?

Expect, George, to behold me push'd into perferment against my will;—all great people *say* so, you know;—expect to behold me preside as governor of this castle.—Let me enjoy it then,—let me plume myself beneath the sun-beam.

If to witness the honours with I am surrounded, is insufficient to fill your expanded heart;—if it looks out for a warmer gratification; you shall see, you shall hear, the exulting parents?—you shall see Mr. Morgan revers'd;—Mr. Watson restor'd to *more* than sight—the steward and his family worthy every *honour* they receive from this *honourable house*.

I hear my *shadow*.—Strange, indeed! to hear *shadows*;—but more so to hear them swear.—Ha! ha! ha!—Ha! ha! ha!—I cannot speak to it for laughing.—Coming, Sir!—coming, Mr. Morgan!—Now is he cursing me in every corner of the house;—I suppose dinner is on the table.

This moment return'd from regaling myself with the happy family:—I mean Sir James and Lady Powis, with their joyful inmates.—Mr. and Mrs. Powis are set out for London.—As an addition to their felicity, Lady Powis had a letter from her grand-daughter the instant they were stepping into the chaise.

For one hour I am at your command:—take, then, the particulars which I was incapable of giving you by John.—

I was sitting in the library-window, talking to Mr. Watson; the Ladies, Sir James, and Mr. Morgan, in the dressing-room, when I saw John riding down the great road a full gallop.—At first I thought Lord Darcey had been dead; then, again, consider'd his faithful servant would not have come post with the news:—however, I had not patience to go through the house, but lifting up a sash, jump'd out before he could reach the stable yard.—Without speaking, I enquired of his face what tidings; and was answer'd by a broad grin. I had nothing to fear from his message.

Well, John, said I, running up to him,—how is your Lord? how is Mr. Molesworth?—

Better, I thank God, Sir;—better, I thank God! With that he turned his horse, and was riding across the lawn.—

Zounds, John, where are you going?—where are you going?

Follow me, Sir;—follow me (setting up a brisk trot). If you kill me, I dare not deliver letter or message before we are at a distance from the Abbey.

I thought him mad, but kept on by the side of his horse 'till we came to the gate of a meadow, where he dismounted.

Now, Sir,' said he, with a look that bespoke his consequence,—have patience, whilst I tie up my horse.

Patience, John! (and I swore at him) I am out of all *patience*.

With that he condescended to deliver your letters.—I rambled with surprise at the contents, and fell against a hedge.—John, who by this time had fasten'd his steed, came up to me just as I recover'd my legs;—and speaking close to my ear,—'Twas *John Warren*, Sir, was the *man* who found out the Lady; 'twas I was the *man*, Sir.

I shook him heartily by the hand, but for my soul could not utter a syllable.—I hope you are not ill, Sir, said the poor fellow, thinking me seiz'd speechless.—

No, John;—no, reply'd I; it is only excess of pleasure.—You are a welcome messenger:—you have made your fortune, John Warren, and please your honour, has made his dear Lord happy;—that is more *pleasurable* to him than all the riches in the world.

You are an honest, good creature, John.

Ay, Captain; but was it not very sensible to remember the young Lady's hand-writing?—Would a powder-headed monkey have had the forecast?

Oh very sensible, John;—very sensible, indeed!—Now go the Abbey;—ask for my servant;—say you was sent by Mr. Molesworth to enquire for the family; but do not mention you have seen me:—I shall return by a different way.

John mounted immediately, and I walk'd full speed towards the house. I found Mr. Morgan taking long strides up and down the dining-parlour, puffing, blowing, and turning his wig on every side.

Where have you been, Captain? I have sent to seek you.—Lord Darcey's servant is without;—come to enquire how things are *here*.—I would not let them send his message up;—but I have been out myself to ask for his Lordship.

Well, Sir, and what says the servant?

Says!—Faith I hardly know what he says—something about hopes of him:—to be plain, I should think it better if *hope* was out of the question.—If *he* and all of *us* were dead—But see John yourself; I will send him to you.

As he was just without the door, I drew him back,—and turn'd the key.—

Come hither, Sir;—Come hither, Mr. Morgan:—I have something of importance to communicate.

D——n ye, Captain, what's the matter now? (staring.)—I'll hear no more bad news:—upon my soul, I'll run out of it (attempting to open the door).

Hold, Sir; why this impatience?—Miss Powis *lives!*—Will you run from me now?—Miss Powis *lives!*—With that he sent forth a horrid noise;—something betwixt howling and screaming.—It reach'd the dressing-room, as well it might:—had the wind sat that way, I question if the village would not have been alarm'd.—Down ran Sir James and Mr. Powis into the library;—out jump'd Mr. Morgan.—I held up my hand for him to retreat:—he disregarding the caution, I follow'd.—Sir James was inquiring of a servant whence the noise had proceeded.

It was I, said Mr. Morgan, rubbing his sides, and expressing the agitation of joy by dumb shew;—it was I, beating one of my damn'd dogs for running up stairs.

If that is all, said Mr. Powis,—let us return to my mother and wife, who are much hurried.—Away we went together, and the affair of the dog pass'd very well on the Ladies.

I sat musing for some moments how to introduce the event my heart labour'd to give up.—*Every* sigh that escap'd,—*every* sorrowful look that was interchang'd, I *now* plac'd to my own account, because in *my* power to reverse the scene.

