

Letters to His Son on the Art of Becoming a Man of the World and a Gentleman, 1750 eBook

Letters to His Son on the Art of Becoming a Man of the World and a Gentleman, 1750 by Philip Stanhope, 4th Earl of Chesterfield

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LETTER C

London, January 8, O. S. 1750

Dear boy: I have seldom or never written to you upon the subject of religion and morality; your own reason, I am persuaded, has given you true notions of both; they speak best for themselves; but if they wanted assistance, you have Mr. Harte at hand, both for precept and example; to your own reason, therefore, and to Mr. Harte, shall I refer you for the reality of both, and confine myself in this letter to the decency, the utility, and the necessity of scrupulously preserving the appearances of both. When I say the appearances of religion, I do not mean that you should talk or act like a missionary or an enthusiast, nor that you should take up a controversial cudgel against whoever attacks the sect you are of; this would be both useless and unbecoming your age; but I mean that you should by no means seem to approve, encourage, or applaud, those libertine notions, which strike at religions equally, and which are the poor threadbare topics of halfwits and minute philosophers. Even those who are silly enough to laugh at their jokes, are still wise enough to distrust and detest their characters; for putting moral virtues at the highest, and religion at the lowest, religion must still be allowed to be a collateral security, at least, to virtue, and every prudent man will sooner trust to two securities than to one. Whenever, therefore, you happen to be in company with those pretended 'Esprits forts', or with thoughtless libertines, who laugh at all religion to show their wit, or disclaim it, to complete their riot, let no word or look of yours intimate the least approbation; on the contrary, let a silent gravity express your dislike: but enter not into the subject and decline such unprofitable and indecent controversies. Depend upon this truth, that every man is the worse looked upon, and the less trusted for being thought to have no religion; in spite of all the pompous and specious epithets he may assume, of 'Esprit fort', freethinker, or moral philosopher; and a wise atheist (if such a thing there is) would, for his own interest and character in this world, pretend to some religion.

Your moral character must be not only pure, but, like Caesar's wife, unsuspected. The least speck or blemish upon it is fatal. Nothing degrades and vilifies more, for it excites and unites detestation and contempt. There are, however, wretches in the world profligate enough to explode all notions of moral good and evil; to maintain that they are merely local, and depend entirely upon the customs and fashions of different countries; nay, there are still, if possible, more unaccountable wretches; I mean those who affect to preach and propagate such absurd and infamous notions without believing them themselves. These are the devil's hypocrites. Avoid, as much as possible, the company of such people; who reflect a degree of discredit and infamy upon all

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who converse with them. But as you may, sometimes, by accident, fall into such company, take great care that no complaisance, no good-humor, no warmth of festal mirth, ever make you seem even to acquiesce, much less to approve or applaud, such infamous doctrines. On the other hand, do not debate nor enter into serious argument upon a subject so much below it: but content yourself with telling these *apostles* that you know they are not, serious; that you have a much better opinion of them than they would have you have; and that, you are very sure, they would not practice the doctrine they preach. But put your private mark upon them, and shun them forever afterward.

There is nothing so delicate as your moral character, and nothing which it is your interest so much to preserve pure. Should you be suspected of injustice, malignity, perfidy, lying, *etc.*, all the parts and knowledge in the world will never procure you esteem, friendship, or respect. A strange concurrence of circumstances has sometimes raised very bad men to high stations, but they have been raised like criminals to a pillory, where their persons and their crimes, by being more conspicuous, are only the more known, the more detested, and the more pelted and insulted. If, in any case whatsoever, affectation and ostentation are pardonable, it is in the case of morality; though even there, I would not advise you to a pharisaical pomp of virtue. But I will recommend to you a most scrupulous tenderness for your moral character, and the utmost care not to say or do the least thing that may ever so slightly taint it. Show yourself, upon all occasions, the advocate, the friend, but not the bully of virtue. Colonel Chartres, whom you have certainly heard of (who was, I believe, the most notorious blasted rascal in the world, and who had, by all sorts of crimes, amassed immense wealth), was so sensible of the disadvantage of a bad character, that I heard him once say, in his impudent, profligate manner, that though he would not give one farthing for virtue, he would give ten thousand pounds for a character; because he should get a hundred thousand pounds by it; whereas, he was so blasted, that he had no longer an opportunity of cheating people. Is it possible, then, that an honest man can neglect what a wise rogue would purchase so dear?

There is one of the vices above mentioned, into which people of good education, and, in the main, of good principles, sometimes fall, from mistaken notions of skill, dexterity, and self-defense, I mean lying; though it is inseparably attended with more infamy and loss than any other. The prudence and necessity of often concealing the truth, insensibly seduces people to violate it. It is the only art of mean capacities, and the only refuge of mean spirits. Whereas, concealing the truth, upon proper occasions, is as prudent and as innocent, as telling a lie, upon any occasion, is infamous and foolish. I will state you a case in your own department. Suppose

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you are employed at a foreign court, and that the minister of that court is absurd or impertinent enough to ask you what your instructions are? will you tell him a lie, which as soon as found out (and found out it certainly will be) must destroy your credit, blast your character, and render you useless there? No. Will you tell him the truth then, and betray your trust? As certainly, No. But you will answer with firmness, That you are surprised at such a question, that you are persuaded he does not expect an answer to it; but that, at all events, he certainly will not have one. Such an answer will give him confidence in you; he will conceive an opinion of your veracity, of which opinion you may afterward make very honest and fair advantages. But if, in negotiations, you are looked upon as a liar and a trickster, no confidence will be placed in you, nothing will be communicated to you, and you will be in the situation of a man who has been burned in the cheek; and who, from that mark, cannot afterward get an honest livelihood if he would, but must continue a thief.

Lord Bacon, very justly, makes a distinction between simulation and dissimulation; and allows the latter rather than the former; but still observes, that they are the weaker sort of politicians who have recourse to either. A man who has strength of mind and strength of parts, wants neither of them. Certainly (says he) the ablest men that ever were, have all had an openness and frankness of dealing, and a name of certainty and veracity; but then, they were like horses well managed; for they could tell, passing well, when to stop or turn; and at such times, when they thought the case indeed required some dissimulation, if then they used it, it came to pass that the former opinion spread abroad of their good faith and clearness of dealing, made them almost invisible.

There are people who indulge themselves in a sort of lying, which they reckon innocent, and which in one sense is so; for it hurts nobody but themselves. This sort of lying is the spurious offspring of vanity, begotten upon folly: these people deal in the marvelous; they have seen some things that never existed; they have seen other things which they never really saw, though they did exist, only because they were thought worth seeing. Has anything remarkable been said or done in any place, or in any company? they immediately present and declare themselves eye or ear witnesses of it. They have done feats themselves, unattempted, or at least unperformed by others. They are always the heroes of their own fables; and think that they gain consideration, or at least present attention, by it. Whereas, in truth, all that they get is ridicule and contempt, not without a good degree of distrust; for one must naturally conclude, that he who will tell any lie from idle vanity, will not scruple telling a greater for interest. Had I really seen anything so very extraordinary as to be almost incredible I would keep

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it to myself, rather than by telling it give anybody room to doubt, for one minute, of my veracity. It is most certain, that the reputation of chastity is not so necessary for a women, as that of veracity is for a man; and with reason; for it is possible for a woman to be virtuous, though not strictly chaste, but it is not possible for a man to be virtuous without strict veracity. The slips of the poor women are sometimes mere bodily frailties; but a lie in a man is a vice of the mind and of the heart. For God's sake be scrupulously jealous of the purity of your moral character; keep it immaculate, unblemished, unsullied; and it will be unsuspected. Defamation and calumny never attack, where there is no weak place; they magnify, but they do not create.

There is a very great difference between the purity of character, which I so earnestly recommend to you, and the stoical gravity and austerity of character, which I do by no means recommend to you. At your, age, I would no more wish you to be a Cato than a Clodius. Be, and be reckoned, a man of pleasure as well as a man of business. Enjoy this happy and giddy time of your life; shine in the pleasures, and in the company of people of your own age. This is all to be done, and indeed only can be done, without the least taint to the purity of your moral character; for those mistaken young fellows, who think to shine by an impious or immoral licentiousness, shine only from their stinking, like corrupted flesh, in the dark. Without this purity, you can have no dignity of character; and without dignity of character it is impossible to rise in the world. You must be respectable, if you will be respected. I have known people slattern away their character, without really polluting it; the consequence of which has been, that they have become innocently contemptible; their merit has been dimmed, their pretensions unregarded, and all their views defeated. Character must be kept bright, as well as clean. Content yourself with mediocrity in nothing. In purity of character and in politeness of manners labor to excel all, if you wish to equal many. Adieu.

LETTER CI

London, January 11, O. S. 1750

My dear friend: Yesterday I received a letter from Mr. Harte, of the 31st December, N. S., which I will answer soon; and for which I desire you to return him my thanks now. He tells me two things that give me great satisfaction: one is that there are very few English at Rome; the other is, that you frequent the best foreign companies. This last is a very good symptom; for a man of sense is never desirous to frequent those companies, where he is not desirous to please, or where he finds that he displeases; it will not be expected in those companies, that, at your age, you should have the 'Garbo', the 'Disinvoltura', and the 'Leggiadria' of a man of five-and-twenty, who has been long used

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to keep the best companies; and therefore do not be discouraged, and think yourself either slighted or laughed at, because you see others, older and more used to the world, easier, more familiar, and consequently rather better received in those companies than yourself. In time your turn will come; and if you do but show an inclination, a desire to please, though you should be embarrassed or even err in the means, which must necessarily happen to you at first, yet the will (to use a vulgar expression) will be taken for the deed; and people, instead of laughing at you, will be glad to instruct you. Good sense can only give you the great outlines of good-breeding; but observation and usage can alone give you the delicate touches, and the fine coloring. You will naturally endeavor to show the utmost respect to people of certain ranks and characters, and consequently you will show it; but the proper, the delicate manner of showing that respect, nothing but observation and time can give.

I remember that when, with all the awkwardness and rust of Cambridge about me, I was first introduced into good company, I was frightened out of my wits. I was determined to be, what I thought, civil; I made fine low bows, and placed myself below everybody; but when I was spoken to, or attempted to speak myself, 'obstupui, steteruntque comae, et vox faucibus haesit'. If I saw people whisper, I was sure it was at me; and I thought myself the sole object of either the ridicule or the censure of the whole company, who, God knows, did not trouble their heads about me. In this way I suffered, for some time, like a criminal at the bar; and should certainly have renounced all polite company forever, if I had not been so convinced of the absolute necessity of forming my manners upon those of the best companies, that I determined to persevere and suffer anything, or everything, rather than not compass that point. Insensibly it grew easier to me; and I began not to bow so ridiculously low, and to answer questions without great hesitation or stammering: if, now and then, some charitable people, seeing my embarrassment, and being 'desoevre' themselves, came and spoke to me, I considered them as angels sent to comfort me, and that gave me a little courage. I got more soon afterward, and was intrepid enough to go up to a fine woman, and tell her that I thought it a warm day; she answered me, very civilly, that she thought so too; upon which the conversation ceased, on my part, for some time, till she, good-naturedly resuming it, spoke to me thus: "I see your embarrassment, and I am sure that the few words you said to me cost you a great deal; but do not be discouraged for that reason, and avoid good company. We see that you desire to please, and that is the main point; you want only the manner, and you think that you want it still more than you do. You must go through your noviciate before you can profess good-breeding: and, if you will be my novice, I will present you my acquaintance as such."

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You will easily imagine how much this speech pleased me, and how awkwardly I answered it; I hemmed once or twice (for it gave me a bur in my throat) before I could tell her that I was very much obliged to her; that it was true, that I had a great deal of reason to distrust my own behavior, not being used to fine company; and that I should be proud of being her novice, and receiving her instructions.

As soon as I had fumbled out this answer, she called up three or four people to her, and said: *Savez-vous* (for she was a foreigner, and I was abroad) *que j'ai entrepris ce jeune homme, et qu'il le faut rassurer? Pour moi, je crois en avoir fait*—[Do you know that I have undertaken this young man, and he must be encouraged? As for me, I think I have made a conquest of him; for he just now ventured to tell me, although tremblingly, that it is warm. You will assist me in polishing him. He must necessarily have a passion for somebody; if he does not think me worthy of being the object, he will seek out some other. However, my novice, do not disgrace yourself by frequenting opera girls and actresses; who will not require of you sentiments and politeness, but will be your ruin in every respect. I repeat it to you, my, friend, if you should get into low, mean company, you will be undone. Those creatures will destroy your fortune and your health, corrupt your morals, and you will never acquire the style of good company.]

The company laughed at this lecture, and I was stunned with it. I did not know whether she was serious or in jest. By turns I was pleased, ashamed, encouraged, and dejected. But when I found afterward, that both she, and those to whom she had presented me, countenanced and protected me in company, I gradually got more assurance, and began not to be ashamed of endeavoring to be civil. I copied the best masters, at first servilely, afterward more freely, and at last I joined habit and invention.

All this will happen to you, if you persevere in the desire of pleasing and shining as a man of the world; that part of your character is the only one about which I have at present the least doubt. I cannot entertain the least suspicion of your moral character; your learned character is out of question. Your polite character is now the only remaining object that gives me the least anxiety; and you are now in the right way of finishing it. Your constant collision with good company will, of course, smooth and polish you. I could wish that you would say, to the five or six men or women with whom you are the most acquainted, that you are sensible that, from youth and inexperience, you must make many mistakes in good-breeding; that you beg of them to correct you, without reserve, wherever they see you fail; and that you shall take such admonition as the strongest proofs of their friendship. Such a confession and application will be very engaging to those to whom you make them. They will tell others of them, who will be pleased

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with that disposition, and, in a friendly manner, tell you of any little slip or error. The Duke de Nivernois—[At that time Ambassador from the Court of France to Rome.]—would, I am sure, be charmed, if you dropped such a thing to him; adding, that you loved to address yourself always to the best masters. Observe also the different modes of good-breeding of several nations, and conform yourself to them respectively. Use an easy civility with the French, more ceremony with the Italians, and still more with the Germans; but let it be without embarrassment and with ease. Bring it by use to be habitual to you; for, if it seems unwilling and forced; it will never please. ‘Omnis Aristippum decuit color, et res’. Acquire an easiness and versatility of manners, as well as of mind; and, like the chameleon, take the hue of the company you are with.

There is a sort of veteran women of condition, who having lived always in the ‘grande monde’, and having possibly had some gallantries, together with the experience of five-and-twenty, or thirty years, form a young fellow better than all the rules that can be given him. These women, being past their bloom, are extremely flattered by the least attention from a young fellow; and they will point out to him those manners and *attentions* that pleased and engaged them, when they were in the pride of their youth and beauty. Wherever you go, make some of those women your friends; which a very little matter will do. Ask their advice, tell them your doubts or difficulties as to your behavior; but take great care not to drop one word of their experience; for experience implies age; and the suspicion of age, no woman, let her be ever so old, ever forgives. I long for your picture, which Mr. Harte tells me is now drawing. I want to see your countenance, your air, and even your dress; the better they all three are, the better I am not wise enough to despise any one of them. Your dress, at least, is in your own power, and I hope that you mind it to a proper degree. Yours, Adieu.

LETTER CII

London, January 18, O. S. 1750

My dear friend: I consider the solid part of your little edifice as so near being finished and completed, that my only remaining care is about the embellishments; and that must now be your principal care too. Adorn yourself with all those graces and accomplishments, which, without solidity, are frivolous; but without which solidity is, to a great degree, useless. Take one man, with a very moderate degree of knowledge, but with a pleasing figure, a prepossessing address, graceful in all that he says and does, polite, ‘liant’, and, in short, adorned with all the lesser talents: and take another man, with sound sense and profound knowledge, but without the above-mentioned advantages; the former will not only get the better of the latter, in every pursuit of every *kind*, but in truth there will be no sort of competition between them. But can every man acquire these advantages? I say, Yes, if he please, suppose he is in a situation and in

circumstances to frequent good company. Attention, observation, and imitation, will most infallibly do it.

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When you see a man whose first 'abond' strikes you, prepossesses you in his favor, and makes you entertain a good opinion of him, you do not know why, analyze that 'abond', and examine, within yourself, the several parts that composed it; and you will generally find it to be the result, the happy assemblage of modesty unembarrassed, respect without timidity, a genteel, but unaffected attitude of body and limbs, an open, cheerful, but unsmirking countenance, and a dress, by no means negligent, and yet not foppish. Copy him, then, not servilely, but as some of the greatest masters of painting have copied others; insomuch that their copies have been equal to the originals, both as to beauty and freedom. When you see a man who is universally allowed to shine as an agreeable, well-bred man, and a fine gentleman (as, for example, the Duke de Nivernois), attend to him, watch him carefully; observe in what manner he addresses himself to his superiors, how he lives with his equals, and how he treats his inferiors. Mind his turn of conversation in the several situations of morning visits, the table, and the evening amusements. Imitate, without mimicking him; and be his duplicate, but not his ape. You will find that he takes care never to say or do any thing that can be construed into a slight, or a negligence; or that can, in any degree, mortify people's vanity and self-love; on the contrary, you will perceive that he makes people pleased with him, by making them first pleased with themselves: he shows respect, regard, esteem and attention, where they are severally proper: he sows them with care, and he reaps them in plenty.

These amiable accomplishments are all to be acquired by use and imitation; for we are, in truth, more than half what we are by imitation. The great point is, to choose good models and to study them with care. People insensibly contract, not only the air, the manners, and the vices, of those with whom they commonly converse, but their virtues too, and even their way of thinking. This is so true, that I have known very plain understandings catch a certain degree of wit, by constantly conversing with those who had a great deal. Persist, therefore, in keeping the best company, and you will insensibly become like them; but if you add attention and observation, you will very soon become one of them. The inevitable contagion of company shows you the necessity of keeping the best, and avoiding all other; for in everyone, something will stick. You have hitherto, I confess, had very few opportunities of keeping polite company. Westminster school is, undoubtedly, the seat of illiberal manners and brutal behavior. Leipsig, I suppose, is not the seat of refined and elegant manners. Venice, I believe, has done something; Rome, I hope, will do a great deal more; and Paris will, I dare say, do all that you want; always supposing that you frequent the best companies, and in the intention of improving and forming yourself; for without that intention nothing will do.

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I here subjoin a list of all those necessary, ornamental accomplishments (without which, no man living can either please, or rise in the world) which hitherto I fear you want, and which only require your care and attention to possess.

To speak elegantly, whatever language you speak in; without which nobody will hear you with pleasure, and consequently you will speak to very little purpose.

An agreeable and distinct elocution; without which nobody will hear you with patience: this everybody may acquire, who is not born with some imperfection in the organs of speech. You are not; and therefore it is wholly in your power. You need take much less pains for it than Demosthenes did.

A distinguished politeness of manners and address; which common sense, observation, good company, and imitation, will infallibly give you if you will accept it.

A genteel carriage and graceful motions, with the air of a man of fashion: a good dancing-master, with some care on your part, and some imitation of those who excel, will soon bring this about.

To be extremely clean in your person, and perfectly well dressed, according to the fashion, be that what it will: Your negligence of your dress while you were a schoolboy was pardonable, but would not be so now.

Upon the whole, take it for granted, that without these accomplishments, all you know, and all you can do, will avail you very little. Adieu.

LETTER CIII

London, January 25, O. S. 1750

My dear friend: It is so long since I have heard from you, that I suppose Rome engrosses every moment of your time; and if it engrosses it in the manner I could wish, I willingly give up my share of it. I would rather 'prodesse quam conspici'. Put out your time, but to good interest; and I do not desire to borrow much of it. Your studies, the respectable remains of antiquity, and your evening amusements cannot, and indeed ought not, to leave you much time to write. You will, probably, never see Rome again; and therefore you ought to see it well now; by seeing it well, I do not mean only the buildings, statues, and paintings, though they undoubtedly deserve your attention: but I mean seeing into the constitution and government of it. But these things certainly occur to your own common sense.

How go, your pleasures at Rome? Are you in fashion there? that is, do you live with the people who are?—the only way of being so yourself, in time. Are you domestic enough in any considerable house to be called 'le petit Stanhope'? Has any woman of fashion



and good-breeding taken the trouble of abusing and laughing at you amicably to your face? Have you found a good 'decrotteuse'. For those are the steps by which you must rise to politeness. I do not presume to ask if you have any attachment, because I believe you will not make me your confidant; but this I will say, eventually, that if you have one, 'il faut bien payer d'attentions et de petits soins', if you would have your sacrifice propitiously received. Women are not so much taken by beauty as men are, but prefer those men who show them the most attention.

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Would you engage the lovely fair?
With gentlest manners treat her;
With tender looks and graceful air,
In softest accents greet her.

Verse were but vain, the Muses fail,
Without the Graces' aid;
The God of Verse could not prevail
To stop the flying maid.

Attention by attentions gain,
And merit care by cares;
So shall the nymph reward your pain;
And Venus crown your prayers.
Probatum est.

A man's address and manner weigh much more with them than his beauty; and, without them, the Abbati and Monsignori will get the better of you. This address and manner should be exceedingly respectful, but at the same time easy and unembarrassed. Your chit-chat or 'entregent' with them neither can, nor ought to be very solid; but you should take care to turn and dress up your trifles prettily, and make them every now and then convey indirectly some little piece of flattery. A fan, a riband, or a head-dress, are great materials for gallant dissertations, to one who has got 'le ton léger et aimable de la bonne compagnie'. At all events, a man had better talk too much to women, than too little; they take silence for dullness, unless where they think that the passion they have inspired occasions it; and in that case they adopt the notion, that

Silence in love betrays more woe
Than words, though ne'er so witty;
The beggar that is dumb, we know,
Deserves a double pity.

'A propos' of this subject: what progress do you make in that language, in which Charles the Fifth said that he would choose to speak to his mistress? Have you got all the tender diminutives, in 'etta, ina', and 'ettina', which, I presume, he alluded to? You already possess, and, I hope, take care not to forget, that language which he reserved for his horse. You are absolutely master, too, of that language in which he said he would converse with men; French. But, in every language, pray attend carefully to the choice of your words, and to the turn of your expression. Indeed, it is a point of very great consequence. To be heard with success, you must be heard with pleasure: words are the dress of thoughts; which should no more be presented in rags, tatters, and dirt, than your person should. By the way, do you mind your person and your dress sufficiently? Do you take great care of your teeth? Pray have them put in order by the best operator at Rome. Are you be-laced, bepowdered, and be-feathered, as other

young fellows are, and should be? At your age, 'il faut du brillant, et meme un peu de fracas, mais point de mediocre; il faut un air vif, aise et noble. Avec les hommes, un maintien respectueux et en meme tems respectable; avec les femmes, un caquet leger, enjoue, et badin, mais toujours fort poli'.

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To give you an opportunity of exerting your talents, I send you, here inclosed, a letter of recommendation from Monsieur Villetes to Madame de Simonetti at Milan; a woman of the first fashion and consideration there; and I shall in my next send you another from the same person to Madame Clerici, at the same place. As these two ladies' houses are the resort of all the people of fashion at Milan, those two recommendations will introduce you to them all. Let me know, in due time, if you have received these two letters, that I may have them renewed, in case of accidents.

Adieu, my dear friend! Study hard; divert yourself heartily; distinguish carefully between the pleasures of a man of fashion, and the vices of a scoundrel; pursue the former, and abhor the latter, like a man of sense.

LETTER CIV

London, February 5, O. S. 1750

My dear friend: Very few people are good economists of their fortune, and still fewer of their time; and yet of the two, the latter is the most precious. I heartily wish you to be a good economist of both: and you are now of an age to begin to think seriously of those two important articles. Young people are apt to think that they have so much time before them, that they may squander what they please of it, and yet have enough left; as very great fortunes have frequently seduced people to a ruinous profusion. Fatal mistakes, always repented of, but always too late! Old Mr. Lowndes, the famous Secretary of the Treasury in the reigns of King William, Queen Anne, and King George the First, used to say,—*take care of the Pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves*. To this maxim, which he not only preached but practiced, his two grandsons at this time owe the very considerable fortunes that he left them.

This holds equally true as to time; and I most earnestly recommend to you the care of those minutes and quarters of hours, in the course of the day, which people think too short to deserve their attention; and yet, if summed up at the end of the year, would amount to a very considerable portion of time. For example: you are to be at such a place at twelve, by appointment; you go out at eleven, to make two or three visits first; those persons are not at home, instead of sauntering away that intermediate time at a coffeehouse, and possibly alone, return home, write a letter, beforehand, for the ensuing post, or take up a good book, I do not mean Descartes, Malebranche, Locke, or Newton, by way of dipping; but some book of rational amusement and detached pieces, as Horace, Boileau, Waller, La Bruyere, etc. This will be so much time saved, and by no means ill employed. Many people lose a great deal of time by reading: for they read frivolous and idle books, such as the absurd romances of the two last centuries; where characters,

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that never existed, are insipidly displayed, and sentiments that were never felt, pompously described: the Oriental ravings and extravagances of the “Arabian Nights,” and Mogul tales; or, the new flimsy brochures that now swarm in France, of fairy tales, ‘Reflections sur le coeur et l’esprit, metaphysique de l’amour, analyse des beaux sentimens’, and such sort of idle frivolous stuff, that nourishes and improves the mind just as much as whipped cream would the body. Stick to the best established books in every language; the celebrated poets, historians, orators, or philosophers. By these means (to use a city metaphor) you will make fifty *per cent*. Of that time, of which others do not make above three or four, or probably nothing at all.

Many people lose a great deal of their time by laziness; they loll and yawn in a great chair, tell themselves that they have not time to begin anything then, and that it will do as well another time. This is a most unfortunate disposition, and the greatest obstruction to both knowledge and business. At your age, you have no right nor claim to laziness; I have, if I please, being emeritus. You are but just listed in the world, and must be active, diligent, indefatigable. If ever you propose commanding with dignity, you must serve up to it with diligence. Never put off till tomorrow what you can do to-day.

Dispatch is the soul of business; and nothing contributes more to dispatch than method. Lay down a method for everything, and stick to it inviolably, as far as unexpected incidents may allow. Fix one certain hour and day in the week for your accounts, and keep them together in their proper order; by which means they will require very little time, and you can never be much cheated. Whatever letters and papers you keep, docket and tie them up in their respective classes, so that you may instantly have recourse to any one. Lay down a method also for your reading, for which you allot a certain share of your mornings; let it be in a consistent and consecutive course, and not in that desultory and unmethodical manner, in which many people read scraps of different authors, upon different subjects. Keep a useful and short commonplace book of what you read, to help your memory only, and not for pedantic quotations. Never read history without having maps and a chronological book, or tables, lying by you, and constantly recurred to; without which history is only a confused heap of facts. One method more I recommend to you, by which I have found great benefit, even in the most dissipated part of my life; that is, to rise early, and at the same hour every morning, how late soever you may have sat up the night before. This secures you an hour or two, at least, of reading or reflection before the common interruptions of the morning begin; and it will save your constitution, by forcing you to go to bed early, at least one night in three.

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You will say, it may be, as many young people would, that all this order and method is very troublesome, only fit for dull people, and a disagreeable restraint upon the noble spirit and fire of youth. I deny it; and assert, on the contrary, that it will procure you both more time and more taste for your pleasures; and, so far from being troublesome to you, that after you have pursued it a month, it would be troublesome to you to lay it aside. Business whets the appetite, and gives a taste to pleasure, as exercise does to food; and business can never be done without method; it raises the spirits for pleasures; and a *spectacle*, a ball, an assembly, will much more sensibly affect a man who has employed, than a man who has lost, the preceding part of the day; nay, I will venture to say, that a fine lady will seem to have more charms to a man of study or business, than to a saunterer. The same listlessness runs through his whole conduct, and he is as insipid in his pleasures, as inefficient in everything else.

I hope you earn your pleasures, and consequently taste them; for, by the way, I know a great many men, who call themselves men of pleasure, but who, in truth, have none. They adopt other people's indiscriminately, but without any taste of their own. I have known them often inflict excesses upon themselves because they thought them genteel; though they sat as awkwardly upon them as other people's clothes would have done. Have no pleasures but your own, and then you will shine in them. What are yours? Give me a short history of them. 'Tenez-vous votre coin a table, et dans les bonnes compagnies? y brillez-vous du cote de la politesse, de d'enjouement, du badinage? Etes-vous galant? Filex-vous le parfait amour? Est-il question de flechir par vos soins et par vos attentions les rigueurs de quelque fiere Princesse'? You may safely trust me; for though I am a severe censor of vice and folly, I am a friend and advocate for pleasures, and will contribute all in my power to yours.

There is a certain dignity to be kept up in pleasures, as well as in business. In love, a man may lose his heart with dignity; but if he loses his nose, he loses his character into the bargain. At table, a man may with decency have a distinguishing palate; but indiscriminate voraciousness degrades him to a glutton. A man may play with decency; but if he games, he is disgraced. Vivacity and wit make a man shine in company; but trite jokes and loud laughter reduce him to a buffoon. [see Mark Twain's identical advice in his 'Speeches' D.W.] Every virtue, they say, has its kindred vice; every pleasure, I am sure, has its neighboring disgrace. Mark carefully, therefore, the line that separates them, and rather stop a yard short, than step an inch beyond it.

I wish to God that you had as much pleasure in following my advice, as I have in giving it you! and you may the more easily have it, as I give you none that is inconsistent with your pleasure. In all that I say to you, it is your interest alone that I consider: trust to my experience; you know you may to my affection. Adieu.

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I have received no letter yet from you or Mr. Harte.

LETTER CV

London, February 8, O. S. 1750

My dear friend: You have, by this time, I hope and believe, made such a progress in the Italian language, that you can read it with ease; I mean, the easy books in it; and indeed, in that, as well as in every other language, the easiest books are generally the best; for, whatever author is obscure and difficult in his own language, certainly does not think clearly. This is, in my opinion, the case of a celebrated Italian author; to whom the Italians, from the admiration they have of him, have given the epithet of *il divino*; I mean Dante. Though I formerly knew Italian extremely well, I could never understand him; for which reason I had done with him, fully convinced that he was not worth the pains necessary to understand him.

The good Italian authors are, in my mind, but few; I mean, authors of invention; for there are, undoubtedly, very good historians and excellent translators. The two poets worth your reading, and, I was going to say, the only two, are Tasso and Ariosto. Tasso's '*Gierusalemme Liberata*' is altogether unquestionably a fine poem, though—it has some low, and many false thoughts in it: and Boileau very justly makes it the mark of a bad taste, to compare '*le Clinquant Tasse a l' Or de Virgile*'. The image, with which he adorns the introduction of his epic poem, is low and disgusting; it is that of a froward, sick, puking child, who is deceived into a dose of necessary physic by '*du bon-bon*'. These verses are these:

"Cosi all'egro fanciul porgiamo aspersi
Di soavi licor gli orli del vaso:
Socchi amari ingannato intanto ei beve,
E dall' inganno suo vita riceve."

However, the poem, with all its faults about it, may justly be called a fine one.

If fancy, imagination, invention, description, *etc.*, constitute a poet, Ariosto is, unquestionably, a great one. His "*Orlando*," it is true, is a medley of lies and truths—sacred and profane—wars, loves, enchantments, giants, madheroes, and adventurous damsels, but then, he gives it you very fairly for what it is, and does not pretend to put it upon you for the true '*epopee*', or epic poem. He says:

"Le Donne, i Cavalier, l'arme, gli amori
Le cortesie, l'audaci imprese, io canto."

The connections of his stories are admirable, his reflections just, his sneers and ironies incomparable, and his painting excellent. When Angelica, after having wandered over half the world alone with Orlando, pretends, notwithstanding,

“—ch’el fior virginal cosi avea salvo,
Come selo porto dal matern’ alvo.”

The author adds, very gravely,—

“Forse era ver, ma non pero credibile
A chi del senso suo fosse Signore.”

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Astolpho's being carried to the moon by St. John, in order to look for Orlando's lost wits, at the end of the 34th book, and the many lost things that he finds there, is a most happy extravagancy, and contains, at the same time, a great deal of sense. I would advise you to read this poem with attention. It is, also, the source of half the tales, novels, and plays, that have been written since.

The 'Pastor Fido' of Guarini is so celebrated, that you should read it; but in reading it, you will judge of the great propriety of the characters. A parcel of shepherds and shepherdesses, with the *true pastoral*' simplicity, talk metaphysics, epigrams, 'concelli', and quibbles, by the hour to each other.

The Aminto del Tasso, is much more what it is intended to be, a pastoral: the shepherds, indeed, have their 'concelli' and their antitheses; but are not quite so sublime and abstracted as those in Pastor Fido. I think that you will like it much the best of the two.

Petrarca is, in my mind, a sing-song, love-sick poet; much admired, however, by the Italians: but an Italian who should think no better of him than I do, would certainly say that he deserved his 'Laura' better than his 'Lauro'; and that wretched quibble would be reckoned an excellent piece of Italian wit.

The Italian prose-writers (of invention I mean) which I would recommend to your acquaintance, are Machiavello and Boccacio; the former, for the established reputation which he has acquired, of a consummate politician (whatever my own private sentiments may be of either his politics or his morality): the latter, for his great invention, and for his natural and agreeable manner of telling his stories.

Guicciardini, Bentivoglio, Davila, *etc.*, are excellent historians, and deserved being read with attention. The nature of history checks, a little, the flights of Italian imaginations; which, in works of invention, are very high indeed. Translations curb them still more: and their translations of the classics are incomparable; particularly the first ten, translated in the time of Leo the Tenth, and inscribed to him, under the title of Collana. That original Collana has been lengthened since; and if I mistake not, consist now of one hundred and ten volumes.

From what I have said, you will easily guess that I meant to put you upon your guard; and not let your fancy be dazzled and your taste corrupted by the concetti, the quaintnesses, and false thoughts, which are too much the characteristics of the Italian and Spanish authors. I think you are in no great danger, as your taste has been formed upon the best ancient models, the Greek and Latin authors of the best ages, who indulge themselves in none of the puerilities I have hinted at. I think I may say, with truth; that true wit, sound taste, and good sense, are now, as it were, engrossed by France and England. Your old acquaintances, the Germans, I fear, are a little below

them; and your new acquaintances, the Italians, are a great deal too much above them. The former, I doubt, crawl a little; the latter, I am sure, very often fly out of sight.

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I recommended to you a good many years ago, and I believe you then read, *La maniere de bien penser dans les ouvrages d'esprit* par le Pere Bouhours; and I think it is very well worth your reading again, now that you can judge of it better. I do not know any book that contributes more to form a true taste; and you find there, into the bargain, the most celebrated passages, both of the ancients and the moderns, which refresh your memory with what you have formerly read in them separately. It is followed by a book much of the same size, by the same author, entitled, '*Suite des Pensees ingenieuses*'.

To do justice to the best English and French authors, they have not given into that false taste; they allow no thoughts to be good, that are not just and founded upon truth. The age of Lewis XIV. was very like the Augustan; Boileau, Moliere, La Fontaine, Racine, *etc.*, established the true, and exposed the false taste. The reign of King Charles II. (meritorious in no other respect) banished false taste out of England, and proscribed puns, quibbles, acrostics, *etc.* Since that, false wit has renewed its attacks, and endeavored to recover its lost empire, both in England and France; but without success; though, I must say, with more success in France than in England. Addison, Pope, and Swift, have vigorously defended the rights of good sense, which is more than can be said of their contemporary French authors, who have of late had a great tendency to '*le faux brillant*', '*le raffinement, et l'entortillement*'. And Lord Roscommon would be more in the right now, than he was then, in saying, that,

"The English bullion of one sterling line,
Drawn to French wire, would through whole pages shine."

Lose no time, my dear child, I conjure you, in forming your taste, your manners, your mind, your everything; you have but two years' time to do it in; for whatever you are, to a certain degree, at twenty, you will be, more or less, all the rest of your life. May it be a long and happy one. Adieu.