Addressing myself to Mr. Powis, I ask'd if he knew Lord Darcey's servant was below.—He shook his head;—No, he answer'd.—Then it is all *over*, Risby, I suppose in a low voice?—I hardly wish for his *own* sake he may recover:—for *ours*, it would be selfish.

He was not worse, I reply'd:—there was hope,—great hope he would do well.

Blessings attend him! cried Mrs. Powis.—tears starting afresh to her swoln eyes;—then you really think, Mr. Risby, he may recover?

If he does, Madam, return'd! he is flatter'd into life.—Flatter'd! said Mr. Powis eagerly;—how flatter'd?

Why, continued I, he has been told some persons are sav'd from the wreck.

Up they all started, surrounding me on every side:—there seem'd but one voice, yet each ask'd if I credited the report.

I said I did.—

Down they dropp'd on their knees, praying with uplifted hands their dear,—dear child may be of the number.—Though nothing could equal the solemnity of this scene, I could scarce command my countenance, when I saw Mr. Morgan standing in the midst of the circle, his hat held up before his face, and a cane under his arm.

As they rose from their knees,—I gave them all the consolation I thought at that moment they were capable of sustaining;—and assur'd them no vigilance would be wanting to come at particulars.—I was ask'd, if there was any letter from Mr. Molesworth?—When answer'd in the

affirmative,—the next question was, if it related to what I had just disclos'd?—I equivocated in my reply, and withdrew to write the few unconnected lines sent by John.

After he was dispatch'd, I return'd immediately to the hopeing,—fearing family.—Mr. Watson was sitting amidst them:—he seem'd like a Being of purity presiding over hearts going to be rewarded for resignation to the Divine will.

He heard me as I enter'd: he rose from his seat as I came near him, and pressing one of my hands between both his, whisper'd, I have seen Mr. Morgan.—Then raising his voice, You are the messenger of joy, Mr. Risby;—complete the happiness you have begun:—all present, pointing round, are prepar'd to receive it.

Here drops my pen.—I must not attempt this scene:—a Shakespeare would have wrote it in tears.

How infinite,—how dazzling the beauty of holiness!—Affliction seems to have threaten'd this amiable family, only to encrease their love,—their reverence,—their admiration of Divine Omnipotence.—Blessings may appear, as a certain great man remarks, under the shape of pain, losses, and disappointments;—but let us have patience, and we shall see them in their own proper figures.

If rewards even in this world attend the *virtuous*, who would be *depraved?*—Could the loose, the abandon'd, look in on this happy mansion, how would their sensual appetites be pall'd!—How would they hate,—how detest the vanity,—the folly that leads to vice!—If pleasure is their pursuit, here they might see it speaking at *mouth* and *eyes*:—*pleasures* that fleet not away;—*pleasures* that are carried beyond the grave.

What a family is this to take a wife from!—Lord Darcey's happiness is insur'd:—in my conscience, there will not be such another couple in England.

Preparations are making to welcome the lovely successor of this ancient house;—preparations to rejoice those whose satisfactions are scanty,—to clothe the naked,—to feed the hungry,—to let the stately roof echo with songs and mirth from a croud of chearful, honest, old tenants.

I often hear Mrs. Jenkings crying out in extasy,—My angel!—my sweet angel!—As to the old gentleman and Edmund, they actually cannot refrain from tears, when Miss Powis's name is mention'd.—Sir James and her Ladyship are never easy without these good folks.—It has ever been an observation of mine, that at an unexpected fortunate event, we are fond of having people about us who feel on the same passion.

Mr. Morgan is quite his own man again:—he has been regaling himself with a fine hunt, whilst I attended Sir James and my Lady in an airing round the park.—After dinner we were acquainted with all his losses and crosses in the dog and horse way.—He had not seen *Filley* rubb'd down this fortnight:—the huntsman had lost three of his best hounds:—two spaniels were lame;—and one of his running horses glander'd.—He concluded with swearing, as things turn'd out, he did not matter it *much*;—but had it happen'd three weeks since; he should have drove all his servants to the devil.—Enough of Mr. Morgan.—Adieu, Molesworth!—Forget not my congratulations to your noble, happy, friend.

RISBY.

LETTER XL.

The Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH

to RICHARD RISBY, Esq;

Dover.

All is happiness, Dick!—I see nothing else; I hear of nothing else.—It is the *last* thing I take leave of at night;—the *first* thing I meet in the morning.—*Yesterday* was full of it!—*yesterday* I dined with Mr. and Mrs. Powis and their charming daughter, at the Banker's.—To look back, it seems as if I had gone through all the vexations of my life in the last three weeks.

Darcey would not let me rest 'till I had been to congratulate them, or rather to satisfy his own impatience, being distracted to hear how Miss Powis bore the great discovery.—Her fortitude is amazing!—But Sir James has had every particular from his son, therefore I shall be too late on that subject.

The following short epistle I receiv'd from Mr. Powis, as I was setting off for Town.

Mr. Powis to the Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH.

London,

"The first moment I can tear myself from the tender embraces of all my hopes;—the first moment I can leave my belov'd daughter, I come to Dover;—I come to acknowledge my gratitude to the noble-minded

Molesworth—I come to testify my affection to the generous, disinterested Lord Darcey.—We pray for the recovery of his. Lordship's health.—When that is establish'd, not one wish will be wanting to complete the felicity of

J. Powis."

The more I know of *this* family, the more I admire them.—I *must* be their neighbour, that's certain—*Suppose* I petition for a little spot at one end of the park; *suppose* you throw up your commission; and we live together two snug batchelors.