LETTER CVI

London, February 22, O. S. 1750

My dear friend: If the Italian of your letter to Lady Chesterfield was all your own, I am very well satisfied with the progress which you have made in that language in so short a time; according to that gradation, you will, in a very little time more, be master of it. Except at the French Ambassador's, I believe you hear only Italian spoke; for the Italians speak very little French, and that little generally very ill. The French are even with them, and generally speak Italian as ill; for I never knew a Frenchman in my life who could pronounce the Italian *ce*, *ci*, or *ge*, *gi*. Your desire of pleasing the Roman ladies will of course give you not only the desire, but the means of speaking to them elegantly in their own language. The Princess Borghese, I am told, speaks French both ill and unwillingly;

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and therefore you should make a merit to her of your application to her language. She is, by a kind of prescription (longer than she would probably wish), at the head of the 'beau monde' at Rome; and can, consequently, establish or destroy a young fellow's fashionable character. If she declares him 'amabile e leggiadro', others will think him so, or at least those who do not will not dare to say so. There are in every great town some such women, whose rank, beauty, and fortune have conspired to place them at the head of the fashion. They have generally been gallant, but within certain decent bounds. Their gallantries have taught, both them and their admirers, good-breeding; without which they could keep up no dignity, but would be vilified by those very gallantries which put them in vogue. It is with these women, as with ministers and favorites at court; they decide upon fashion and characters, as these do of fortunes and preferments. Pay particular court, therefore, wherever you are, to these female sovereigns of the 'beau monde'; their recommendation is a passport through all the realms of politeness. But then, remember that they require minute officious attentions. You should, if possible, guess at and anticipate all their little fancies and inclinations; make yourself familiarly and domestically useful to them, by offering yourself for all their little commissions, and assisting in doing the honors of their houses, and entering with seeming unction into all their little grievances, bustles, and views; for they are always busy. If you are once 'ben ficcato' at the Palazzo Borghese, you twill soon be in fashion at Rome; and being in fashion will soon fashion you; for that is what you must now think of very seriously.

I am sorry that there is no good dancing-master at Rome, to form your exterior air and carriage; which, I doubt, are not yet the genteelest in the world. But you may, and I hope you will, in the meantime, observe the air and carriage of those who are reckoned to have the best, and form your own upon them. Ease, gracefulness, and dignity, compose the air and address of a man of fashion; which is as unlike the affected attitudes and motions of a 'petit maitre', as it is to the awkward, negligent, clumsy, and slouching manner of a booby.

I am extremely pleased with the account Mr. Harte has given me of the allotment of your time at Rome. Those five hours every morning, which you employ in serious studies with Mr. Harte, are laid out with great interest, and will make you rich all the rest of your life. I do not look upon the subsequent morning hours, which you pass with your Ciceroni, to be ill-disposed of; there is a kind of connection between them; and your evening diversions in good company are, in their way, as useful and necessary. This is the way for you to have both weight and lustre in the world; and this is the object which I always had in view in your education.

Adieu, my friend! go on and prosper.

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Mr. Grevenkop has just received Mr. Harte's letter of the 19th N. S.

LETTER CVII

London, March 8, O. S. 1750

Young as you are, I hope you are in haste to live; by living, I mean living with lustre and honor to yourself, with utility to society; doing what may deserve to be written, or writing what may deserve to be read; I should wish both. Those who consider life in that light, will not idly lavish one moment. The present moments are the only ones we are sure of, and as such the most valuable; but yours are doubly so at your age; for the credit, the dignity, the comfort, and the pleasure of all your future moments, depend upon the use you make of your present ones.

I am extremely satisfied with your present manner of employing your time; but will you always employ it as well? I am far from meaning always in the same way; but I mean as well in proportion, in the variation of age and circumstances. You now, study five hours every morning; I neither suppose that you will, nor desire that you should do so for the rest of your life. Both business and pleasure will justly and equally break in upon those hours. But then, will you always employ the leisure they leave you in useful studies? If you have but an hour, will you improve that hour, instead of idling it away? While you have such a friend and monitor with you as Mr. Harte, I am sure you will. But suppose that business and situations should, in six or seven months, call Mr. Harte away from you; tell me truly, what may I expect and depend upon from you, when left to yourself? May I be sure that you will employ some part of every day, in adding something to that stock of knowledge which he will have left you? May I hope that you will allot one hour in the week to the care of your own affairs, to keep them in that order and method which every prudent man does? But, above all, may I be convinced that your pleasures, whatever they may be, will be confined within the circle of good company, and people of fashion? Those pleasures I recommend to you; I will promote them I will pay for them; but I will neither pay for, nor suffer, the unbecoming, disgraceful, and degrading pleasures (they should not be called pleasures), of low and profligate company. I confess the pleasures of high life are not always strictly philosophical; and I believe a Stoic would blame, my indulgence; but I am yet no Stoic, though turned of five-and-fifty; and I am apt to think that you are rather less so, at eighteen. The pleasures of the table, among people of the first fashion, may indeed sometimes, by accident, run into excesses: but they will never sink into a continued course of gluttony and drunkenness. The gallantry of high life, though not strictly justifiable, carries, at least, no external marks of infamy about it. Neither the heart nor the constitution is corrupted by it; neither nose nor character lost by it; manners, possibly, improved. Play, in good company, is only play, and not gaming; not deep, and consequently not dangerous nor dishonorable. It is only the interacts of other amusements.

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This, I am sure, is not talking to you like an old man, though it is talking to you like an old friend; these are not hard conditions to ask of you. I am certain you have sense enough to know how reasonable they are on my part, how advantageous they are on yours: but have you resolution enough to perform them? Can you withstand the examples, and the invitations, of the profligate, and their infamous missionaries? For I have known many a young fellow seduced by a 'mauvaise honte', that made him ashamed to refuse. These are resolutions which you must form, and steadily execute for yourself, whenever you lose the friendly care and assistance of your Mentor. In the meantime, make a greedy use of him; exhaust him, if you can, of all his knowledge; and get the prophet's mantle from him, before he is taken away himself.

You seem to like Rome. How do you go on there? Are you got into the inside of that extraordinary government? Has your Abbate Foggini discovered many of those mysteries to you? Have you made an acquaintance with some eminent Jesuits? I know no people in the world more instructive. You would do very well to take one or two such sort of people home with you to dinner every day. It would be only a little 'minestra' and 'macaroni' the more; and a three or four hours' conversation 'de suite' produces a thousand useful informations, which short meetings and snatches at third places do not admit of; and many of those gentlemen are by no means unwilling to dine 'gratis'. Whenever you meet with a man eminent in any way, feed him, and feed upon him at the same time; it will not only improve you, but give you a reputation of knowledge, and of loving it in others.

I have been lately informed of an Italian book, which I believe may be of use to you, and which, I dare say, you may get at Rome, written by one Alberti, about fourscore or a hundred years ago, a thick quarto. It is a classical description of Italy; from whence, I am assured, that Mr. Addison, to save himself trouble, has taken most of his remarks and classical references. I am told that it is an excellent book for a traveler in Italy.

What Italian books have you read, or are you reading? Ariosto. I hope, is one of them. Pray apply yourself diligently to Italian; it is so easy a language, that speaking it constantly, and reading it often, must, in six months more, make you perfect master of it: in which case you will never forget it; for we only forget those things of which we know but little.

But, above all things, to all that you learn, to all that you say, and to all that you do, remember to join the Graces. All is imperfect without them; with them everything is at least tolerable. Nothing could hurt me more than to find you unattended by them. How cruelly should I be shocked, if, at our first meeting, you should present yourself to me without them! Invoke them, and sacrifice to them every moment; they are always kind, where they are assiduously courted. For God's sake, aim at perfection in everything: 'Nil actum reputans si quid superesset agendum. Adieu. Yours most tenderly.

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LETTER CVIII

London, March 19, O. S. 1750.

My dear friend: I acknowledge your last letter of the 24th February, N. S. In return for your earthquake, I can tell you that we have had here more than our share of earthquakes; for we had two very strong ones in eight-and-twenty days. They really do too much honor to our cold climate; in your warm one, they are compensated by favors from the sun, which we do not enjoy.

I did not think that the present Pope was a sort of man to build seven modern little chapels at the expense of so respectable a piece of antiquity as the Coliseum. However, let his Holiness's taste of 'virtu' be ever so bad, pray get somebody to present you to him before you leave Rome; and without hesitation kiss his slipper, or whatever else the etiquette of that Court requires. I would have you see all those ceremonies; and I presume that you are, by this time, ready enough at Italian to understand and answer 'il Santo Padre' in that language. I hope, too, that you have acquired address and usage enough of the world to be presented to anybody, without embarrassment or disapprobation. If that is not yet quite perfect, as I cannot suppose it is entirely, custom will improve it daily, and habit at last complete it. I have for some time told you, that the great difficulties are pretty well conquered. You have acquired knowledge, which is the 'principium et fons'; but you have now a variety of lesser things to attend to, which collectively make one great and important object. You easily guess that I mean the graces, the air, address, politeness, and, in short, the whole 'tournure' and 'agremens' of a man of fashion; so many little things conspire to form that 'tournure', that though separately they seem too insignificant to mention, yet aggregately they are too material for me (who think for you down to the very lowest things) to omit. For instance, do you use yourself to carve, eat and drink genteelly, and with ease? Do you take care to walk, sit, stand, and present yourself gracefully? Are you sufficiently upon your guard against awkward attitudes, and illiberal, ill-bred, and disgusting habits, such as scratching yourself, putting your fingers in your mouth, nose, and ears? Tricks always acquired at schools, often too much neglected afterward; but, however, extremely ill-bred and nauseous. For I do not conceive that any man has a right to exhibit, in company, any one excrement more than another. Do you dress well, and think a little of the brilliant in your person? That, too, is necessary, because it is 'prevenant'. Do you aim at easy, engaging, but, at the same time, civil or respectful manners, according to the company you are in? These, and a thousand other things, which you will observe in people of fashion better than I can describe them, are absolutely necessary for every man; but still more for you, than for almost any man living. The showish, the shining, the engaging parts of the character of a fine gentleman, should (considering your destination) be the principal objects, of your present attention.

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When you return here, I am apt to think that you will find something better to do than to run to Mr. Osborne's at Gray's Inn, to pick up scarce books. Buy good books and read them; the best books are the commonest, and the last editions are always the best, if the editors are not blockheads, for they may profit of the former. But take care not to understand editions and title-pages too well. It always smells of pedantry, and not always of learning. What curious books I have—they are indeed but few—shall be at your service. I have some of the old Collana, and the Machiavel of 1550. Beware of the 'Bibliomanie'.

In the midst of either your studies or your pleasures, pray never lose view of the object of your destination: I mean the political affairs of Europe. Follow them politically, chronologically, and geographically, through the newspapers, and trace up the facts which you meet with there to their sources: as, for example, consult the treaties Neustadt and Abo, with regard to the disputes, which you read of every day in the public papers, between Russia and Sweden. For the affairs of Italy, which are reported to be the objects of present negotiations, recur to the quadruple alliance of the year 1718, and follow them down through their several variations to the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748; in which (by the bye) you will find the very different tenures by which the Infant Don Philip, your namesake, holds Parma and Placentia. Consult, also, the Emperor Charles the Sixth's Act of Cession of the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily, being a point which, upon the death of the present King of Spain, is likely to occasion some disputes; do not lose the thread of these matters; which is carried on with great ease, but if once broken, is resumed with difficulty.

Pray tell Mr. Harte, that I have sent his packet to Baron Firmian by Count Einsiedlen, who is gone from hence this day for Germany, and passes through Vienna in his way to Italy; where he is in hopes of crossing upon you somewhere or other. Adieu, my friend.

LETTER CIX

London, March 29, O. S. 1750

My dear friend: You are now, I suppose, at Naples, in a new scene of 'Virtu', examining all the curiosities of Herculaneum, watching the eruptions of Mount Vesuvius, and surveying the magnificent churches and public buildings, by which Naples is distinguished.

You have a court there into the bargain, which, I hope, you frequent and attend to. Polite manners, a versatility of mind, a complaisance even to enemies, and the 'volto sciolto', with the 'pensieri stretti', are only to be learned at courts, and must be well learned by whoever would either shine or thrive in them. Though they do not change the nature, they smooth and soften the manners of mankind. Vigilance, dexterity, and flexibility supply the place of natural force; and it is the ablest mind, not the

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strongest body that prevails there. Monsieur and Madame Fogliani will, I am sure, show you all the politeness of courts; for I know no better bred people than they are. Domesticate yourself there while you stay at Naples, and lay aside the English coldness and formality. You have also a letter to Comte Mahony, whose house I hope you frequent, as it is the resort of the best company. His sister, Madame Bulkeley, is now here; and had I known of your going so soon to Naples, I would have got you, 'ex abundanti', a letter from her to her brother. The conversation of the moderns in the evening is full as necessary for you, as that of the ancients in the morning.

You would do well, while you are at Naples, to read some very short history of that kingdom. It has had great variety of masters, and has occasioned many wars; the general history of which will enable you to ask many proper questions, and to receive useful informations in return. Inquire into the manner and form of that government; for constitution it has none, being an absolute one; but the most absolute governments have certain customs and forms, which are more or less observed by their respective tyrants. In China it is the fashion for the emperors, absolute as they are, to govern with justice and equity; as in the other Oriental monarchies, it is the custom to govern by violence and cruelty. The King of France, as absolute, in fact, as any of them, is by custom only more gentle; for I know of no constitutional bar to his will. England is now, the only monarchy in the world, that can properly be said to have a constitution; for the people's rights and liberties are secured by laws; and I cannot reckon Sweden and Poland to be monarchies, those two kings having little more to say than the Doge of Venice. I do not presume to say anything of the constitution of the empire to you, who are 'jurisperitorum Germanicorum facile princeps'.

When you write to me, which, by the way, you do pretty seldom, tell me rather whom you see, than what you see. Inform me of your evening transactions and acquaintances; where, and how you pass your evenings; what people of learning you have made acquaintance with; and, if you will trust me with so important an affair, what belle passion inflames you. I interest myself most in what personally concerns you most; and this is a very critical year in your life. To talk like a virtuoso, your canvas is, I think, a good one, and *Raphael Harte* has drawn the outlines admirably; nothing is now wanting but the coloring of Titian, and the Graces, the 'morbidezza' of Guido; but that is a great deal. You must get them soon, or you will never get them at all. 'Per la lingua Italiana, sono sicuro ch'ella n'e adesso professore, a segno tale ch'io non ardisca dirle altra cosa in quella lingua se non. Addio'.

LETTER CX

London, April 26, O. S. 1756.

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My dear friend: As your journey to Paris approaches, and as that period will, one way or another, be of infinite consequence to you, my letters will henceforward be principally calculated for that meridian. You will be left there to your own discretion, instead of Mr. Harte's, and you will allow me, I am sure, to distrust a little the discretion of eighteen. You will find in the Academy a number of young fellows much less discreet than yourself. These will all be your acquaintances; but look about you first, and inquire into their respective characters, before you form any connections among them; and, 'caeteris paribus', single out those of the most considerable rank and family. Show them a distinguishing attention; by which means you will get into their respective houses, and keep the best company. All those French young fellows are excessively 'etourdis'; be upon your guard against scrapes and quarrels; have no corporal pleasantries with them, no 'jeux de mains', no 'coups de chambriere', which frequently bring on quarrels. Be as lively as they, if you please, but at the same time be a little wiser than they. As to letters, you will find most of them ignorant; do not reproach them with that ignorance, nor make them feel your superiority. It is not their faults, they are all bred up for the army; but, on the other, hand, do not allow their ignorance and idleness to break in upon those morning hours which you may be able to allot to your serious, studies. No breakfastings with them, which consume a great deal of time; but tell them (not magisterially and sententiously) that you will read two or three hours in the morning, and that for the rest of the day you are very much at their service. Though, by the way, I hope you will keep wiser company in the evenings.

I must insist upon your never going to what is called the English coffee-house at Paris, which is the resort of all the scrub English, and also of the fugitive and attainted Scotch and Irish; party quarrels and drunken squabbles are very frequent there; and I do not know a more degrading place in all Paris. Coffee-houses and taverns are by no means creditable at Paris. Be cautiously upon your guard against the infinite number of fine-dressed and fine-spoken 'chevaliers d'industrie' and 'avanturiers' which swarm at Paris: and keep everybody civilly at arm's length, of whose real character or rank you are not previously informed. Monsieur le Comte or Monsieur le Chevalier, in a handsome laced coat, 'et tres bien mis', accosts you at the play, or some other public place; he conceives at first sight an infinite regard for you: he sees that you are a stranger of the first distinction; he offers you his services, and wishes nothing more ardently than to contribute, as far as may be in his little power, to procure you 'les agrements de Paris'. He is acquainted with some ladies of condition, 'qui prefont une petite societe agreable, et des petits soupers aimables d'honnnetes

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gens, au tumulte et a la dissipation de Paris'; and he will with the greatest pleasure imaginable have the honor of introducing you to those ladies of quality. Well, if you were to accept of this kind offer, and go with him, you would find 'au troisieme; a handsome, painted and p——d strumpet, in a tarnished silver or gold second-hand robe, playing a sham party at cards for livres, with three or four sharpers well dressed enough, and dignified by the titles of Marquis, Comte, and Chevalier. The lady receives you in the most polite and gracious manner, and with all those 'complimens de routine' which every French woman has equally. Though she loves retirement, and shuns 'le grande monde', yet she confesses herself obliged to the Marquis for having procured her so inestimable, so accomplished an acquaintance as yourself; but her concern is how to amuse you: for she never suffers play at her house for above a livre; if you can amuse yourself with that low play till supper, 'a la bonne heure'. Accordingly you sit down to that little play, at which the good company takes care that you shall win fifteen or sixteen livres, which gives them an opportunity of celebrating both your good luck and your good play. Supper comes up, and a good one it is, upon the strength of your being able to pay for it. 'La Marquise en fait les honneurs au mieux, talks sentiments, 'moeurs et morale', interlarded with 'enjouement', and accompanied with some oblique ogles, which bid you not despair in time. After supper, pharaoh, lansquenet, or quinze, happen accidentally to be mentioned: the Marquise exclaims against it, and vows she will not suffer it, but is at last prevailed upon by being assured 'que ce ne sera que pour des riens'. Then the wished-for moment is come, the operation begins: you are cheated, at best, of all the money in your pocket, and if you stay late, very probably robbed of your watch and snuff-box, possibly murdered for greater security. This I can assure you, is not an exaggerated, but a literal description of what happens every day to some raw and inexperienced stranger at Paris. Remember to receive all these civil gentlemen, who take such a fancy to you at first sight, very coldly, and take care always to be previously engaged, whatever party they propose to you. You may happen sometimes, in very great and good companies, to meet with some dexterous gentlemen, who may be very desirous, and also very sure, to win your money, if they can but engage you to play with them. Therefore lay it down as an invariable rule never to play with men, but only with women of fashion, at low play, or with women and men mixed. But, at the same time, whenever you are asked to play deeper than you would, do not refuse it gravely and sententiously, alleging the folly of staking what would be very inconvenient to one to lose, against what one does not want to win; but parry those invitations ludicrously, 'et en badinant'. Say that, if you were sure to lose, you might possibly play, but that as you

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may as well win, you dread 'l'embarras des richesses', ever since you have seen what an encumbrance they were to poor Harlequin, and that, therefore, you are determined never to venture the winning above two louis a-day; this sort of light trifling way of declining invitations to vice and folly, is more becoming your age, and at the same time more effectual, than grave philosophical refusals. A young fellow who seems to have no will of his own, and who does everything that is asked of him, is called a very good-natured, but at the same time, is thought a very silly young fellow. Act wisely, upon solid principles, and from true motives, but keep them to yourself, and never talk sententiously. When you are invited to drink, say that you wish you could, but that so little makes you both drunk and sick, 'que le jeu me vaut pas la chandelle'.

Pray show great attention, and make your court to Monsieur de la Gueriniere; he is well with Prince Charles and many people of the first distinction at Paris; his commendations will raise your character there, not to mention that his favor will be of use to you in the Academy itself. For the reasons which I mentioned to you in my last, I would have you be interne in the Academy for the first six months; but after that, I promise you that you shall have lodgings of your own 'dans un hotel garni', if in the meantime I hear well of you, and that you frequent, and are esteemed in the best French companies. You want nothing now, thank God, but exterior advantages, that last polish, that 'tournure du monde', and those graces, which are so necessary to adorn, and give efficacy to, the most solid merit. They are only to be acquired in the best companies, and better in the best French companies than in any other. You will not want opportunities, for I shall send you letters that will establish you in the most distinguished companies, not only of the beau monde, but of the beaux esprits, too. Dedicate, therefore, I beg of you, that whole year to your own advantage and final improvement, and do not be diverted from those objects by idle dissipations, low seduction, or bad example. After that year, do whatever you please; I will interfere no longer in your conduct; for I am sure both you and I shall be safe then. Adieu!

LETTER CXI

London, April 30, O. S. 1750

My dear friend: Mr. Harte, who in all his letters gives you some dash of panegyric, told me in his last a thing that pleases me extremely; which was that at Rome you had constantly preferred the established Italian assemblies to the English conventicles setup against them by dissenting English ladies. That shows sense, and that you know what you are sent abroad for. It is of much more consequence to know the 'mores multorum hominum' than the 'urbes'. Pray continue this judicious conduct wherever you go, especially at Paris, where, instead of thirty, you will find above three hundred English, herding together and conversing with no one French body.

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The life of 'les Milords Anglois' is regularly, or, if you will, irregularly, this. As soon as they rise, which is very late, they breakfast together, to the utter loss of two good morning hours. Then they go by coachfuls to the Palais, the Invalides, and Notre-Dame; from thence to the English coffee-house, where they make up their tavern party for dinner. From dinner, where they drink quick, they adjourn in clusters to the play, where they crowd up the stage, dressed up in very fine clothes, very ill-made by a Scotch or Irish tailor. From the play to the tavern again, where they get very drunk, and where they either quarrel among themselves, or sally forth, commit some riot in the streets, and are taken up by the watch. Those who do not speak French before they go, are sure to learn none there. Their tender vows are addressed to their Irish laundress, unless by chance some itinerant Englishwoman, eloped from her husband, or her creditors, defrauds her of them. Thus they return home, more petulant, but not more informed, than when they left it; and show, as they think, their improvement by affectedly both speaking and dressing in broken French:—

“Hunc to Romane caveito.”

Connect yourself, while you are in France, entirely with the French; improve yourself with the old, divert yourself with the young; conform cheerfully to their customs, even to their little follies, but not to their vices. Do not, however, remonstrate or preach against them, for remonstrances do not suit with your age. In French companies in general you will not find much learning, therefore take care not to brandish yours in their faces. People hate those who make them feel their own inferiority. Conceal all your learning carefully, and reserve it for the company of les Gens d'Eglise, or les Gens de Robe; and even then let them rather extort it from you, than find you over-willing to draw it. Your are then thought, from that seeming unwillingness, to have still more knowledge than it may be you really have, and with the additional merit of modesty into the bargain. A man who talks of, or even hints at, his 'bonnes fortunes', is seldom believed, or, if believed, much blamed; whereas a man who conceals with care is often supposed to have more than he has, and his reputation of discretion gets him others. It is just so with a man of learning; if he affects to show it, it is questioned, and he is reckoned only superficial; but if afterward it appears that he really has it, he is pronounced a pedant. Real merit of any kind, 'ubi est non potest diu celari'; it will be discovered, and nothing can depreciate it but a man's exhibiting it himself. It may not always be rewarded as it ought, but it will always be known. You will in general find the women of the beau monde at Paris more instructed than the men, who are bred up singly for the army, and thrown into it at twelve or thirteen years old; but then that sort of education, which makes them ignorant of books, gives them a great knowledge of the world, an easy address, and polite manners.

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Fashion is more tyrannical at Paris than in any other place in the world; it governs even more absolutely than their king, which is saying a great deal. The least revolt against it is punished by proscription. You must observe, and conform to all the 'minutiae' of it, if you will be in fashion there yourself; and if you are not in fashion, you are nobody. Get, therefore, at all events, into the company of those men and women 'qui donnent le ton'; and though at first you should be admitted upon that shining theatre only as a 'persona muta', persist, persevere, and you will soon have a part given you. Take great care never to tell in one company what you see or hear in another, much less to divert the present company at the expense of the last; but let discretion and secrecy be known parts of your character. They will carry you much further, and much safer than more shining talents. Be upon your guard against quarrels at Paris; honor is extremely nice there, though the asserting of it is exceedingly penal. Therefore, 'point de mauvaises plaisanteries, point de jeux de main, et point de raillerie piquante'.

Paris is the place in the world where, if you please, you may the best unite the 'utile' and the 'dulce'. Even your pleasures will be your improvements, if you take them with the people of the place, and in high life. From what you have hitherto done everywhere else, I have just reason to believe, that you will do everything that you ought at Paris. Remember that it is your decisive moment; whatever you do there will be known to thousands here, and your character there, whatever it is, will get before you here. You will meet with it at London. May you and I both have reason to rejoice at that meeting! Adieu.

LETTER CXII

London, May 8, O. S. 1750

My dear friend: At your age the love of pleasures is extremely natural, and the enjoyment of them not unbecoming: but the danger, at your age, is mistaking the object, and setting out wrong in the pursuit. The character of a man of pleasure dazzles young eyes; they do not see their way to it distinctly, and fall into vice and profligacy. I remember a strong instance of this a great many years ago. A young fellow, determined to shine as a man of pleasure, was at the play called the "Libertine Destroyed," a translation of 'Le Festin de Pierre' of Moliere's. He was so struck with what he thought the fine character of the libertine, that he swore he would be the *libertine destroyed*. Some friends asked him, whether he had not better content himself with being only the libertine, but without being *destroyed*? to which he answered with great warmth, "No, for that being destroyed was the perfection of the whole." This, extravagant as it seems in this light, is really the case of many an unfortunate young fellow, who, captivated by the name of pleasures, rushes indiscriminately,

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and without taste, into them all, and is finally *destroyed*. I am not stoically advising, nor parsonically preaching to you to be a Stoic at your age; far from it: I am pointing out to you the paths to pleasures, and am endeavoring only to quicken and heighten them for you. Enjoy pleasures, but let them be your own, and then you will taste them; but adopt none; trust to nature for genuine ones. The pleasures that you would feel you must earn; the man who gives himself up to all, feels none sensibly. Sardanapalus, I am convinced, never felt any in his life. Those only who join serious occupations with pleasures, feel either as they should do. Alcibiades, though addicted to the most shameful excesses, gave some time to philosophy, and some to business. Julius Caesar joined business with pleasure so properly, that they mutually assisted each other; and though he was the husband of all the wives at Rome, he found time to be one of the best scholars, almost the best orator, and absolutely the best general there. An uninterrupted life of pleasures is as insipid as contemptible. Some hours given every day to serious business must whet both the mind and the senses, to enjoy those of pleasure. A surfeited glutton, an emaciated sot, and an enervated rotten whoremaster, never enjoy the pleasures to which they devote themselves; but they are only so many human sacrifices to false gods. The pleasures of low life are all of this mistaken, merely sensual, and disgraceful nature; whereas, those of high life, and in good company (though possibly in themselves not more moral) are more delicate, more refined, less dangerous, and less disgraceful; and, in the common course of things, not reckoned disgraceful at all. In short, pleasure must not, nay, cannot, be the business of a man of sense and character; but it may be, and is, his relief, his reward. It is particularly so with regard to the women; who have the utmost contempt for those men, that, having no character nor consideration with their own sex, frivolously pass their whole time in 'ruelles' and at 'toilettes'. They look upon them as their lumber, and remove them whenever they can get better furniture. Women choose their favorites more by the ear than by any other of their senses or even their understandings. The man whom they hear the most commended by the men, will always be the best received by them. Such a conquest flatters their vanity, and vanity is their universal, if not their strongest passion. A distinguished shining character is irresistible with them; they crowd to, nay, they even quarrel for the danger in hopes of the triumph. Though, by the way (to use a vulgar expression), she who conquers only catches a Tartar, and becomes the slave of her captive. 'Mais c'est la leur affaire'. Divide your time between useful occupations and elegant pleasures. The morning seems to belong to study, business, or serious conversations with men of learning and figure; not that I exclude an occasional hour

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at a toilette. From sitting down to dinner, the proper business of the day is pleasure, unless real business, which must never be postponed for pleasure, happens accidentally to interfere. In good company, the pleasures of the table are always carried to a certain point of delicacy and gratification, but never to excess and riot. Plays, operas, balls, suppers, gay conversations in polite and cheerful companies, properly conclude the evenings; not to mention the tender looks that you may direct and the sighs that you may offer, upon these several occasions, to some propitious or unpropitious female deity, whose character and manners will neither disgrace nor corrupt yours. This is the life of a man of real sense and pleasure; and by this distribution of your time, and choice of your pleasures, you will be equally qualified for the busy, or the 'beau monde'. You see I am not rigid, and do not require that you and I should be of the same age. What I say to you, therefore, should have the more weight, as coming from a friend, not a father. But low company, and their low vices, their indecent riots and profligacy, I never will bear nor forgive.

I have lately received two volumes of treatises, in German and Latin, from Hawkins, with your orders, under your own hand, to take care of them for you, which orders I shall most dutifully and punctually obey, and they wait for you in my library, together with your great collection of rare books, which your Mamma sent me upon removing from her old house.

I hope you not only keep up, but improve in your German, for it will be of great use to you when you come into business; and the more so, as you will be almost the only Englishman who either can speak or understand it. Pray speak it constantly to all Germans, wherever you meet them, and you will meet multitudes of them at Paris. Is Italian now become easy and familiar to you? Can you speak it with the same fluency that you can speak German? You cannot conceive what an advantage it will give you in negotiations to possess Italian, German, and French perfectly, so as to understand all the force and finesse of those three languages. If two men of equal talents negotiate together, he who best understands the language in which the negotiation is carried on, will infallibly get the better of the other. The signification and force of one single word is often of great consequence in a treaty, and even in a letter.

Remember the *graces*, for without them 'ogni fatica e vana'. Adieu.

LETTER CXIII

London, May 17, O. S. 1750

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My dear friend: Your apprenticeship is near out, and you are soon to set up for yourself; that approaching moment is a critical one for you, and an anxious one for me. A tradesman who would succeed in his way, must begin by establishing a character of integrity and good manners; without the former, nobody will go to his shop at all; without the latter, nobody will go there twice. This rule does not exclude the fair arts of trade. He may sell his goods at the best price he can, within certain bounds. He may avail himself of the humor, the whims, and the fantastical tastes of his customers; but what he warrants to be good must be really so, what he seriously asserts must be true, or his first fraudulent profits will soon end in a bankruptcy. It is the same in higher life, and in the great business of the world. A man who does not solidly establish, and really deserve, a character of truth, probity, good manners, and good morals, at his first setting out in the world, may impose, and shine like a meteor for a very short time, but will very soon vanish, and be extinguished with contempt. People easily pardon, in young men, the common irregularities of the senses: but they do not forgive the least vice of the heart. The heart never grows better by age; I fear rather worse; always harder. A young liar will be an old one; and a young knave will only be a greater knave as he grows older. But should a bad young heart, accompanied with a good head (which, by the way, very seldom is the case), really reform in a more advanced age, from a consciousness of its folly, as well as of its guilt; such a conversion would only be thought prudential and political, but never sincere. I hope in God, and I verily believe, that you want no moral virtue. But the possession of all the moral virtues, in ‘actu primo’, as the logicians call it, is not sufficient; you must have them in ‘actu secundo’ too; nay, that is not sufficient neither—you must have the reputation of them also. Your character in the world must be built upon that solid foundation, or it will soon fall, and upon your own head. You cannot, therefore, be too careful, too nice, too scrupulous, in establishing this character at first, upon which your whole depends. Let no conversation, no example, no fashion, no ‘bon mot’, no silly desire of seeming to be above, what most knaves, and many fools, call prejudices, ever tempt you to avow, excuse, extenuate, or laugh at the least breach of morality; but show upon all occasions, and take all occasions to show, a detestation and abhorrence of it. There, though young, you ought to be strict; and there only, while young, it becomes you to be strict and severe. But there, too, spare the persons while you lash the crimes. All this relates, as you easily judge, to the vices of the heart, such as lying, fraud, envy, malice, detraction, etc., and I do not extend it to the little frailties of youth, flowing from high spirits and warm blood. It would ill become you, at your age, to declaim against them, and sententiously censure a gallantry, an accidental excess of the table, a frolic, an inadvertency; no, keep as free from them yourself as you can: but say nothing against them in others. They certainly mend by time, often by reason; and a man’s worldly character is not affected by them, provided it be pure in all other respects.

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To come now to a point of much less, but yet of very great consequence at your first setting out. Be extremely upon your guard against vanity, the common failing of inexperienced youth; but particularly against that kind of vanity that dubs a man a coxcomb; a character which, once acquired, is more indelible than that of the priesthood. It is not to be imagined by how many different ways vanity defeats its own purposes. One man decides peremptorily upon every subject, betrays his ignorance upon many, and shows a disgusting presumption upon the rest. Another desires to appear successful among the women; he hints at the encouragement he has received, from those of the most distinguished rank and beauty, and intimates a particular connection with some one; if it is true, it is ungenerous; if false, it is infamous: but in either case he destroys the reputation he wants to get. Some flatter their vanity by little extraneous objects, which have not the least relation to themselves; such as being descended from, related to, or acquainted with, people of distinguished merit and eminent characters. They talk perpetually of their grandfather such-a-one, their uncle such-a-one, and their intimate friend Mr. Such-a-one, with whom, possibly, they are hardly acquainted. But admitting it all to be as they would have it, what then? Have they the more merit for those accidents? Certainly not. On the contrary, their taking up adventitious, proves their want of intrinsic merit; a rich man never borrows. Take this rule for granted, as a never-failing one: That you must never seem to affect the character in which you have a mind to shine. Modesty is the only sure bait when you angle for praise. The affectation of courage will make even a brave man pass only for a bully; as the affectation of wit will make a man of parts pass for a coxcomb. By this modesty I do not mean timidity and awkward bashfulness. On the contrary, be inwardly firm and steady, know your own value whatever it may be, and act upon that principle; but take great care to let nobody discover that you do know your own value. Whatever real merit you have, other people will discover, and people always magnify their own discoveries, as they lessen those of others.

For God's sake, revolve all these things seriously in your thoughts, before you launch out alone into the ocean of Paris. Recollect the observations that you have yourself made upon mankind, compare and connect them with my instructions, and then act systematically and consequentially from them; not 'au jour la journee'. Lay your little plan now, which you will hereafter extend and improve by your own observations, and by the advice of those who can never mean to mislead you; I mean Mr. Harte and myself.

LETTER CXIV

London, May 24., O. S. 1750

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My dear friend: I received yesterday your letter of the 7th, N. S., from Naples, to which place I find you have traveled, classically, critically, and 'da virtuoso'. You did right, for whatever is worth seeing at, all, is worth seeing well, and better than most people see it. It is a poor and frivolous excuse, when anything curious is talked of that one has seen, to say, I *saw it, but really I did not much mind it*. Why did they go to see it, if they would not mind it? or why not mind it when they saw it? Now that you are at Naples, you pass part of your time there 'en honnete homme, da garbato cavaliere', in the court and the best companies. I am told that strangers are received with the utmost hospitality at Prince-----'s, 'que lui il fait bonne chere, et que Madame la Princesse donne chere entiere; mais que sa chair est plus que hazardee ou mortifiee meme'; which in plain English means, that she is not only tender, but rotten. If this be true, as I am pretty sure it is, one may say to her in a little sense, 'juvenumque prodis, publics cura'.

Mr. Harte informs me that you are clothed in sumptuous apparel; a young fellow should be so; especially abroad, where fine clothes are so generally the fashion. Next to their being fine, they should be well made, and worn easily for a man is only the less genteel for a fine coat, if, in wearing it, he shows a regard for it, and is not as easy in it as if it were a plain one.

I thank you for your drawing, which I am impatient to see, and which I shall hang up in a new gallery that I am building at Blackheath, and very fond of; but I am still more impatient for another copy, which I wonder I have not yet received, I mean the copy of your countenance. I believe, were that a whole length, it would still fall a good deal short of the dimensions of the drawing after Dominichino, which you say is about eight feet high; and I take you, as well as myself, to be of the family of the Piccolomini. Mr. Bathurst tells me that he thinks you rather taller than I am; if so, you may very possibly get up to five feet eight inches, which I would compound for, though I would wish you five feet ten. In truth, what do I not wish you, that has a tendency to perfection? I say a tendency only, for absolute perfection is not in human nature, so that it would be idle to wish it. But I am very willing to compound for your coming nearer to perfection than the generality of your contemporaries: without a compliment to you, I think you bid fair for that. Mr. Harte affirms (and if it were consistent with his character would, I believe, swear) that you have no vices of the heart; you have undoubtedly a stock of both ancient and modern learning, which I will venture to say nobody of your age has, and which must now daily increase, do what you will. What, then, do you want toward that practicable degree of perfection which I wish

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you? Nothing but the knowledge, the turn, and the manners of the world; I mean the 'beau monde'. These it is impossible that you can yet have quite right; they are not given, they must be learned. But then, on the other hand, it is impossible not to acquire them, if one has a mind to them; for they are acquired insensibly, by keeping good company, if one has but the least attention to their characters and manners.