Darcey vows he will go to Town next week.—If fatigue should cause him to relapse, what will become of us *then?*—But I will not think of that *now*.

We shall come down a joyful, cavalcade to the Abbey.—I long to see the doors thrown open to receive us.—School-boy like, I shall first count days;—next hours;—then minutes: though I am your's the same here, there, and every where.

MOLESWORTH.

LETTER XLI

The Honourable GEORGE MOLESWORTH to the same.

London.

Build in the park, and live batchelors!—Pish!—A horrid scheme!—I give it up.—Over head and ears, Dick!

Last Monday arriv'd at his Lordship's house in *St. James's-Square*, the Right Honourable the Earl and Countess of Hampstead,—Lord Hallum,—the Ladies Elizabeth and Sophia Curtis.

True, as I hope to be sav'd;—and as *true*, that Lady Elizabeth and Sophia *are* blooming as angels.

Three times have I sat down, *pen* in my hand, *paper* folded, yet could not tune my mind to write one word.—Over head and ears! I say.—

Past one in the morning!—All silent! Let me try if I can scribble now.

First, I must tell you the body drove on shore at Dover, which I concluded was Miss Powis's, is discover'd to be a Miss Frances Walsh, going over in the yacht which was unfortunately cast-away;—the corpse much defac'd:—but what confirm'd it to be the body of Miss Powis, was a handkerchief taken from the neck mark'd F W.—Poor young Lady! her friends, perhaps are suffering the excesses of grief which *you* and I have so lately witness'd.—But *this* is a subject I shall not dwell on.

I came to Town this evening with Darcey:—he bore the journey very poorly;—sinking, fainting, all the way.—When we got to our lodgings, and he was put into a bed, recovering a little, he press'd me to go to the

Banker's.—I saw his impatience, and went immediately.

My name was no sooner sent up, than Mr. Powis flew to receive me.—Welcome, my friend! said he; you come opportunely. We have a noble family with us that has been just wishing to see Mr. Molesworth.—He had time for no more; the door open'd.—What was my surprize to be embrac'd by Lord Hampstead and Lord Hallum, by them, led to the Countess and our two divinities, *whose* mild eyes,—*whose* elegant deportment, told me *Loves* and *Graces* had put a finishing stroke to the great work of *virtue* and *humility*.—Lady Mary Sutton,—yes, Lady Mary Sutton too was there: she advanc'd towards me, Miss Powis in her hand.

I have the honour, said Mr. Powis, of presenting Lady Mary Sutton (the source of all my felicity) to Mr. Molesworth.—Then addressing himself to her Ladyship, Permit me, Madam, to introduce to you the friend I love.

If ever I wish'd to shine, it was then—I would have given the world for eloquence;—nay, common understanding.—The former I *never* possessed:—A surprize and pleasure had flown away with the latter.—Miss Powis has that looks through one's very soul—a sweet compassionate eye: the dignity it expresses bespeaks your confidence.—She perceived my embarrassment, and said, Come, Mr. Molesworth, let me have the satisfaction of placing you next Lady Mary. So down sat the stupid blockhead.—Her Ladyship is very chatty, and very affable; she said a thousand obliging things; but half was lost upon me, whilst I watch'd the lips of my fair Elizabeth.

Mr. Mrs. Powis, and Lady Mary, enquired affectionately after the health of Lord Darcey. When I said he was come to Town, up flew the heart's tell-tale to the face of Miss Powis.—Her father and mother ask'd, if they might have the happiness of waiting on his Lordship next morning.—I arose to assure them what joy their visit would occasion; when having settled the hour, and so forth, I slid to a chair vacant between Lady Elizabeth and Lady Sophia,—How enchanting *did* they look!—how

enchanting *did* they speak!—No reserve;—all frankness;—the same innocence in their manners as at fifteen;—the vivacity of the French,—the sedateness of the English, how charmingly blended!

Risby, thou art a fortunate fellow: Lady Sophia speaks of thee with esteem.

The sweet syrens—*syrens* only by attraction—held me by the ear upwards of an hour.—From them I learnt Lady Mary Sutton came to England, on receiving an account from Mr. Delves that Miss Powis had the small-pox.—Happy for us, Dick, they lov'd Lady Mary too well to stay behind her!

As I was listening to their entertaining descriptions of places abroad, we were join'd by Lord Hallum.—Molesworth, said his Lordship, I will not suffer these girls to engage you solely:—My prating sisters are grown so saucy that I am obliged to be a very tyrant.—

A spirited conversation ensued, in which the cherub sisters bore away the palm.

More and more sick of my batchelor notions!—Yet I aver, that state should be my choice, rather than swallow one grain of indifference in the matrimonial pill, gilder'd over ever so nicely.—Think what *must* be my friendship for Darcey, to tear myself from this engageing circle before nine!—As I was taking my leave, Lady Mary stepp'd towards me.—To-morrow, Mr. Molesworth, said her Ladyship, I bespeak the favour of your company and Lord Darcey's to dine with me in *Pall-Mall*:—I bow'd, and answer'd both for his Lordship and myself.

We shall rejoice, continued she, to congratulate your friend on his recovery,—looking with peculiar meaning at Miss Powis.—I think by *that* look there will be an interview between the *lovers*, though I did not say so much to Darcey.—He requires sleep: none would he have had, if he knew my surmises.—I'll to bed, and dream of Lady Elizabeth;—*so* good night, Dick.