Every man becomes, to a certain degree, what the people he generally converses with are. He catches their air, their manners, and even their way of thinking. If he observes with attention, he will catch them soon, but if he does not, he will at long run contract them insensibly. I know nothing in the world but poetry that is not to be acquired by application and care. The sum total of this is a very comfortable one for you, as it plainly amounts to this in your favor, that you now want nothing but what even your pleasures, if they are liberal ones, will teach you. I congratulate both you and myself upon your being in such a situation, that, excepting your exercises, nothing is now wanting but pleasures to complete you. Take them, but (as I am sure you will) with people of the first fashion, wherever you are, and the business is done; your exercises at Paris, which I am sure you will attend to, will supple and fashion your body; and the company you will keep there will, with some degree of observation on your part, soon give you their air, address, manners, in short, 'le ton de la bonne compagnie'. Let not these considerations, however, make you vain: they are only between you and me but as they are very comfortable ones, they may justly give you a manly assurance, a firmness, a steadiness, without which a man can neither be well-bred, or in any light appear to advantage, or really what he is. They may justly remove all, timidity, awkward bashfulness, low diffidence of one's self, and mean abject complaisance to every or anybody's opinion. La Bruyere says, very truly, 'on ne vaut dans ce monde, que ce que l'on veut valoir'. It is a right principle to proceed upon in the world, taking care only to guard against the appearances and outward symptoms of vanity. Your whole then, you see, turns upon the company you keep for the future. I have laid you in variety of the best at Paris, where, at your arrival you will find a cargo of letters to very different sorts of people, as 'beaux esprits, savants, et belles dames'. These, if you will frequent them, will form you, not only by their examples, advice, and admonitions in private, as I have desired them to do; and consequently add to what you have the only one thing now needful.

Pray tell me what Italian books you have read, and whether that language is now become familiar to you.

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Read Ariosto and Tasso through, and then you will have read all the Italian poets who in my opinion are worth reading. In all events, when you get to Paris, take a good Italian master to read Italian with you three times a week; not only to keep what you have already, which you would otherwise forget, but also to perfect you in the rest. It is a great pleasure, as well as a great advantage, to be able to speak to people of all nations, and well, in their own language. Aim at perfection in everything, though in most things it is unattainable; however, they who aim at it, and persevere, will come much nearer it, than those whose laziness and despondency make them give it up as unattainable. 'Magnis tamen excidit ausis' is a degree of praise which will always attend a noble and shining temerity, and a much better sign in a young fellow, than 'serpere humi, tutus nimium timidusque procellae'. For men as well as women:

“-----born to be controlled,
Stoop to the forward and the bold.”

A man who sets out in the world with real timidity and diffidence has not an equal chance for it; he will be discouraged, put by, or trampled upon. But to succeed, a man, especially a young one, should have inward firmness, steadiness, and intrepidity, with exterior modesty and *seeming* diffidence. He must modestly, but resolutely, assert his own rights and privileges. 'Suaviter in modo', but 'fortiter in re'. He should have an apparent frankness and openness, but with inward caution and closeness. All these things will come to you by frequenting and observing good company. And by good company, I mean that sort of company which is called good company by everybody of that place. When all this is over, we shall meet; and then we will talk over, *tete-a-tete*, the various little finishing strokes which conversation and, acquaintance occasionally suggest, and which cannot be methodically written.

Tell Mr. Harte that I have received his two letters of the 2d and 8th N. S., which, as soon as I have received a third, I will answer. Adieu, my dear! I find you will do.

LETTER CXV

London, June 5, O. S. 1750

My dear friend: I have received your picture, which I have long waited for with impatience: I wanted to see your countenance from whence I am very apt, as I believe most people are, to form some general opinion of the mind. If the painter has taken you as well as he has done Mr. Harte (for his picture is by far the most like I ever saw in my life), I draw good conclusions from your countenance, which has both spirit and finesse in it. In bulk you are pretty well increased since I saw you; if your height has not increased in proportion, I desire that you will make haste to, complete it. Seriously, I

believe that your exercises at Paris will make you shoot up to a good size; your legs, by all accounts, seem to promise it. Dancing excepted, the wholesome part is the best part of those academical exercises. 'Ils degraissent leur homme'.

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'A propos' of exercises, I have prepared everything for your reception at Monsieur de la Gueriniere's, and your room, *etc.*, will be ready at your arrival. I am sure you must be sensible how much better it will be for you to be interne in the Academy for the first six or seven months at least, than to be 'en hotel garni', at some distance from it, and obliged to go to it every morning, let the weather be what it will, not to mention the loss of time too; besides, by living and boarding in the Academy, you will make an acquaintance with half the young fellows of fashion at Paris; and in a very little while be looked upon as one of them in all French companies: an advantage that has never yet happened to any one Englishman that I have known. I am sure you do not suppose that the difference of the expense, which is but a trifle, has any weight with me in this resolution. You have the French language so perfectly, and you will acquire the French 'tournure' so soon, that I do not know anybody likely to pass their time so well at Paris as yourself. Our young countrymen have generally too little French, and too bad address, either to present themselves, or be well received in the best French companies; and, as a proof of it, there is no one instance of an Englishman's having ever been suspected of a gallantry with a French woman of condition, though every French woman of condition is more than suspected of having a gallantry. But they take up with the disgraceful and dangerous commerce of prostitutes, actresses, dancing-women, and that sort of trash; though, if they had common address, better achievements would be extremely easy. 'Un arrangement', which is in plain English a gallantry, is, at Paris, as necessary a part of a woman of fashion's establishment, as her house, stable, coach, *etc.* A young fellow must therefore be a very awkward one, to be reduced to, or of a very singular taste, to prefer drabs and danger to a commerce (in the course of the world not disgraceful) with a woman of health, education, and rank. Nothing sinks a young man into low company, both of women and men, so surely as timidity and diffidence of himself. If he thinks that he shall not, he may depend upon it he will not please. But with proper endeavors to please, and a degree of persuasion that he shall, it is almost certain that he will. How many people does one meet with everywhere, who, with very moderate parts, and very little knowledge, push themselves pretty far, simply by being sanguine, enterprising, and persevering? They will take no denial from man or woman; difficulties do not discourage them; repulsed twice or thrice, they rally, they charge again, and nine times in ten prevail at last. The same means will much sooner, and, more certainly, attain the same ends, with your parts and knowledge. You have a fund to be sanguine upon, and good forces to rally. In business (talents supposed) nothing is more effectual or successful, than a good, though

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concealed opinion of one's self, a firm resolution, and an unwearied perseverance. None but madmen attempt impossibilities; and whatever is possible, is one way or another to be brought about. If one method fails, try another, and suit your methods to the characters you have to do with. At the treaty of the Pyrenees, which Cardinal Mazarin and Don Louis de Haro concluded, 'dans l'Isle des Faisans', the latter carried some very important points by his constant and cool perseverance.

The Cardinal had all the Italian vivacity and impatience; Don Louis all the Spanish phlegm and tenaciousness. The point which the Cardinal had most at heart was, to hinder the re-establishment of the Prince of Conde, his implacable enemy; but he was in haste to conclude, and impatient to return to Court, where absence is always dangerous. Don Louis observed this, and never failed at every conference to bring the affair of the Prince of Conde upon the tapis. The Cardinal for some time refused even to treat upon it. Don Louis, with the same 'sang froid', as constantly persisted, till he at last prevailed: contrary to the intentions and the interest both of the Cardinal and of his Court. Sense must distinguish between what is impossible, and what is only difficult; and spirit and perseverance will get the better of the latter. Every man is to be had one way or another, and every woman almost any way. I must not omit one thing, which is previously necessary to this, and, indeed, to everything else; which is attention, a flexibility of attention; never to be wholly engrossed by any past or future object, but instantly directed to the present one, be it what it will. An absent man can make but few observations; and those will be disjointed and imperfect ones, as half the circumstance must necessarily escape him. He can pursue nothing steadily, because his absences make him lose his way. They are very disagreeable, and hardly to be tolerated in old age; but in youth they cannot be forgiven. If you find that you have the least tendency to them, pray watch yourself very carefully, and you may prevent them now; but if you let them grow into habit, you will find it very difficult to cure them hereafter, and a worse distemper I do not know.

I heard with great satisfaction the other day, from one who has been lately at Rome, that nobody was better received in the best companies than yourself. The same thing, I dare say, will happen to you at Paris; where they are particularly kind to all strangers, who will be civil to them, and show a desire of pleasing. But they must be flattered a little, not only by words, but by a seeming preference given to their country, their manners, and their customs; which is but a very small price to pay for a very good reception. Were I in Africa, I would pay it to a negro for his goodwill. Adieu.

LETTER CXVI

London, June 11, O. S. 1750

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My dear friend: The President Montesquieu (whom you will be acquainted with at Paris), after having laid down in his book, 'De l'Esprit des Lois', the nature and principles of the three different kinds of government, viz, the democratical, the monarchical, and the despotic, treats of the education necessary for each respective form. His chapter upon the education proper for the monarchical I thought worth transcribing and sending to you. You will observe that the monarchy which he has in his eye is France:—

“In monarchies, the principal branch of education is not taught in colleges or academies. It commences, in some measure, at our setting out in the world; for this is the school of what we call honor, that universal preceptor, which ought everywhere to be our guide.

“Here it is that we constantly hear three rules or maxims, viz: That we should have a certain nobleness in our virtues, a kind of frankness in our morals, and a particular politeness in our behavior.

“The virtues we are here taught, are less what we owe to others, than to ourselves; they are not so much what draws us toward society, as what distinguishes us from our fellow-citizens.

“Here the actions of men are judged, not as virtuous, but as shining; not as just, but as great; not as reasonable, but as extraordinary.

“When honor here meets with anything noble in our actions, it is either a judge that approves them, or a sophister by whom they are excused.

“It allows of gallantry, when united with the idea of sensible affection, or with that of conquest; this is the reason why we never meet with so strict a purity of morals in monarchies as in republican governments.

“It allows of cunning and craft, when joined with the notion of greatness of soul or importance of affairs; as, for instance, in politics, with whose finenesses it is far from being offended.

“It does not forbid adulation, but when separate from the idea of a large fortune, and connected only with the sense of our mean condition.

“With regard to morals, I have observed, that the education of monarchies ought to admit of a certain frankness and open carriage. Truth, therefore, in conversation, is here a necessary point. But is it for the sake of truth. By no means. Truth is requisite only, because a person habituated to veracity has an air of boldness and freedom. And, indeed, a man of this stamp seems to lay a stress only on the things themselves, not on the manner in which they are received.

“Hence it is, that in proportion as this kind of frankness is commended, that of the common people is despised, which has nothing but truth and simplicity for its object.

“In fine, the education of monarchies requires a certain politeness of behavior. Man, a sociable animal, is formed to please in society; and a person that would break through the rules of decency, so as to shock those he conversed with, would lose the public esteem, and become incapable of doing any good.

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"But politeness, generally speaking, does not derive its original from so pure a source. It arises from a desire of distinguishing ourselves. It is pride that renders us polite; we are flattered with being taken notice of for a behavior that shows we are not of a mean condition, and that we have not been bred up with those who in all ages are considered as the scum of the people.

"Politeness, in monarchies, is naturalized at court. One man excessively great renders everybody else little. Hence that regard which is paid to our fellow-subjects; hence that politeness, equally pleasing to those by whom, as to those toward whom, it is practiced; because it gives people to understand that a person actually belongs, or at least deserves to belong, to the court.

"A court air consists in quitting a real for a borrowed greatness. The latter pleases the courtier more than the former. It inspires him with a certain disdainful modesty, which shows itself externally, but whose pride insensibly diminishes in proportion to his distance from the source of this greatness.

"At court we find a delicacy of taste in everything; a delicacy arising from the constant use of the superfluities of life; from the variety, and especially the satiety of pleasures; from the multiplicity and even confusion of fancies, which, if they are not agreeable, are sure of being well received.

"These are the things which properly fall within the province of education, in order to form what we call a man of honor, a man possessed of all the qualities and virtues requisite in this kind of government.

"Here it is that honor interferes with everything, mixing even with people's manner of thinking, and directing their very principles.

"To this whimsical honor it is owing that the virtues are only just what it pleases; it adds rules of its own invention to everything prescribed to us; it extends or limits our duties according to its own fancy, whether they proceed from religion, politics, or morality.

"There is nothing so strongly inculcated in monarchies, by the laws, by religion, and honor, as submission to the Prince's will, but this very honor tells us, that the Prince never ought to command a dishonorable action, because this would render us incapable of serving him.

"Crillon refused to assassinate the Duke of Guise, but offered to fight him. After the massacre of St. Bartholomew, Charles IX., having sent orders to the governors in the several provinces for the Huguenots to be murdered, Viscount Dorte, who commanded at Bayonne, wrote thus to the King: 'Sire, Among the inhabitants of this town, and your Majesty's troops, I could not find so much as one executioner; they are honest citizens and brave soldiers. We jointly, therefore, beseech your Majesty to command our arms

and lives in things that are practicable.' This great and generous soul looked upon a base action as a thing impossible.

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“There is nothing that honor more strongly recommends to the nobility, than to serve their Prince in a military capacity. And indeed this is their favorite profession, because its dangers, its success, and even its miscarriages, are the road to grandeur. Yet this very law, of its own making, honor chooses to explain; and in case of any affront, it requires or permits us to retire.

“It insists also, that we should be at liberty either to seek or to reject employments; a liberty which it prefers even to an ample fortune.

“Honor, therefore, has its supreme laws, to which education is obliged to conform. The chief of these are, that we are permitted to set a value upon our fortune, but are absolutely forbidden to set any upon our lives.

“The second is, that when we are raised to a post or preferment, we should never do or permit anything which may seem to imply that we look upon ourselves as inferior to the rank we hold.

“The third is, that those things which honor forbids are more rigorously forbidden, when the laws do not concur in the prohibition; and those it commands are more strongly insisted upon, when they happen not to be commanded by law.”

Though our government differs considerably from the French, inasmuch as we have fixed laws and constitutional barriers for the security of our liberties and properties, yet the President's observations hold pretty near as true in England as in France. Though monarchies may differ a good deal, kings differ very little. Those who are absolute desire to continue so, and those who are not, endeavor to become so; hence the same maxims and manners almost in all courts: voluptuousness and profusion encouraged, the one to sink the people into indolence, the other into poverty—consequently into dependence. The court is called the world here as well as at Paris; and nothing more is meant by saying that a man knows the world, than that he knows courts. In all courts you must expect to meet with connections without friendship, enmities without hatred, honor without virtue, appearances saved, and realities sacrificed; good manners with bad morals; and all vice and virtues so disguised, that whoever has only reasoned upon both would know neither when he first met them at court. It is well that you should know the map of that country, that when you come to travel in it, you may do it with greater safety.

From all this you will of yourself draw this obvious conclusion: That you are in truth but now going to the great and important school, the world; to which Westminster and Leipsig were only the little preparatory schools, as Marylebone, Windsor, etc., are to them. What you have already acquired will only place you in the second form of this new school, instead of the first. But if you intend, as I suppose you do, to get into the shell, you have very different things to learn from Latin and Greek: and which require much more sagacity and attention than those

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two dead languages; the language of pure and simple nature; the language of nature variously modified and corrupted by passions, prejudices, and habits; the language of simulation and dissimulation: very hard, but very necessary to decipher. Homer has not half so many, nor so difficult dialects, as the great book of the school you are now going to. Observe, therefore, progressively, and with the greatest attention, what the best scholars in the form immediately above you do, and so on, until you get into the shell yourself. Adieu.

Pray tell Mr. Harte that I have received his letter of the 27th May, N. S., and that I advise him never to take the English newswriters literally, who never yet inserted any one thing quite right. I have both his patent and his mandamus, in both which he is Walter, let the newspapers call him what they please.

LETTER CXVII

London, July 9, O. S. 1750.

My dear friend: I should not deserve that appellation in return from you, if I did not freely and explicitly inform you of every corrigible defect which I may either hear of, suspect, or at any time discover in you. Those who, in the common course of the world, will call themselves your friends; or whom, according to the common notions of friendship, you may possibly think such, will never tell you of your faults, still less of your weaknesses. But, on the contrary, more desirous to make you their friend, than to prove themselves yours, they will flatter both, and, in truth, not be sorry for either. Interiorly, most people enjoy the inferiority of their best friends. The useful and essential part of friendship, to you, is reserved singly for Mr. Harte and myself: our relations to you stand pure and unsuspected of all private views. In whatever we say to you, we can have no interest but yours. We are therefore authorized to represent, advise, and remonstrate; and your reason must tell you that you ought to attend to and believe us.

I am credibly informed, that there is still a considerable hitch or hobble in your enunciation; and that when you speak fast you sometimes speak unintelligibly. I have formerly and frequently laid my thoughts before you so fully upon this subject, that I can say nothing new upon it now. I must therefore only repeat, that your whole depends upon it. Your trade is to speak well, both in public and in private. The manner of your speaking is full as important as the matter, as more people have ears to be tickled, than understandings to judge. Be your productions ever so good, they will be of no use, if you stifle and strangle them in their birth. The best compositions of Corelli, if ill executed and played out of tune, instead of touching, as they do when well performed, would only excite the indignation of the hearer's, when murdered by an unskillful performer. But to murder your own productions, and that 'coram

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Populo', is a MEDEAN *cruelty*, which Horace absolutely forbids. Remember of what importance Demosthenes, and one of the Gracchi, thought *enunciation*; and read what stress Cicero and Quintilian lay upon it; even the herb-women at Athens were correct judges of it. Oratory, with all its graces, that of enunciation in particular, is full as necessary in our government as it ever was in Greece or Rome. No man can make a fortune or a figure in this country, without speaking, and speaking well in public. If you will persuade, you must first please; and if you will please, you must tune your voice to harmony, you must articulate every syllable distinctly, your emphasis and cadences must be strongly and properly marked; and the whole together must be graceful and engaging: If you do not speak in that manner, you had much better not speak at all. All the learning you have, or ever can have, is not worth one groat without it. It may be a comfort and an amusement to you in your closet, but can be of no use to you in the world. Let me conjure you, therefore, to make this your only object, till you have absolutely conquered it, for that is in your power; think of nothing else, read and speak for nothing else. Read aloud, though alone, and read articulately and distinctly, as if you were reading in public, and on the most important occasion. Recite pieces of eloquence, declaim scenes of tragedies to Mr. Harte, as if he were a numerous audience. If there is any particular consonant which you have a difficulty in articulating, as I think you had with the R, utter it millions and millions of times, till you have uttered it right. Never speak quick, till you have first learned to speak well. In short, lay aside every book, and every thought, that does not directly tend to this great object, absolutely decisive of your future fortune and figure.

The next thing necessary in your destination, is writing correctly, elegantly, and in a good hand too; in which three particulars, I am sorry to tell you, that you hitherto fail. Your handwriting is a very bad one, and would make a scurvy figure in an office-book of letters, or even in a lady's pocket-book. But that fault is easily cured by care, since every man, who has the use of his eyes and of his right hand, can write whatever hand he pleases. As to the correctness and elegance of your writing, attention to grammar does the one, and to the best authors the other. In your letter to me of the 27th June, N. S., you omitted the date of the place, so that I only conjectured from the contents that you were at Rome.

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Thus I have, with the truth and freedom of the tenderest affection, told you all your defects, at least all that I know or have heard of. Thank God, they are all very curable; they must be cured, and I am sure, you will cure them. That once done, nothing remains for you to acquire, or for me to wish you, but the turn, the manners, the address, and the *graces*, of the polite world; which experience, observation, and good company; will insensibly give you. Few people at your age have read, seen, and known, so much as you have; and consequently few are so near as yourself to what I call perfection, by which I only, mean being very near as well as the best. Far, therefore, from being discouraged by what you still want, what you already have should encourage you to attempt, and convince you that by attempting you will inevitably obtain it. The difficulties which you have surmounted were much greater than any you have now to encounter. Till very lately, your way has been only through thorns and briars; the few that now remain are mixed with roses. Pleasure is now the principal remaining part of your education. It will soften and polish your manners; it will make you pursue and at last overtake the *graces*. Pleasure is necessarily reciprocal; no one feels, who does not at the same time give it. To be pleased one must please. What pleases you in others, will in general please them in you. Paris is indisputably the seat of the *graces*; they will even court you, if you are not too coy. Frequent and observe the best companies there, and you will soon be naturalized among them; you will soon find how particularly attentive they are to the correctness and elegance of their language, and to the *graces* of their enunciation: they would even call the understanding of a man in question, who should neglect or not know the infinite advantages arising from them. 'Narrer, reciter, declamer bien', are serious studies among them, and well deserve to be so everywhere. The conversations, even among the women, frequently turn upon the elegancies and minutest delicacies of the French language. An 'enjouement', a gallant turn, prevails in all their companies, to women, with whom they neither are, nor pretend to be, in love; but should you (as may very possibly happen) fall really in love there with some woman of fashion and sense (for I do not suppose you capable of falling in love with a strumpet), and that your rival, without half your parts or knowledge, should get the better of you, merely by dint of manners, 'enjouement, badinage', etc., how would you regret not having sufficiently attended to those accomplishments which you despised as superficial and trifling, but which you would then find of real consequence in the course of the world! And men, as well as women, are taken by those external *graces*. Shut up your books, then, now as a business, and open them only as a pleasure; but let the great book of the world be your serious study; read it over and over, get it by heart, adopt its style, and make it your own.

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When I cast up your account as it now stands, I rejoice to see the balance so much in your favor; and that the items per contra are so few, and of such a nature, that they may be very easily cancelled. By way of debtor and creditor, it stands thus:

Creditor. By French Debtor. To English

German Enunciation

Italian Manners

Latin

Greek

Logic

Ethics

History

|Naturae

Jus |Gentium

|Publicum

This, my dear friend, is a very true account; and a very encouraging one for you. A man who owes so little can clear it off in a very little time, and, if he is a prudent man, will; whereas a man who, by long negligence, owes a great deal, despairs of ever being able to pay; and therefore never looks into his account at all.

When you go to Genoa, pray observe carefully all the environs of it, and view them with somebody who can tell you all the situations and operations of the Austrian army, during that famous siege, if it deserves to be called one; for in reality the town never was besieged, nor had the Austrians any one thing necessary for a siege. If Marquis Centurioni, who was last winter in England, should happen to be there, go to him with my compliments, and he will show you all imaginable civilities.

I could have sent you some letters to Florence, but that I knew Mr. Mann would be of more use to you than all of them. Pray make him my compliments. Cultivate your Italian, while you are at Florence, where it is spoken in its utmost purity, but ill pronounced.

Pray save me the seed of some of the best melons you eat, and put it up dry in paper. You need not send it me; but Mr. Harte will bring it in his pocket when he comes over. I should likewise be glad of some cuttings of the best figs, especially la Pica gentile and the Maltese; but as this is not the season for them, Mr. Mann will, I dare say, undertake that commission, and send them to me at the proper time by Leghorn. Adieu. Endeavor to please others, and divert yourself as much as ever you can, in 'honnete et galant homme'.

P. S. I send you the inclosed to deliver to Lord Rochford, upon your arrival at Turin.

LETTER CXVIII.

London, August 6, O. S. 1750

My dear friend: Since your letter from Sienna, which gave me a very imperfect account both of your illness and your recovery, I have not received one word either from you or Mr. Harte. I impute this to the carelessness of the post simply: and the great distance between us at present exposes our letters to those accidents. But when you come to Paris, from whence the letters arrive here very regularly, I shall insist upon you writing to me constantly once a week; and that upon the same day, for instance, every Thursday, that I may know by what mail to expect

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your letter. I shall also require you to be more minute in your account of yourself than you have hitherto been, or than I have required, because of the informations which I receive from time to time from Mr. Harte. At Paris you will be out of your time, and must set up for yourself; it is then that I shall be very solicitous to know how you carry on your business. While Mr. Harte was your partner, the care was his share, and the profit yours. But at Paris, if you will have the latter, you must take the former along with it. It will be quite a new world to you; very different from the little world that you have hitherto seen; and you will have much more to do in it. You must keep your little accounts constantly every morning, if you would not have them run into confusion, and swell to a bulk that would frighten you from ever looking into them at all. You must allow some time for learning what you do not know, and some for keeping what you do know; and you must leave a great deal of time for your pleasures; which (I repeat it, again) are now become the most necessary part of your education. It is by conversations, dinners, suppers, entertainments, *etc.*, in the best companies, that you must be formed for the world. 'Les manieres les agrements, les graces' cannot be learned by theory; they are only to be got by use among those who have them; and they are now the main object of your life, as they are the necessary steps to your fortune. A man of the best parts, and the greatest learning, if he does not know the world by his own experience and observation, will be very absurd; and consequently very unwelcome in company. He may say very good things; but they will probably be so ill-timed, misplaced, or improperly addressed, that he had much better hold his tongue. Full of his own matter, and uninformed of; or inattentive to, the particular circumstances and situations of the company, he vents it indiscriminately; he puts some people out of countenance; he shocks others; and frightens all, who dread what may come out next. The most general rule that I can give you for the world, and which your experience will convince you of the truth of, is, Never to give the tone to the company, but to take it from them; and to labor more to put them in conceit with themselves, than to make them admire you. Those whom you can make like themselves better, will, I promise you, like you very well.

A system-monger, who, without knowing anything of the world by experience, has formed a system, of it in his dusty cell, lays it down, for example, that (from the general nature of mankind) flattery is pleasing. He will therefore flatter. But how? Why, indiscriminately. And instead of repairing and heightening the piece judiciously, with soft colors and a delicate pencil,—with a coarse brush and a great deal of whitewash, he daubs and besmears the piece he means to adorn. His flattery offends even his patron; and is almost too gross for his mistress. A man of the world knows the force of flattery as well as he does; but then he knows how, when, and where to give it; he proportions his dose to the constitution of the patient. He flatters by application, by inference, by comparison, by hint, and seldom directly. In the course of the world, there is the same difference in everything between system and practice.

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I long to have you at Paris, which is to be your great school; you will be then in a manner within reach of me.

Tell me, are you perfectly recovered, or do you still find any remaining complaint upon your lungs? Your diet should be cooling, and at the same time nourishing. Milks of all kinds are proper for you; wines of all kinds bad. A great deal of gentle, and no violent exercise, is good for you. Adieu. 'Gratia, fama, et valetudo, contingat, abunde!'

LETTER CXIX

London, October 22, O. S. 1750

My dear friend: This letter will, I am persuaded, find you, and I hope safely, arrived at Montpellier; from whence I trust that Mr. Harte's indisposition will, by being totally removed, allow you to get to Paris before Christmas. You will there find two people who, though both English, I recommend in the strongest manner possible to your attention; and advise you to form the most intimate connections with them both, in their different ways. The one is a man whom you already know something of, but not near enough: it is the Earl of Huntingdon; who, next to you, is the truest object of my affection and esteem; and who (I am proud to say it) calls me, and considers me as his adopted father. His parts are as quick as his knowledge is extensive; and if quality were worth putting into an account, where every other item is so much more valuable, he is the first almost in this country: the figure he will make in it, soon after he returns to it, will, if I am not more mistaken than ever I was in my life, equal his birth and my hopes. Such a connection will be of infinite advantage to you; and, I can assure you, that he is extremely disposed to form it upon my account; and will, I hope and believe, desire to improve and cement it upon your own.

In our parliamentary government, connections are absolutely necessary; and, if prudently formed and ably maintained, the success of them is infallible. There are two sorts of connections, which I would always advise you to have in view. The first I will call equal ones; by which I mean those, where the two connecting parties reciprocally find their account, from pretty near an equal degree of parts and abilities. In those, there must be a freer communication; each must see that the other is able, and be convinced that he is willing to be of use to him. Honor must be the principle of such connections; and there must be a mutual dependence, that present and separate interest shall not be able to break them. There must be a joint system of action; and, in case of different opinions, each must recede a little, in order at last to form an unanimous one. Such, I hope, will be your connection with Lord Huntingdon. You will both come into parliament at the same time; and if you have an equal share of abilities and application, you and he, with other young people, with whom you will naturally associate, may form a band which will

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be respected by any administration, and make a figure in the public. The other sort of connections I call unequal ones; that is, where the parts are all on one side, and the rank and fortune on the other. Here, the advantage is all on one side; but that advantage must be ably and artfully concealed. Complaisance, an engaging manner, and a patient toleration of certain airs of superiority, must cement them. The weaker party must be taken by the heart, his head giving no hold; and he must be governed by being made to believe that he governs. These people, skillfully led, give great weight to their leader. I have formerly pointed out to you a couple that I take to be proper objects for your skill; and you will meet with twenty more, for they are very ripe.

The other person whom I recommended to you is a woman; not as a woman, for that is not immediately my business; besides, I fear that she is turned of fifty. It is Lady Hervey, whom I directed you to call upon at Dijon, but who, to my great joy, because to your great advantage, passes all this winter at Paris. She has been bred all her life at courts; of which she has acquired all the easy good-breeding and politeness, without the frivolousness. She has all the reading that a woman should have; and more than any woman need have; for she understands Latin perfectly well, though she wisely conceals it. As she will look upon you as her son, I desire that you will look upon her as my delegate: trust, consult, and apply to her without reserve. No woman ever had more than she has, 'le ton de la parfaitement bonne compagnie, les manieres engageantes, et le je ne sais quoi qui plait'. Desire her to reprove and correct any, and every, the least error and in-, accuracy in your manners, air, address, *etc.* No woman in Europe can do it so well; none will do it more willingly, or in a more proper and obliging manner. In such a case she will not put you out of countenance, by telling you of it in company; but either intimate it by some sign, or wait for an opportunity when you are alone together. She is also in the best French company, where she will not only introduce but *Puff* you, if I may use so low a word. And I can assure you that it is no little help, in the 'beau monde', to be puffed there by a fashionable woman. I send you the inclosed billet to carry her, only as a certificate of the identity of your person, which I take it for granted she could not know again.

You would be so much surprised to receive a whole letter from me without any mention of the exterior ornaments necessary for a gentleman, as manners, elocution, air, address, graces, *etc.*, that, to comply with your expectations, I will touch upon them; and tell you, that when you come to England, I will show you some people, whom I do not now care to name, raised to the highest stations singly by those exterior and adventitious ornaments, whose parts would never have entitled them to the smallest office in the excise.

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Are they then necessary, and worth acquiring, or not? You will see many instances of this kind at Paris, particularly a glaring one, of a person—[M. le Marechal de Richelieu]—raised to the highest posts and dignities in France, as well as to be absolute sovereign of the 'beau monde', simply by the graces of his person and address; by woman's chit-chat, accompanied with important gestures; by an imposing air and pleasing abord. Nay, by these helps, he even passes for a wit, though he hath certainly no uncommon share of it. I will not name him, because it would be very imprudent in you to do it. A young fellow, at his first entrance into the 'beau monde', must not offend the king 'de facto' there. It is very often more necessary to conceal contempt than resentment, the former forgiven, but the latter sometimes forgot.

There is a small quarto book entitled, 'Histoire Chronologique de la France', lately published by Le President Henault, a man of parts and learning, with whom you will probably get acquainted at Paris. I desire that it may always lie upon your table, for your recourse as often as you read history. The chronology, though chiefly relative to the history of France, is not singly confined to it; but the most interesting events of all the rest of Europe are also inserted, and many of them adorned by short, pretty, and just reflections. The new edition of 'Les Memoires de Sully', in three quarto volumes, is also extremely well worth your reading, as it will give you a clearer, and truer notion of one of the most interesting periods of the French history, than you can yet have formed from all the other books you may have read upon the subject. That prince, I mean Henry the Fourth, had all the accomplishments and virtues of a hero, and of a king, and almost of a man. The last are the most rarely seen. May you possess them all! Adieu.

Pray make my compliments to Mr. Harte, and let him know that I have this moment received his letter of the 12th, N. S., from Antibes. It requires no immediate answer; I shall therefore delay mine till I have another from him. Give him the inclosed, which I have received from Mr. Eliot.

LETTER CXX

London, November 1, O. S. 1750

My dear friend: I hope that this letter will not find you still at Montpelier, but rather be sent after you from thence to Paris, where, I am persuaded, that Mr. Harte could find as good advice for his leg as at Montpelier, if not better; but if he is of a different opinion, I am sure you ought to stay there, as long as he desires.

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While you are in France, I could wish that the hours you allot for historical amusement should be entirely devoted to the history of France. One always reads history to most advantage in that country to which it is relative; not only books, but persons being ever at hand to solve doubts and clear up difficulties. I do by no means advise you to throw away your time in ransacking, like a dull antiquarian, the minute and unimportant parts of remote and fabulous times. Let blockheads read what blockheads wrote. And a general notion of the history of France, from the conquest of that country by the Franks, to the reign of Louis the Eleventh, is sufficient for use, consequently sufficient for you. There are, however, in those remote times, some remarkable eras that deserve more particular attention; I mean those in which some notable alterations happened in the constitution and form of government. As, for example, in the settlement of Clovis in Gaul, and the form of government which he then established; for, by the way; that form of government differed in this particular from all the other Gothic governments, that the people, neither collectively nor by representatives, had any share in it. It was a mixture of monarchy and aristocracy: and what were called the States General of France consisted only of the nobility and clergy till the time of Philip le Bel, in the very beginning of the fourteenth century, who first called the people to those assemblies, by no means for the good of the people, who were only amused by this pretended honor, but, in truth, to check the nobility and clergy, and induce them to grant the money he wanted for his profusion; this was a scheme of Enguerrand de Marigny, his minister, who governed both him and his kingdom to such a degree as to, be called the coadjutor and governor of the kingdom. Charles Martel laid aside these assemblies, and governed by open force. Pepin restored them, and attached them to him, and with them the nation; by which means he deposed Childeric and mounted the throne. This is a second period worth your attention. The third race of kings, which begins with Hugues Capet, is a third period. A judicious reader of history will save himself a great deal of time and trouble by attending with care only to those interesting periods of history which furnish remarkable events, and make eras, and going slightly over the, common run of events. Some people read history as others read the "Pilgrim's Progress"; giving equal attention to, and indiscriminately loading their memories with every part alike. But I would have you read it in a different manner; take the shortest general history you can find of every country; and mark down in that history the most important periods, such as conquests, changes of kings, and alterations of the form of government; and then have recourse to more extensive histories or particular treatises, relative to those great points. Consider them well, trace up their causes, and follow their

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consequences. For instance, there is a most excellent, though very short history of France, by Le Gendre. Read that with attention, and you will know enough of the general history; but when you find there such remarkable periods as are above mentioned, consult Mezeray, and other of the best and minutest historians, as well as political treatises upon those subjects. In later times, memoirs, from those of Philip de Commines, down to the innumerable ones in the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, have been of great use, and thrown great light upon particular parts of history.

Conversation in France, if you have the address and dexterity to turn it upon useful subjects, will exceedingly improve your historical knowledge; for people there, however classically ignorant they may be, think it a shame to be ignorant of the history of their own country: they read that, if they read nothing else, and having often read nothing else, are proud of having read that, and talk of it willingly; even the women are well instructed in that sort of reading. I am far from meaning by this that you should always be talking wisely in company, of books, history, and matters of knowledge. There are many companies which you will, and ought to keep, where such conversations would be misplaced and ill-timed; your own good sense must distinguish the company and the time. You must trifle only with triflers; and be serious only with the serious, but dance to those who pipe. 'Cur in theatrum Cato severs venisti?' was justly said to an old man: how much more so would it be to one of your age? From the moment that you are dressed and go out, pocket all your knowledge with your watch, and never pull it out in company unless desired: the producing of the one unasked, implies that you are weary of the company; and the producing of the other unrequired, will make the company weary of you. Company is a republic too jealous of its liberties, to suffer a dictator even for a quarter of an hour; and yet in that, as in republics, there are some few who really govern; but then it is by seeming to disclaim, instead of attempting to usurp the power; that is the occasion in which manners, dexterity, address, and the undefinable 'je ne sais quoi' triumph; if properly exerted, their conquest is sure, and the more lasting for not being perceived. Remember, that this is not only your first and greatest, but ought to be almost your only object, while you are in France.