Twelve o'clock at noon.

Mr. and Mrs. Powis this moment gone;—Lord Darcey dressing to meet them in *Pall-Mall*.—Yes, they are to be there;—and the whole groupe of beauties are to be there;—Miss Powis,—Lady Elizabeth,—Lady Sophia,—and the little sprightly hawk-eyed Delves.—Risby, *you* know nothing of *life*; you are *dead* and *buried*.

I will try to be serious.—Impossible! my head runs round and round with pleasure.—The interview was affecting to the last degree.—Between whom?—Why Darcey, Mr. and Mrs.—faith I can write no more.

MOLESWORTH.

LETTER XLII.

The Hon. GEORGE MOLESWORTH to the same.

London

The day of days is over!

I am too happy to sleep:—exquisite felicity wants not the common supports of nature.—In such scenes as I have witness'd, the *soul* begins to know herself:—she gives us a peep into futurity:—the enjoyments of this day has been all her own.

Once more I regain the beaten path of narrative.

Suppose me then under the hands of hair-dressers, valets, &c. &c. &c. I hate those fellows about me:—but the singularity of this visit made me undergo their tortures with tolerable patience.—Now was the time when Vanity, under pretence of respect, love, and decorum, usher'd in her implements.

It was about two when we were set down at Lady Mary Sutton's.—Darcey trembled, and look'd so pale at coming out of his chair, that I desir'd a servant to shew us to a room, where we might be alone 'till Mr. Powis was inform'd of our being in the house.—He instantly came with Lady Mary.—Tender welcomes and affectionate caresses fill'd him with new life.—Her Ladyship propos'd he should first see Miss Powis in her dressing-room;—that none should be present but Mr. and Mrs. Powis, her Ladyship, and your humble servant.

Judge how agreeable this must be to his Lordship, whose extreme weakness consider'd, could not have supported this interview before so much company as were assembled in the drawing-room.

The plan settled, Lady Mary withdrew to prepare Miss Powis for our reception.—A footman soon came with a message from her Ladyship that she expected us.

I was all compassionate at this moment:—the conflicts of my feeble friend were not to be conceal'd.—We follow'd Mr. Powis;—the door open'd;—Darcey turn'd half round, and laying his cold clammy hand on mine, said, Oh Molesworth! my happiness is in view!—how can I meet it?

Inimitable creature!—Can I describe your reception of my friend?—can I describe the dignity of beauty;—the melting softness of sensibility;—the blushing emotion of surprize?—No, Risby;—impossible!

The Ladies stood to receive us; Miss Powis supported between her mother and Lady Mary;—*she* all graceful timidity;—*they* all extasy and rapture.—Do you not expect to see Darcey at the feet of his mistress?—No; at Mrs. Powis's, at Lady Mary's, he fell.

The eyes of his Adorable glisten'd.—He was rais'd, and embrac'd tenderly—by the parents,—by Lady Mary.—Mr. Powis said, presenting him to his delighted daughter, *You*, my dear, must make *our* returns of gratitude to Lord Darcey;—giving him her more than passive hand, which he press'd to his lips with fervor, saying, *This* is the hour my soul has flown up to petition—Dearest, best of women! tell me I am welcome.

She attempted to reply;—it was only an attempt.

She does bid you welcome, return'd Mr. Powis;—her *heart* bids you welcome.

Indeed, said she, I am not ungrateful:—*indeed*, my Lord, I am not insensible to the obligations you have laid me under.

As these words escap'd her, you must certainly take in the whole countenance of Darcey.

By this time we were seated, and Lady Mary return'd to the company.

Honour'd as I am, said his Lordship, addressing Miss Powis, will you permit me, Madam, in presence of your revered parents,—in presence of the friend to whom every wish of my heart has been confess'd;—will you permit me to hope you are not offended by my application to Sir James? —May I hope for your—

Friendship, my Lord (reply'd she, interrupting him); you may command my friendship.

Friendship! (retorted he) Miss Powis, starting up:—is that *all I* am to expect?—Can I accept your *friendship?*—No, Madam, the man who would have died for you aspires to more than *friendship*;—he aspires to your *love*.

I am no stranger, my Lord, return'd she, to the honour you intend me;—I am no stranger to *your* worth;—but I have scruples;—scruples that seem to me insurmountable.

I never saw him so affected.

For heaven's sake, Madam, he answer'd, don't drive me to despair:—tear not open the wound which the hand of Mercy has just clos'd:—my shatter'd frame will not bear another rub from fortune.—*What scruples?* —Tell me, Miss Powis, I conjure you.

You have none, my dear child, said Mrs. Powis. You have none, Fanny, said Mr. Powis, but what his Lordship can remove.

Indeed, Sir!—indeed, Madam! replied she, I meant not to give Lord Darcey pain.—Then turning to him in a tender, soothing accent,—Your peace, my Lord, has never been lightly regarded by me.—Here he brighten'd up,—and said, taking her hand, You know not, Miss Powis, from the first moment I saw you, how ardent,—how steady has been my love.

Why *then* my Lord, resum'd she—*why* endeavour to gain my affections, yet hide your preference for me from the *world*;—even from *myself?*— Think of the *day* Lord Allen dined at the Abbey;—think what pass'd in a

walk preceding *that* you set out for town:—on both these,—on many others, how mysterious your conduct?—If you thought me worthy your regard, my Lord, why *such* mysteries?