I know that many of your countrymen are apt to call the freedom and vivacity of the French petulancy and illbreeding; but, should you think so, I desire upon many accounts that you will not say so; I admit that it may be so in some instances of 'petits maitres Etourdis', and in some young people unbroken to the world; but I can assure you, that you will find it much otherwise with people of a certain rank and age, upon whose model you will do very well to form yourself. We call their steady assurance, impudence why? Only because what we call modesty

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is awkward bashfulness and ‘mauvaise honte’. For my part, I see no impudence, but, on the contrary, infinite utility and advantage in presenting one’s self with the same coolness and unconcern in any and every company. Till one can do that, I am very sure that one can never present one’s self well. Whatever is done under concern and embarrassment, must be ill done, and, till a man is absolutely easy and unconcerned in every company, he will never be thought to have kept good company, nor be very welcome in it. A steady assurance, with seeming modesty, is possibly the most useful qualification that a man can have in every part of life. A man would certainly make a very considerable fortune and figure in the world, whose modesty and timidity should often, as bashfulness always does (put him in the deplorable and lamentable situation of the pious Aeneas, when ‘obstupuit, steteruntque comae; et vox faucibus haesit!’). Fortune (as well as women)—

“-----born to be controlled,
Stoops to the forward and the bold.”

Assurance and intrepidity, under the white banner of seeming modesty, clear the way for merit, that would otherwise be discouraged by difficulties in its journey; whereas barefaced impudence is the noisy and blustering harbinger of a worthless and senseless usurper.

You will think that I shall never have done recommending to you these exterior worldly accomplishments, and you will think right, for I never shall; they are of too great consequence to you for me to be indifferent or negligent about them: the shining part of your future figure and fortune depends now wholly upon them. These are the acquisitions which must give efficacy and success to those you have already made. To have it said and believed that you are the most learned man in England, would be no more than was said and believed of Dr. Bentley; but to have it said, at the same time, that you are also the best-bred, most polite, and agreeable man in the kingdom, would be such a happy composition of a character as I never yet knew any one man deserve; and which I will endeavor, as well as ardently wish, that you may. Absolute perfection is, I well know, unattainable; but I know too, that a man of parts may be unweariedly aiming at it, and arrive pretty near it. Try, labor, persevere. Adieu.

LETTER CXXI

London, November 8, O. S. 1750

My dear friend: Before you get to Paris, where you will soon be left to your own discretion, if you have any, it is necessary that we should understand one another thoroughly; which is the most probable way of preventing disputes. Money, the cause of



much mischief in the world, is the cause of most quarrels between fathers and sons; the former commonly thinking that they cannot give too little, and the latter, that they cannot have enough; both equally in the wrong. You must do me the justice to acknowledge, that I have hitherto

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neither stinted nor grudged any expense that could be of use or real pleasure to you; and I can assure you, by the way, that you have traveled at a much more considerable expense than I did myself; but I never so much as thought of that, while Mr. Harte was at the head of your finances; being very sure that the sums granted were scrupulously applied to the uses for which they were intended. But the case will soon be altered, and you will be your own receiver and treasurer. However, I promise you, that we will not quarrel singly upon the quantum, which shall be cheerfully and freely granted: the application and appropriation of it will be the material point, which I am now going to clear up and finally settle with you. I will fix, or even name, no settled allowance; though I well know in my own mind what would be the proper one; but I will first try your draughts, by which I can in a good degree judge of your conduct. This only I tell you in general, that if the channels through which my money is to go are the proper ones, the source shall not be scanty; but should it deviate into dirty, muddy, and obscure ones (which by the bye, it cannot do for a week without my knowing it); I give you fair and timely notice, that the source will instantly be dry. Mr. Harte, in establishing you at Paris, will point out to you those proper channels; he will leave you there upon the foot of a man of fashion, and I will continue you upon the same; you will have your coach, your valet de chambre, your own footman, and a valet de place; which, by the way, is one servant more than I had. I would have you very well dressed, by which I mean dressed as the generality of people of fashion are; that is, not to be taken notice of, for being either more or less fine than other people: it is by being well dressed, not finely dressed, that a gentleman should be distinguished. You must frequent 'les spectacles', which expense I shall willingly supply. You must play 'a des petits jeux de commerce' in mixed companies; that article is trifling; I shall pay it cheerfully. All the other articles of pocket-money are very inconsiderable at Paris, in comparison of what they are here, the silly custom of giving money wherever one dines or sups, and the expensive importunity of subscriptions, not being yet introduced there. Having thus reckoned up all the decent expenses of a gentleman, which I will most readily defray, I come now to those which I will neither bear nor supply. The first of these is gaming, of which, though I have not the least reason to suspect you, I think it necessary eventually to assure you, that no consideration in the world shall ever make me pay your play debts; should you ever urge to me that your honor is pawned, I should most immovably answer you, that it was your honor, not mine, that was pawned; and that your creditor might e'en take the pawn for the debt.

Low company, and low pleasures, are always much more costly than liberal and elegant ones. The disgraceful riots of a tavern are much more expensive, as well as dishonorable, than the sometimes pardonable excesses in good company. I must absolutely hear of no tavern scrapes and squabbles.

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I come now to another and very material point; I mean women; and I will not address myself to you upon this subject, either in a religious, a moral, or a parental style. I will even lay aside my age, remember yours, and speak to you as one man of pleasure, if he had parts too, would speak to another. I will by no means pay for whores, and their never-failing consequences, surgeons; nor will I, upon any account, keep singers, dancers, actresses, and 'id genus omne'; and, independently of the expense, I must tell you, that such connections would give me, and all sensible people, the utmost contempt for your parts and address; a young fellow must have as little sense as address, to venture, or more properly to sacrifice, his health and ruin his fortune, with such sort of creatures; in such a place as Paris especially, where gallantry is both the profession and the practice of every woman of fashion. To speak plainly, I will not forgive your understanding c-----s and p-----s; nor will your constitution forgive them you. These distempers, as well as their cures, fall nine times in ten upon the lungs. This argument, I am sure, ought to have weight with you: for I protest to you, that if you meet with any such accident, I would not give one year's purchase for your life. Lastly, there is another sort of expense that I will not allow, only because it is a silly one; I mean the fooling away your money in baubles at toy shops. Have one handsome snuff-box (if you take snuff), and one handsome sword; but then no more pretty and very useless things.

By what goes before, you will easily perceive that I mean to allow you whatever is necessary, not only for the figure, but for the pleasures of a gentleman, and not to supply the profusion of a rake. This, you must confess, does not savor of either the severity or parsimony of old age. I consider this agreement between us, as a subsidiary treaty on my part, for services to be performed on yours. I promise you, that I will be as punctual in the payment of the subsidies, as England has been during the last war; but then I give you notice at the same time, that I require a much more scrupulous execution of the treaty on your part, than we met with on that of our allies; or else that payment will be stopped. I hope all that I have now said was absolutely unnecessary, and that sentiments more worthy and more noble than pecuniary ones, would of themselves have pointed out to you the conduct I recommend; but, at all events, I resolved to be once for all explicit with you, that, in the worst that can happen, you may not plead ignorance, and complain that I had not sufficiently explained to you my intentions.

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Having mentioned the word rake, I must say a word or two more on that subject, because young people too frequently, and always fatally, are apt to mistake that character for that of a man of pleasure; whereas, there are not in the world two characters more different. A rake is a composition of all the lowest, most ignoble, degrading, and shameful vices; they all conspire to disgrace his character, and to ruin his fortune; while wine and the p-----s contend which shall soonest and most effectually destroy his constitution. A dissolute, flagitious footman, or porter, makes full as good a rake as a man of the first quality. By the bye, let me tell you, that in the wildest part of my youth, I never was a rake, but, on the contrary, always detested and despised that character.

A man of pleasure, though not always so scrupulous as he should be, and as one day he will wish he had been, refines at least his pleasures by taste, accompanies them with decency, and enjoys them with dignity. Few men can be men of pleasure, every man may be a rake. Remember that I shall know everything you say or do at Paris, as exactly as if, by the force of magic, I could follow you everywhere, like a sylph or a gnome, invisible myself. Seneca says, very prettily, that one should ask nothing of God, but what one should be willing that men should know; nor of men, but what one should be willing that God should know. I advise you to say and do nothing at Paris, but what you would be willing that I should know. I hope, nay, I believe, that will be the case. Sense, I dare say, you do not want; instruction, I am sure, you have never wanted: experience you are daily gaining: all which together must inevitably (I should think) make you both 'respectable et aimable', the perfection of a human character. In that case nothing shall be wanting on my part, and you shall solidly experience all the extent and tenderness of my affection for you; but dread the reverse of both! Adieu!

P. S. When you get to Paris, after you have been to wait on Lord Albemarle, go to see Mr. Yorke, whom I have particular reasons for desiring that you should be well with, as I shall hereafter explain to you. Let him know that my orders, and your own inclinations, conspired to make you desire his friendship and protection.

LETTER CXXII

My dear friend: I have sent you so many preparatory letters for Paris, that this, which will meet you there, shall only be a summary of them all.

You have hitherto had more liberty than anybody of your age ever had; and I must do you the justice to own, that you have made a better use of it than most people of your age would have done; but then, though you had not a jailer, you had a friend with you. At Paris, you will not only be unconfined, but unassisted. Your own good sense must be your only guide: I have great confidence in it, and am convinced that

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I shall receive just such accounts of your conduct at Paris as I could wish; for I tell you beforehand, that I shall be most minutely informed of all that you do, and almost of all that you say there. Enjoy the pleasures of youth, you cannot do better: but refine and dignify them like a man, of parts; let them raise, and not sink; let them adorn and not vilify your character; let them, in short, be the pleasures of a gentleman, and taken with your equals at least, but rather with your superiors, and those chiefly French.

Inquire into the characters of the several Academicians, before you form a connection with any of them; and be most upon your guard against those who make the most court to you.

You cannot study much in the Academy; but you may study usefully there, if you are an economist of your time, and bestow only upon good books those quarters and halves of hours, which occur to everybody in the course of almost every day; and which, at the year's end, amount to a very considerable sum of time. Let Greek, without fail, share some part of every day; I do not mean the Greek poets, the catches of Anacreon, or the tender complaints of Theocritus, or even the porter-like language of Homer's heroes; of whom all smatterers in Greek know a little, quote often, and talk of always; but I mean Plato, Aristoteles, Demosthenes, and Thucydides, whom none but adepts know. It is Greek that must distinguish you in the learned world, Latin alone will not: and Greek must be sought to be retained, for it never occurs like Latin. When you read history or other books of amusement, let every language you are master of have its turn, so that you may not only retain, but improve in everyone. I also desire that you will converse in German and Italian, with all the Germans and the Italians with whom you converse at all. This will be a very agreeable and flattering thing to them, and a very useful one to you.

Pray apply yourself diligently to your exercises; for though the doing them well is not supremely meritorious, the doing them ill is illiberal, vulgar, and ridiculous.

I recommend theatrical representations to you; which are excellent at Paris. The tragedies of Corneille and Racine, and the comedies of Moliere, well attended to, are admirable lessons, both for the heart and the head. There is not, nor ever was, any theatre comparable to the French. If the music of the French operas does not please your Italian ear, the words of them, at least, are sense and poetry, which is much more than I can, say of any Italian opera that I ever read or heard in my life.

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I send you the inclosed letter of recommendation to Marquis Matignon, which I would have you deliver to him as soon as you can; you will, I am sure, feel the good effects of his warm friendship for me and Lord Bolingbroke, who has also wrote to him upon your subject. By that, and by the other letters which I have sent you, you will be at once so thoroughly introduced into the best French company, that you must take some pains if you will keep bad; but that is what I do not suspect you of. You have, I am sure, too much right ambition to prefer low and disgraceful company to that of your superiors, both in rank and age. Your character, and consequently your fortune, absolutely depends upon the company you keep, and the turn you take at Paris. I do not in the least mean a grave turn; on the contrary, a gay, a sprightly, but, at the same time, an elegant and liberal one.

Keep carefully out of all scrapes and quarrels. They lower a character extremely; and are particularly dangerous in France; where a man is dishonored by not resenting an affront, and utterly ruined by resenting it. The young Frenchmen are hasty, giddy, and petulant; extremely national, and 'avantageux'. Forbear from any national jokes or reflections, which are always improper, and commonly unjust. The colder northern nations generally look upon France as a whistling, singing, dancing, frivolous nation; this notion is very far from being a true one, though many 'Petits maitres' by their behavior seem to justify it; but those very 'petits maltres', when mellowed by age and experience, very often turn out very able men. The number of great generals and statesmen, as well as excellent authors, that France has produced, is an undeniable proof, that it is not that frivolous, unthinking, empty nation that northern prejudices suppose it. Seem to like and approve of everything at first, and I promise you that you will like and approve of many things afterward.

I expect that you will write to me constantly, once every week, which I desire may be every Thursday; and that your letters may inform me of your personal transactions: not of what you see, but of whom you see, and what you do.

Be your own monitor, now that you will have no other. As to enunciation, I must repeat it to you again and again, that there is no one thing so necessary: all other talents, without that, are absolutely useless, except in your own closet.

It sounds ridiculously to bid you study with your dancing-master; and yet I do. The bodily-carriage and graces are of infinite consequence to everybody, and more particularly to you.

Adieu for this time, my dear child. Yours tenderly.

LETTER CXXIII

London, November 12, O. S. 1750



My dear friend: You will possibly think, that this letter turns upon strange, little, trifling objects; and you will think right, if you consider them separately; but if you take them aggregately, you will be convinced that as parts, which conspire to form that whole, called the exterior of a man of fashion, they are of importance. I shall not dwell now upon these personal graces, that liberal air, and that engaging address, which I have so often recommended to you; but descend still lower, to your dress, cleanliness, and care of your person.

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When you come to Paris, you may take care to be extremely well dressed; that is, as the fashionable people are; this does by no means consist in the finery, but in the taste, fitness, and manner of wearing your clothes; a fine suit ill-made, and slatternly or stiffly worn, far from adorning, only exposes the awkwardness of the wearer. Get the best French tailor to make your clothes, whatever they are, in the fashion, and to fit you: and then wear them, button them, or unbutton them, as the genteelest people you see do. Let your man learn of the best friseur to do your hair well, for that is a very material part of your dress. Take care to have your stockings well gartered up, and your shoes well buckled; for nothing gives a more slovenly air to a man than ill-dressed legs. In your person you must be accurately clean; and your teeth, hands, and nails, should be superlatively so; a dirty mouth has real ill consequences to the owner, for it infallibly causes the decay, as well as the intolerable pain of the teeth, and it is very offensive to his acquaintance, for it will most inevitably stink. I insist, therefore, that you wash your teeth the first thing you do every morning, with a soft sponge and swarm water, for four or five minutes; and then wash your mouth five or six times. Mouton, whom I desire you will send for upon your arrival at Paris, will give you an opiate, and a liquor to be used sometimes. Nothing looks more ordinary, vulgar, and illiberal, than dirty hands, and ugly, uneven, and ragged nails: I do not suspect you of that shocking, awkward trick, of biting yours; but that is not enough: you must keep the ends of them smooth and clean, not tipped with black, as the ordinary people's always are. The ends of your nails should be small segments of circles, which, by a very little care in the cutting, they are very easily brought to; every time that you wipe your hands, rub the skin round your nails backward, that it may not grow up, and shorten your nails too much. The cleanliness of the rest of your person, which, by the way, will conduce greatly to your health, I refer from time to time to the bagnio. My mentioning these particulars arises (I freely own) from some suspicion that the hints are not unnecessary; for, when you were a schoolboy, you were slovenly and dirty above your fellows. I must add another caution, which is that upon no account whatever, you put your fingers, as too many people are apt to do, in your nose or ears. It is the most shocking, nasty, vulgar rudeness, that can be offered to company; it disgusts one, it turns one's stomach; and, for my own part, I would much rather know that a man's fingers were actually in his breech, than see them in his nose. Wash your ears well every morning, and blow your nose in your handkerchief whenever you have occasion; but, by the way, without looking at it afterward. There should be in the least, as well as in the greatest parts of a gentleman, 'les manieres nobles'. Sense will teach you

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some, observation others; attend carefully to the manners, the diction, the motions, of people of the first fashion, and form your own upon them. On the other hand, observe a little those of the vulgar, in order to avoid them: for though the things which they say or do may be the same, the manner is always totally different: and in that, and nothing else, consists the characteristic of a man of fashion. The lowest peasant speaks, moves, dresses, eats, and drinks, as much as a man of the first fashion, but does them all quite differently; so that by doing and saying most things in a manner opposite to that of the vulgar, you have a great chance of doing and saying them right. There are gradations in awkwardness and vulgarism, as there are in everything else. 'Les manieres de robe', though not quite right, are still better than 'les manieres bourgeoises'; and these, though bad, are still better than 'les manieres de campagne'. But the language, the air, the dress, and the manners of the court, are the only true standard 'des manieres nobles, et d'un honnete homme. Ex pede Herculem' is an old and true saying, and very applicable to our present subject; for a man of parts, who has been bred at courts, and used to keep the best company, will distinguish himself, and is to be known from the vulgar by every word, attitude, gesture, and even look. I cannot leave these seeming 'minutiae', without repeating to you the necessity of your carving well; which is an article, little as it is, that is useful twice every day of one's life; and the doing it ill is very troublesome to one's self, and very disagreeable, often ridiculous, to others.

Having said all this, I cannot help reflecting, what a formal dull fellow, or a cloistered pedant, would say, if they were to see this letter: they would look upon it with the utmost contempt, and say that surely a father might find much better topics for advice to a son. I would admit it, if I had given you, or that you were capable of receiving, no better; but if sufficient pains have been taken to form your heart and improve your mind, and, as I hope, not without success, I will tell those solid gentlemen, that all these trifling things, as they think them, collectively, form that pleasing 'je ne sais quoi', that ensemble, which they are utter strangers to both in themselves and others. The word aimable is not known in their language, or the thing in their manners. Great usage of the world, great attention, and a great desire of pleasing, can alone give it; and it is no trifle. It is from old people's looking upon these things as trifles, or not thinking of them at all, that so many young people are so awkward and so ill-bred. Their parents, often careless and unmindful of them, give them only the common run of education, as school, university, and then traveling; without examining, and very often without being able to judge, if they did examine, what progress they make in any one of these stages. Then, they carelessly

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comfort themselves, and say, that their sons will do like other people's sons; and so they do, that is, commonly very ill. They correct none of the childish nasty tricks, which they get at school; nor the illiberal manners which they contract at the university; nor the frivolous and superficial pertness, which is commonly all that they acquire by their travels. As they do not tell them of these things, nobody else can; so they go on in the practice of them, without ever hearing, or knowing, that they are unbecoming, indecent, and shocking. For, as I have often formerly observed to you, nobody but a father can take the liberty to reprove a young fellow, grown up, for those kinds of inaccuracies and improprieties of behavior. The most intimate friendship, unassisted by the paternal superiority, will not authorize it. I may truly say, therefore, that you are happy in having me for a sincere, friendly, and quick-sighted monitor. Nothing will escape me: I shall pry for your defects, in order to correct them, as curiously as I shall seek for your perfections, in order to applaud and reward them, with this difference only, that I shall publicly mention the latter, and never hint at the former, but in a letter to, or a tete-d-tete with you. I will never put you out of countenance before company; and I hope you will never give me reason to be out of countenance for you, as any one of the above-mentioned defects would make me. 'Praetor non, curat de minimis', was a maxim in the Roman law; for causes only of a certain value were tried by him but there were inferior jurisdictions, that took cognizance of the smallest. Now I shall try you, not only as 'praetor' in the greatest, but as 'censor' in lesser, and as the lowest magistrate in the least cases.