For God's sake, my dear,—dear Miss Powis, said Darcey, suffer me to vindicate myself.—Pardon me, my Lord (continued the angel that harangued him) hear me patiently another moment, and I will listen to your vindication.

She went on.

From whence can I suppose, my Lord, your embarrassments proceeded, if not from *some* entanglement grown irksome?—No; before I can promise *myself* happiness, I must be first satisfied I do not borrow that *happiness* from *another*.

Another, Madam! repeated he, throwing himself at her feet:—May all my brighter prospects fly me;—may my youth be blighted by the loss of reason if I have ever lov'd *another!*

She was affected with the solemnity of his air: one pearly drop stray'd down her cheek;—one that escap'd the liquid body of tenderness assembled in her eyes:—she could not speak, but held out her snowy hand for him to be seated.

He obey'd; and placing himself next her, so clearly accounted for that part of his conduct she call'd mysterious, that Mr. and Mrs. Powis both at once exclaim'd, Now, my dear, complete our felicity;—now all your *scruples must* be over.

And do you, said she, my tender, my indulgent parents, rising and throwing herself into their arms;—do you say it is in *my* power to complete your felicity?—*Will* confessing a preference for Lord Darcey;—*will* declaring I wish you to prefer him to your daughter;—will *that* complete it?

My friend caught the blushing beauty from the arms of her parents, and, frantic with joy, folded her to his bosom, standing as if he wonder'd at his own happiness.

What innocence in the look of Miss Powis, when she greatly acknowledg'd her heart!—How reverse from *this* innocence, *this* greatness, is the *prudish hypocrite*, who forbids *even* her features to say she is susceptible of love! You may suppose a profusion of friendly acknowledgments fell to *my* share; but I am not vain enough to repeat them.

It is well Lady Elizabeth stands portress at the door of my heart:—there is such bustling and pushing to get in;—but, notwithstanding her Ladyship's vigilance, Miss Powis has slipp'd by, and sits perch'd up in the same corner with Darcey.

If you go back to Lady Mary's dressing-room, you will find nobody *there*:—but give a peep into the dining-parlour, and you will see us just set down at dinner;—*all* smiling,—*all* happy;—an inexhaustible fountain of pleasure in every breast.

I will go down to Slope Hall;—give Lady Dorothy a hint that she has it now in her power to make one man happy;—*a hint* I believe she never had before.—A snug twenty thousand added to my present fortune,—the hand of Lady Elizabeth,—and then, Risby, get hold of my skirts, and you mount with me.

Next Tuesday prepare, as governor of the castle, for a warm siege.—*Such* a battery of eyes,—*such* bundles of darts,—*such* stores of smiles,—*such* a train of innocence will be laid before the walls, as never was withstood!—No; I shall see you *cap-à-pée* open the gates to the besiegers.—Away goes my pen.—I write no more positively.

MOLESWORTH.

LETTER XLIII.

Miss DELVES to Mrs. DELVES.

Barford Abbey.

Are you well, Madam? Is my dear father well? Tell me you are, and never was so happy a creature as your daughter. I tremble with pleasure,—with joy,—with delight:—but I *must*—my duty, my affection, every thing says I *must* sit down to write.—You did not see how we were marshall'd at setting out:—I wish you could have got up early enough:—never was there such joyous party!

All in Lady Mary's dining-room by seven;—the fine equipages at the door;—servants attending in rich new liveries, to the number of twenty;—Lord Darcey and his heavenly bride that is to be,—smiling on each other,—smiling on all around;—Lady Mary Sutton—yes, *she* is heavenly *too*;—I believe I was the only earthly creature amongst them;—Lord and Lady Hampstead,—the angelic Ladies Elizabeth and Sophia,—Mr. Molesworth,—the generous, friendly, open-hearted Mr. Molesworth,—Lord Hallum.—But why mention him last?—Because, Bessy, I suppose he was *last* in your thoughts.—Dear Madam, how can you think so?

In Lady Mary's coach went her Ladyship, Lord Darcey, Mrs. and Miss Powis:—in Lord Hampstead's, his Lordship, Lady Hampstead, Lady Elizabeth, and Mr. Molesworth:—in Lord Darcey's, Lady Sophia, Mr. Powis, Lord Hallum, and your little *good-for-nothing*:—in Mr. Powis's, the women-servants.—We lay fifty miles short of the Abbey, and the next evening reach'd it at seven.

We reach'd Barford Abbey, I say—but what shall I say *now?*—I cannot do justice to what I have seen of duty,—of affection,—of joy,—of hospitality.—Do, dear Madam, persuade my father to purchase a house in *this* neighbourhood.

Servants were posted at the distance of six miles to carry intelligence when we should approach.—I suppose in their way back it was proclaim'd in the village:—men, women, and children, lined the road a mile from the Abbey, throwing up their hats with loud huzzaing,—bells ringing in every adjacent parish;—bonfires on every rising ground;—in short, we were usher'd in like conquerors.—The coachmen whipp'd up their horses full speed through the park;—thump, thump, went my heart, when by a number of lights I discover'd we were just at the house.

What sensations did I feel when the carriages stopp'd!—At the entrance stood Sir James and Lady Powis,—the Chaplain,—Mr. Morgan,—Captain Risby,—you know their characters, Madam;—every servant in the house with a light:—but who could have stay'd within at this juncture?