I have this moment received Mr. Harte's letter of the 1st November, N. S., by which I am very glad to find that he thinks of moving toward Paris, the end of this month, which looks as if his leg were better; besides, in my opinion, you both of you only lose time at Montpellier; he would find better advice, and you better company, at Paris. In the meantime, I hope you go into the best company there is at Montpellier; and there always is some at the Intendant's, or the Commandant's. You will have had full time to learn 'les petites chansons Languedociennes', which are exceedingly pretty ones, both words and tunes. I remember, when I was in those parts, I was surprised at the difference which I found between the people on one side, and those on the other side of the Rhone. The Provencaux were, in general, surly, ill-bred, ugly, and swarthy; the Languedocians the very reverse: a cheerful, well-bred, handsome people. Adieu! Yours most affectionately.

P. S. Upon reflection, I direct this letter to Paris; I think you must have left Montpellier before it could arrive there.

LETTER CXXIV

London, November 19, O. S. 1750

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My dear friend: I was very glad to find by your letter of the 12th, N. S., that you had informed yourself so well of the state of the French marine at Toulon, and of the commerce at Marseilles; they are objects that deserve the inquiry and attention of every man who intends to be concerned in public affairs. The French are now wisely attentive to both; their commerce is incredibly increased within these last thirty years; they have beaten us out of great part of our Levant trade; their East India trade has greatly affected ours; and, in the West Indies, their Martinico establishment supplies, not only France itself, but the greatest part of Europe, with sugars whereas our islands, as Jamaica, Barbadoes, and the Leeward, have now no other market for theirs but England. New France, or Canada, has also greatly lessened our fur and skin trade. It is true (as you say) that we have no treaty of commerce subsisting (I do not say *with Marseilles*) but with France. There was a treaty of commerce made between England and France, immediately after the treaty of Utrecht; but the whole treaty was conditional, and to depend upon the parliament's enacting certain things which were stipulated in two of the articles; the parliament, after a very famous debate, would not do it; so the treaty fell to the ground: however, the outlines of that treaty are, by mutual and tacit consent, the general rules of our present commerce with France. It is true, too, that our commodities which go to France, must go in our bottoms; the French having imitated in many respects our famous Act of Navigation, as it is commonly called. This act was made in the year 1652, in the parliament held by Oliver Cromwell. It forbids all foreign ships to bring into England any merchandise or commodities whatsoever, that were not of the growth and produce of that country to which those ships belonged, under penalty of the forfeiture of such ships. This act was particularly leveled at the Dutch, who were at that time the carriers of almost all Europe, and got immensely by freight. Upon this principle, of the advantages arising from freight, there is a provision in the same act, that even the growth and produce of our own colonies in America shall not be carried from thence to any other country in Europe, without first touching in England; but this clause has lately been repealed, in the instances of some perishable commodities, such as rice, *etc.*, which are allowed to be carried directly from our American colonies to other countries. The act also provides, that two-thirds, I think, of those who navigate the said ships shall be British subjects. There is an excellent, and little book, written by the famous Monsieur Huet Eveque d'Avranches, 'Sur le Commerce des Anciens', which is very well worth your reading, and very soon read. It will give you a clear notion of the rise and progress of commerce. There are many other books, which take up the history of commerce where Monsieur d'Avranches leaves it, and bring it down to these times. I advise you to read some of them with care; commerce being a very essential part of political knowledge in every country; but more particularly in that which owes all its riches and power to it.

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I come now to another part of your letter, which is the orthography, if I may call bad spelling *orthography*. You spell induce, ENDUCE; and grandeur, you spell grandURE; two faults of which few of my housemaids would have been guilty. I must tell you that orthography, in the true sense of the word, is so absolutely necessary for a man of letters; or a gentleman, that one false spelling may fix ridicule upon him for the rest of his life; and I know a man of quality, who never recovered the ridicule of having spelled *wholesome* without the w.

Reading with care will secure everybody from false spelling; for books are always well spelled, according to the orthography of the times. Some words are indeed doubtful, being spelled differently by different authors of equal authority; but those are few; and in those cases every man has his option, because he may plead his authority either way; but where there is but one right way, as in the two words above mentioned, it is unpardonable and ridiculous for a gentleman to miss it; even a woman of a tolerable education would despise and laugh, at a lover, who should send her an ill-spelled billet-doux. I fear and suspect, that you have taken it into your head, in most cases, that the matter is all, and the manner little or nothing. If you have, undeceive yourself, and be convinced that, in everything, the manner is full as important as the matter. If you speak the sense of an angel, in bad words and with a disagreeable utterance, nobody will hear you twice, who can help it. If you write epistles as well as Cicero, but in a very bad hand, and very ill-spelled, whoever receives will laugh at them; and if you had the figure of Adonis, with an awkward air and motions, it will disgust instead of pleasing. Study manner, therefore, in everything, if you would be anything. My principal inquiries of my friends at Paris, concerning you, will be relative to your manner of doing whatever you do. I shall not inquire whether you understand Demosthenes, Tacitus, or the 'Jus Publicum Imperii'; but I shall inquire, whether your utterance is pleasing, your style not only pure, but elegant, your manners noble and easy, your air and address engaging in short, whether you are a gentleman, a man of fashion, and fit to keep good company, or not; for, till I am satisfied in these particulars, you and I must by no means meet; I could not possibly stand it. It is in your power to become all this at Paris, if you please. Consult with Lady Hervey and Madame Monconseil upon all these matters; and they will speak to you, and advise you freely. Tell them, that 'bisogna compaire ancora', that you are utterly new in the world; that you are desirous to form yourself; that you beg they will reprove, advise, and correct you; that you know that none can do it so well; and that you will implicitly follow their directions. This, together with your careful observation of the manners of the best company, will really form you.

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Abbe Guasco, a friend of mine, will come to you as soon as he knows of your arrival at Paris; he is well received in the best companies there, and will introduce you to them. He will be desirous to do you any service he can; he is active and curious, and can give you information upon most things. He is a sort of 'complaisant' of the President Montesquieu, to whom you have a letter.

I imagine that this letter will not wait for you very long at Paris, where I reckon you will be in about a fortnight. Adieu.

LETTER CXXV

London, December 24, 1750

Dear friend: At length you are become a Parisian, and consequently must be addressed in French; you will also answer me in the same language, that I may be able to judge of the degree in which you possess the elegance, the delicacy, and the orthography of that language which is, in a manner, become the universal one of Europe. I am assured that you speak it well, but in that well there are gradations. He, who in the provinces might be reckoned to speak correctly, would at Paris be looked upon as an ancient Gaul. In that country of mode, even language is subservient to fashion, which varies almost as often as their clothes.

The *affected*, the *refined*, the *neological*, or *new fashionable style* are at present too much in vogue at Paris. Know, observe, and occasionally converse (if you please) according to those different styles; but do not let your taste be infected by them. Wit, too, is there subservient to fashion; and actually, at Paris, one must have wit, even in despite of Minerva. Everybody runs after it; although if it does not come naturally and of itself; it never can be overtaken. But, unfortunately for those who pursue, they seize upon what they take for wit, and endeavor to pass it for such upon others. This is, at best, the lot of Ixion, who embraced a cloud instead of the goddess he pursued. Fine sentiments, which never existed, false and unnatural thoughts, obscure and far-sought expressions, not only unintelligible, but which it is even impossible to decipher, or to guess at, are all the consequences of this error; and two-thirds of the new French books which now appear are made up of those ingredients. It is the new cookery of Parnassus, in which the still is employed instead of the pot and the spit, and where quintessences and extracts are chiefly used. N. B. The Attic salt is proscribed.

You will now and then be obliged to eat of this new cookery, but do not suffer your taste to be corrupted by it. And when you, in your turn, are desirous of treating others, take the good old cookery of Lewis XIV.'s reign for your rule. There were at that time admirable head cooks, such as Corneille, Boileau, Racine, and La Fontaine. Whatever they prepared was simple, wholesome, and solid. But laying aside all metaphors, do not suffer yourself

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to be dazzled by false brilliancy, by unnatural expressions, nor by those antitheses so much in fashion: as a protection against such innovations, have a recourse to your own good sense, and to the ancient authors. On the other hand, do not laugh at those who give into such errors; you are as yet too young to act the critic, or to stand forth a severe avenger of the violated rights of good sense. Content yourself with not being perverted, but do not think of converting others; let them quietly enjoy their errors in taste, as well as in religion. Within the course of the last century and a half, taste in France has (as well as that kingdom itself) undergone many vicissitudes. Under the reign of I do not say Lewis XIII. but of Cardinal de Richelieu, good taste first began to make its way. It was refined under that of Lewis XIV., a great king, at least, if not a great man. Corneille was the restorer of true taste, and the founder of the French theatre; although rather inclined to the Italian 'Concetti' and the Spanish 'Agudeze'. Witness those epigrams which he makes Chimene utter in the greatest excess of grief.

Before his time, those kind of itinerant authors, called troubadours or romanciers, were a species of madmen who attracted the admiration of fools. Toward the end of Cardinal de Richelieu's reign, and the beginning of Lewis XIV.'s, the Temple of Taste was established at the Hotel of Rambouillet; but that taste was not judiciously refined this Temple of Taste might more properly have been named a Laboratory of Wit, where good sense was put to the torture, in order to extract from it the most subtle essence. There it was that Voiture labored hard and incessantly to create wit. At length, Boileau and Moliere fixed the standard of true taste. In spite of the Scuderys, the Calprenedes, etc., they defeated and put to flight ARTAMENES, *Juba*, OROONDATES, and all those heroes of romance, who were, notwithstanding (each of them), as good as a whole Army. Those madmen then endeavored to obtain an asylum in libraries; this they could not accomplish, but were under a necessity of taking shelter in the chambers of some few ladies. I would have you read one volume of "Cleopatra," and one of "Clelia"; it will otherwise be impossible for you to form any idea of the extravagances they contain; but God keep you from ever persevering to the twelfth.

During almost the whole reign of Lewis XIV., true taste remained in its purity, until it received some hurt, although undesignedly, from a very fine genius, I mean Monsieur de Fontenelle; who, with the greatest sense and the most solid learning, sacrificed rather too much to the Graces, whose most favorite child and pupil he was. Admired with reason, others tried to imitate him; but, unfortunately for us, the author of the "Pastorals," of the "History of Oracles," and of the "French Theatre," found fewer imitators than the Chevalier d'Her did mimics. He has since been taken off by a thousand authors: but never really imitated by anyone that I know of.

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At this time, the seat of true taste in France seems to me not well established. It exists, but torn by factions. There is one party of petits maitres, one of half-learned women, another of insipid authors whose works are 'verba et voces, et praeterea nihil'; and, in short, a numerous and very fashionable party of writers, who, in a metaphysical jumble, introduce their false and subtle reasonings upon the movements and the sentiments of *the soul, the heart, and the mind*.

Do not let yourself be overpowered by fashion, nor by particular sets of people with whom you may be connected; but try all the different coins before you receive any in payment. Let your own good sense and reason judge of the value of each; and be persuaded, that *nothing can be beautiful unless true*: whatever brilliancy is not the result of the solidity and justness of a thought, it is but a false glare. The Italian saying upon a diamond is equally just with regard to thoughts, 'Quanto Piu sodezza, tanto piu splendore'.

All this ought not to hinder you from conforming externally to the modes and tones of the different companies in which you may chance to be. With the 'petits maitres' speak epigrams; false sentiments, with frivolous women; and a mixture of all these together, with professed beaux esprits. I would have you do so; for at your age you ought not to aim at changing the tone of the company, but conform to it. Examine well, however; weigh all maturely within yourself; and do not mistake the tinsel of Tasso for the gold of Virgil.

You will find at Paris good authors, and circles distinguished by the solidity of their reasoning. You will never hear *trifling, affected*, and far-sought conversations, at Madame de Monconseil's, nor at the hotels of Matignon and Coigni, where she will introduce you. The President Montesquieu will not speak to you in the epigrammatic style. His book, the "Spirit of the Laws," written in the vulgar tongue, will equally please and instruct you.

Frequent the theatre whenever Corneille, Racine, and Moliere's pieces are played. They are according to nature and to truth. I do not mean by this to give an exclusion to several admirable modern plays, particularly "Cenie,"—[Imitated in English by Mr. Francis, in a play called "Eugenia."]—replete with sentiments that are true, natural, and applicable to one's self. If you choose to know the characters of people now in fashion, read Crebillon the younger, and Marivaux's works. The former is a most excellent painter; the latter has studied, and knows the human heart, perhaps too well. Crebillon's 'Egaremens du Coeur et de l'Esprit is an excellent work in its kind; it will be of infinite amusement to you, and not totally useless. The Japanese history of "Tanzar and Neadarne," by the same author, is an amiable extravagancy, interspersed with the most just reflections. In short, provided you do not mistake the objects of your attention, you will find matter at Paris to form a good and true taste.

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As I shall let you remain at Paris without any person to direct your conduct, I flatter myself that you will not make a bad use of the confidence I repose in you. I do not require that you should lead the life of a Capuchin friar; quite the contrary: I recommend pleasures to you; but I expect that they shall be the pleasures of a gentleman. Those add brilliancy to a young man's character; but debauchery vilifies and degrades it. I shall have very true and exact accounts of your conduct; and, according to the informations I receive, shall be more, or less, or not at all, yours. Adieu.

P. S. Do not omit writing to me once a-week; and let your answer to this letter be in French. Connect yourself as much as possible with the foreign ministers; which is properly traveling into different countries, without going from one place. Speak Italian to all the Italians, and German to all the Germans you meet, in order not to forget those two languages.

I wish you, my dear friend, as many happy new years as you deserve, and not one more. May you deserve a great number!

ETEXT EDITORS BOOKMARKS:

Absurd romances of the two last centuries
Advocate, the friend, but not the bully of virtue
Ariosto
Assurance and intrepidity
Attention
Author is obscure and difficult in his own language
Characters, that never existed, are insipidly displayed
Collana
Commanding with dignity, you must serve up to it with diligence
Complaisance to every or anybody's opinion
Conceal all your learning carefully
Connections
Contempt
Content yourself with mediocrity in nothing
Court mores
Dance to those who pipe
Dante
Decides peremptorily upon every subject
Desire to please, and that is the main point
Desirous to make you their friend
Despairs of ever being able to pay
Difference in everything between system and practice
Dignity to be kept up in pleasures, as well as in business
Distinction between simulation and dissimulation



Do not mistake the tinsel of Tasso for the gold of Virgil
Doing what may deserve to be written
Done under concern and embarrassment, must be ill done
Dressed as the generality of people of fashion are
Economist of your time
Economists
Establishing a character of integrity and good manners
Feed him, and feed upon him at the same time
Flattery
Fortune stoops to the forward and the bold
Frivolous and superficial pertness
Gentlemen, who take such a fancy to you at first sight
Guard against those who make the most court to you
Have no pleasures but your own
If you will persuade, you must first please
Improve yourself with the old, divert yourself with the young
Indiscriminately loading their memories with every part alike
Insipid in his pleasures, as inefficient in everything else
Labor more to put them in conceit with themselves

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Lay down a method for everything, and stick to it inviolably
Leo the Tenth
Let blockheads read what blockheads wrote
Let nobody discover that you do know your own value
Let them quietly enjoy their errors in taste
Lying
Man is dishonored by not resenting an affront
Manner is full as important as the matter
Method
Modesty is the only sure bait when you angle for praise
Money, the cause of much mischief
Montesquieu
More people have ears to be tickled, than understandings to judge
Most people enjoy the inferiority of their best friends
Necessity of scrupulously preserving the appearances
Never affect the character in which you have a mind to shine
Never put you out of countenance before company
Never read history without having maps
No one feels pleasure, who does not at the same time give it
Not only pure, but, like Caesar's wife, unsuspected
Often more necessary to conceal contempt than resentment
Passes for a wit, though he hath certainly no uncommon share
Patient toleration of certain airs of superiority
People hate those who make them feel their own inferiority
People lose a great deal of time by reading
Pleased with him, by making them first pleased with themselves
Pleasure is necessarily reciprocal
Pocket all your knowledge with your watch
Put out your time, but to good interest
Real merit of any kind will be discovered
Resentment
Respect without timidity
Rich man never borrows
Same coolness and unconcern in any and every company
Seem to like and approve of everything at first
Sentiments that were never felt, pompously described
Shall be more, or less, or not at all, yours
She has all the reading that a woman should have
She who conquers only catches a Tartar
Silence in love betrays more woe



Spare the persons while you lash the crimes
Steady assurance, with seeming modesty
Suspicion of age, no woman, let her be ever so old, ever forgive
Take the hue of the company you are with
Taking up adventitious, proves their want of intrinsic merit
Tasso
The present moments are the only ones we are sure of
Those whom you can make like themselves better
Timidity and diffidence
To be heard with success, you must be heard with pleasure
To be pleased one must please
Trifle only with triflers; and be serious only with the serious
Trite jokes and loud laughter reduce him to a buffoon
Unwilling and forced; it will never please
Well dressed, not finely dressed
What is impossible, and what is only difficult
What pleases you in others, will in general please them in you
Whatever real merit you have, other people will discover
Wish you, my dear friend, as many happy new years as you deserve
Women choose their favorites more by the ear
Words are the dress of thoughts
Writing what may deserve to be read
You must be respectable, if you will be respected
Your character there, whatever it is, will get before you here