The first coach that drove up was Lady Mary's. Out sprang Lord Darcey, Miss Powis in his hand; both in a moment lock'd in parental embraces.—Good heaven, what extasy!—I thought Mr. Watson and Mr. Morgan would have fought a duel which should first have folded Miss Powis in his arms, whilst Sir James and Lady Powis quitted her to welcome Lady Mary.—We were all receiv'd tenderly affectionate:—a reception none can have an idea of, but those who have been at Barford Abbey.

In my way to the house, I suppose I had a hundred kisses:—*God knows from whom*.—What can I say of Lord Hampstead's family?—what of Mr. Molesworth?—The general notice taken of him is sufficient.—Absolutely that charming man will be spoil'd.—Pity to set him up for an idol!—I hope he will not *always* expect to be worshipp'd—Mr. Risby *too*—Well, I'll mention you all, one after another, as fast as possible.—Let me see, where did I leave off?—Oh! we were just out of our carriages.—And now for the pathetics:—an attempt;—a humble attempt only.

Lady Powis, Lady Mary, and their darling, had given us the slip.—What could be done?—I mean with Mr. Morgan:—he was quite outrageous.—What could be done? I repeat.—Why Sir James, to pacify him, said, we should all go and surprize them in his Lady's dressing-room.—We did go;—we did surprize them;—great God! in what an attitude!—The exalted Lady Powis at the feet of Lady Mary;—Miss Powis kneeling by her;—she endeavouring to raise them.—I said it would be an attempt at the pathetics;—it must be an attempt:—I can proceed no farther.

To be sure, Mr. Morgan is a queer-looking man, but a great favourite at the Abbey.—He took Miss Powis on his knee;—call'd her a hundred times his dear, dear daughter;—and I could not forbear laughing, when he told her he had not wore a tye-wig before these twenty years. This drew me to observe his dress, which, unless you knew the man, you can have no idea how well it suited him:—a dark snuff-colour'd coat with gold buttons, which I suppose by the fashion of it, was made when he accustomed himself to *tye-wigs*;—the lace a rich orrice; but then it was so immoderately short, both in the sleeves and skirts, that whilst full dress'd he appeared to want cloathing.

The *next* morning,—ay, the *next* morning, then it was I lost my freedom.—Disrob'd of his gingerbread coat, I absolutely sell a sacrifice to a plain suit of broad cloth,—or rather, to a noble, plain heart.—Now pray, dear Madam, do not cross me in my *first* love;—at least, *see* Mr. Morgan, before you command me to give him up:—and you, sweet Sir, steal to a corner of your new possession, whilst I take notice of those who are capering to my fingers ends.

You have seen Miss Powis, Madam, on Mr. Morgan's knee;—you have heard him say enough to fill any other girl than myself with jealousy:—nay, Madam, you may smile;—he really makes love to me.—But for a moment let me forget my lover;—let me forget his *melting* sighs,—his *tender* protections,—his *persuasive* eloquence,—his air *so* languishing:—

let me forget them *all*, I say, and lead you to the library, where by a message flew Miss Powis.—A look from her drew me after:—I suppose Lord Darcey had a touch from the same magnet.

A venerable pair with joy next to phrenzy caught her in their extended arms, as the door open'd. My *kind*, my dear, *ever* dear friends, said the lovely creature,—and is it *thus* we meet? is it *thus* I return to you?—Mr. Jenkings clasp'd her to him; but his utterance was quite choak'd:—the old Lady burst into a flood of tears, and then cried out,—How great is thy mercy, O God!—Suffer me to be grateful.—Again she flew to their arms; —again they folded her to their bosoms.—Lord Darcey too embrac'd them;—he condescendingly kiss'd their hands;—he said, next to the parents of his Fanny,—next to Lady Mary, they were most dear to him.— Miss Powis seated herself between them, and hung about the neck of Mrs. Jenkings;—whilst his Lordship, full of admiration, look'd as if his great soul labour'd for expression.—

Overcome with tender scenes, I left the library.—I acquainted Lady Mary who was there, and she went to them immediately.—Mr. Watson and Mr. Morgan for a quarter of an hour were all my own;—captain Risby, Mr. Molesworth, Lady Elizabeth and Sophia, being engag'd in a conversation at another part of the room:—you may *guess* our subject, Madam;—but I declare, whilst listening to Mr. Watson, I thought myself soaring above earthly enjoyments.—

Sir James, who had follow'd Lady Mary, soon return'd with her Ladyship, Miss Powis, Lord Darcey, and, what gave me heart-felt pleasure, the steward and his wife;—an honour they with difficulty accepted, as they were strangers to Lord Hampstead's family.—

Who says there is not in this life perfect happiness?—I say they are mistaken:—such felicity as I here see and partake of, cannot be call'd imperfect—How comes it that the domestics of *this* family *so* much surpass those of *other* people?—how is it *one* interest governs the whole? —I want to know a thousand mysteries.—I could write,—I could think eternally,—of the first happy evening.—First happy evening do I say?

And can the days that crown that eve be forgot?—Heaven forbid! at least whilst I have recollection.—My heart speaks so fast to my pen, that fain my fingers would,—but cannot keep up with it.

The next morning Lord Darcey introduc'd to us the son of Mr. Jenkings.—A finer youth I never saw!—Well might the old gentleman be *suspicious*.—Few fathers would, like *him*, have sacrificed the interest of a son, to preserve that of a friend.—To know the real rank of Miss Powis;—her ten thousand virtues;—her great expectations; yet act with so *much* caution!—with an anxiety which the most sordid miser watching his treasure, could not have exceeded! and for *what?*—Why lest involuntarily she might enrich his belov'd son with *her* affections.—Will you part with me to this extraordinary man?—Only for an hour or two.—A walk is propos'd.—Our ramble will not be farther than his house.—You say I may go. Thank you, Madam: I am gone.

Just return'd from the steward's, so cramm'd with sweet-meats, cake, and jellies, that I am absolutely stupified.

I must tell you who led Miss Powis.—Lord Darcey, to be sure.—No, Madam; I had the favour of his Lordship's arm:—it was Edmund.—I call him Edmund;—every body calls him Edmund;—*yes*, and at Lord Darcey's request *too*.—Never shall I forget in what a graceful manner!—But his Lordship does every thing with grace.—He mention'd something of past times, hinting he should not always have courted him to *such* honour, presenting the hand of his belov'd.

I wish I could send you her look at that moment; it was all love,—all condescension.—I say I cannot send it.—Mortifying! I cannot even borrow *it*.

Adieu, dear Madam!—Adieu, dear Sir!—Adieu, you best of parents—It is impossible to say which is most dear to your ever dutiful and affectionate

E. DELVES.

LETTER XLIV.

Miss DELVES to the same.

Barford Abbey.

Lost my heart *again!*—Be not surpriz'd, Madam; I lose and find it ten times a day;—yet it never strays from Barford Abbey.—The last account you had from me it was button'd inside Mr. Morgan's hunting-frock:—since that, it has been God knows with whom:—sometimes wrapt in a red coat;—sometimes in a blue;—sometimes in a green:—but finding many competitors flew to black, where it now lies snug, warm, and easy.—Restless creature! I will never take it home again.

What think you, Madam, of a *Dean* for a son-in-law?

What do I think? you say.—Why the gentlemen of the church have too much sense and gravity to take my madcap off my hands.—Well, Madam, but suppose the Dean of H—— now you look pleas'd.—Oh, the Dean of *H——!* What the *Dean*, Bessy, that Lady Mary used to talk of:—the *Dean* that married Mr. and Mrs. Powis.

As sure as I live, Madam, the *very* man:—and *to-morrow,—to-morrow at ten*, he is to unite their lovely daughter with Lord Darcey.—Am I not *very* good,—*extremely* good, *indeed*, to sit down and write,—when every person below is solacing themselves on the approach of this happy festival?

I would suffer shipwreck ten times;—ten times would I be drove on uninhabited islands, for such a husband as Lord Darcey.—Miss Powis's danger was only imaginary, yet *she* must be *so* rewarded.—Well, she *shall* be rewarded:—she *ought* to be rewarded:—Lord Darcey shall reward her.

But is it not *very* hard upon your *poor* girl, that *all* the young smarts we brought down, and *that* which we found *here*, should have dispos'd of their hearts?—*All*;—even Lord Hallum,—*he* who used to boast so much of freedom,—now owns he has dispos'd of his.—

But to whom?—Aye: that's a question.—

They think, perhaps, the *old* stuff will do well enough for poor me!—Thanks to my genius, I can set my cap at any thing.

Why there's something tolerable in the sound of a Dean's Lady—Let me see if it will do.—"The *Deans's* coach;—the *Dean's* servants."—Something better this than a plain *Mr*.

Here comes Miss Powis. Now shall I be forc'd to huddle this into my pocket.—I am resolv'd she shall not see the preferment I have chalk'd out for myself.—No, no; I must be secret, or I shall have it taken from me.

This Miss Powis,—*this* very dutiful young Lady, that I used to have set up for a pattern,—*now* tells me that I *must* write no more; *that* you will not expect to hear from me 'till the next post.—If I *must* take Miss Powis's advice in everything;—if I *must* be guided by *her*;—you know *who* said this, Madam;—why then there is an end of my scribbling for this night.—But remember it is not *my* fault.—No, indeed, I was sat down as sober sedate as could be.—Quite fit for a Dean's Lady?—Yes;—quite fit, indeed.—Now comes Lady Elizabeth and Lady Sophia.—Well, it is impossible, I find, to be dutiful in this house.

Thursday, twelve o'clock at noon.

Bless my soul! one would think I was the bride by my shaking and quaking! Miss Powis is—Lady Darcey.—Down drops my letter:—Yes, dear Madam, I see you drop it to run and tell my father.

I may write on *now*;—I may do what I will;—Lord and Lady Darcey are *every* thing with *every* body Well as I love them, I was not present at the ceremony:—I don't know why neither.—Not a soul but attended, except your poor foolish girl—At the window I stood to see them go, and never stirr'd a step 'till they return'd.—Mr. Molesworth gave her away.—I vow I thought near as handsome as the bridegroom.—But what signifies my thinking him handsome?—I'll ask Lady Elizabeth by and bye what she thinks.—Now for a little about it, before I ature myself with implements of destruction.—The Dean is not quite dead yet; but if he live out this day,—I say, he is invulnerable.

Let us hear no more of yourself:—tell us of Lord and Lady Darcey

Have patience, Madam, and I will,

Well, *their* dress?—Why *their* faces were dress'd in smiles of love:—Nature's charms should always take place of art.—You see with what order I proceed.

Lord Darcey was dress'd in white richly lac'd with gold;—Lady Darcey in a white lutestring négligée nounc'd deep with a silver net;—no cap, a diamond sprig; her hair without powder; a diamond necklace and sleeve-knots;—bracelets set round with diamonds; and let me tell you, her jewels are a present from my first Adorable;—on the knowledge of which I discarded him.—No, no, Mr. Morgan; you are not a *jewel* of yourself neither.—Lady Darcey would have wore quite a morning dishabille, if the vain old Gentleman had not requested the contrary:—so forsooth, to humour him, we must be all put out of our way.

There they are on the lawn, as I hope to live, going to invite in Caesar.—Only an old dog, Madam, that lives betwixt this house and the steward's.

Lady Elizabeth and Mr. Molesworth, Lady Sophia and Captain Risby,—Oh, I long to be with you!—throw no more gravel to my window.—I *will* be dutiful;—in spite of your allurements, I *will*.

I left them in the library, inspecting a very charming piece, just brought from Brandon Lodge, done by the hand of Lady Mary Sutton.—Upon my word, they have soon conn'd it over:—but I have not told you it is the portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Powis;—my dear Dean too joining their hands. —

God defend me! there he is, hopping out.—I wish he had kept within.—Why, Sir, I should have been down in a moment: then we might have had the most comfortable tête-à-tête.

Seriously, Madam—now I am *really* serious—can you believe, after beholding Lord and Lady Darcey, I will ever be content with a moderate share of happiness?—No, I will die first.—To see them at this instant would be an antidote for indifference.—Not any thing of foolish fondness:—no; that will never be seen in Lord and Lady Darcey.—Their happiness is not confin'd:—we are all refreshed by it:—it pours forth from their homes like streams flowing from a pure terrain.—I think I said I could not go to church:—no, not for the world would I have gone: —I expected Miss Powis would be crying, fainting, and I know not what. —Instead of all this fuss, not a tear was shed.—I thought every body cried when they were married:—those that *had*, or had *not* cause.—Well, I am determin'd to appear satisfied, however, if the yoke is a little galling.

How charming look'd Miss Powis, when she smil'd on Lord Darcey!—On Lord Darcey? On every body I mean.—And for him—But I must forget his air,—his words,—his looks, if ever I intend to say love, honour, and obey.—Once I am brought to say love,—honour and obey will slide off glibly enough. I must go down amongst them. Believe me, Madam, I shut myself up to write against intreaties,—against the most persuasive eloquence.

This is the day when the Powis family are crown'd with felicity.—I think on it with rapture.—I will set it down on the heart of your dutiful and affectionate

E. Delves.

LETTER XLV.

Miss Delves to the same.

Barford Abbey

Surely I must smell of venison,—roast beef, and plumb-puddings.—Yes, I smell of the Old English hospitality.—*You*, Madam, have no tenants to regale so;—are safe from such troubles on my account.—Will you believe me, Madam, I had rather see their honest old faces than go to the finest opera ever exhibited.—What think you of a hundred-and-seven chearful farmers sitting at long tables spread with every thing the season can afford;—two hogsheads of wine at their elbows;—the servants waiting on them with assiduous respect:—Their songs still echo in my ears.

I thought the roof would have come down, when Lord and Lady Darcey made their appearance.—Some sung one tune,—some another;—some paid extempore congratulations;—others that had not a genius, made use of ballads compos'd on the marriage of the King and Queen.—One poor old soul cried to the Butler, because he could neither sing or repeat a verse.—Seeing his distress, I went to him, and repeated a few lines applicable to the occasion, which he caught in a moment, and tun'd away with the best of them.

Lord and Lady Hampstead are so delighted with the honest rustics, that they declare every Christmas their tenants shall be regal'd at Hallum Grove.

What can one feel equal to the satisfaction which arises on looking out in the park?—Three hundred poor are there feasting under a shed erected for the purpose;—cloath'd by Sir James and Lady Powis;—*so* clean,—*so*

warm,—*so* comfortable, that to see them at this moment, one would suppose they had never tasted of poverty.

Lord Darcey has order'd two hundred guineas to be given amongst them, —that to-morrow might not be less welcome to them than this day.

For my part, I have only two to provide for out of the number;—a pretty little boy and girl, that pick'd me up before I came to the shed.—The parents of those children were very good, and gave them to me on my first application.

Here comes Mrs. Jenkings.—*Well*, what pleasing thing have you to tell me, Mrs. Jenkings?

Five hundred pounds, as I live, to be given to the poor to-morrow from Lady Mary Sutton.—

What blessings will follow us on our journey! I believe I have not told you, Madam, we set out for Faulcum Park on Monday.—*Not* to stay:—no, I thank God we are *not* to stay.—If Lord and Lady Darcey were to inhabit Faulcum Park, yet it would not be to *me* like Barford Abbey,—Barford Abbey is to be their home whilst Sir James and Lady Powis live.

Lord Hallum wants me to walk with him.—Not I, indeed:—I hate a *tête-à-tête* with heartless men.—On second thoughts, I will go.

Oh Madam! out of breath with astonishment!—What think you:—I am the confidante of Lord Hallum's passion;—with permission too of the earl and countess.—Heavens! and can you guess, Madam, who it is he loves?—Adieu, my *dear,—dear* Dean!—Need I say more?—Will you not spare the blushes of your happy daughter,

E. DELVES.

FINIS.

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