Seventeenth Century Letters

by

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Part I

Letter-writers and Letters of the Seventeenth Century
Introduction

During the seventeenth century, the English people were still in the process of being educated to the point where literary expression was natural and common. This is particularly noticeable in the fact that more letters were being written than previously, letters which bore the stamp of common men expressing to friends their thoughts and doings. During this, the Golden Age of French epistolary literature, England was torn with civil strife and religious struggles, and went through some of the most momentous political changes she has ever experienced.

Until the reign of Henry the Fifth, Latin and French were the languages employed for letter-writing. Even as late as the seventeenth century, Bacon and Milton wrote in Latin. It was natural, therefore, that the Latin formalists should be the chief models for epistolary art.

So they were. Erasmus' treatise on letter-writing, Cicero's letters, Seneca's epistles, Pliny's letters and Petrarch's were studied carefully. In these early days, even familiar letters became legal instruments, and centuries elapsed before the racy, sparkling letters of Howell or the detailed, intimate epistles of Swift and Chesterfield.

1. Thompson, Elbert. Literary Bypaths of the Renaissance, p.95.
As early as the ninth century, skill in letter-writing was demanded of churchmen. A formula for a model letter was devised by Elberich of Monte-Cassino, the order of the letter being "salutatio, captatio, narratio, petitia, and conclusio." A manuscript in the British Museum contains the forms and exact instructions for writing Latin letters. In these days of formalism, scribes were almost invariably employed to write the letters, and vellum was used as writing material.

Remembering that Seneca's Epistles to Lucilius were moral essays expostulating against the Stoic creed, and that Seneca was used as a model by English letter-writers, it is not surprising to find that the familiar letters in English were first taking the place, to some extent, of the argumentative treatise, the novel, or the essay. As such they were addressed to the public or to large audiences, and became finished productions of great literary merit. The letters of the Tudor reigns assume more historical merit than literary. Even in the seventeenth century, the "intelligencers," men employed to write letters regularly containing the news, contributed documents of great historical importance, containing oftentimes bits of gossip which give an insight into the fashions of the century.

Of all the older models, Petrarch was the first to break away and give to letters an intrinsic value not
dependent upon form. In 1574 were translated the letters of Cervantes, a popular Spanish author, in which he instructs letter-writers: "Always endeavour, Sir, when-ever you write, to keep your Lines straight, Letters even, Paper clean, Folding exact, and Seals clear." One of the first collections of English letters, The English Secretary, compiled by Angell Day in 1586, demonstrates that diction should be choice and apt, the content brief and direct, the material well-ordered. "Seeing an Epistle hath chieflie his definition here of, in that it is termed the familiar and mutuall talke of one absent freinde to another: it seemeth the character thereof, shoulde according thersunto bee simple, plaine, and of the lowest and meanest stile, utterly devoid of any shadow of his and loftie speeches," he writes. However, he granted a good deal of freedom to letters, and the conflict between rule and freedom is readily seen in his specimens. Some of them, as one urging a youth to merry, and another dissuading a young collegian from wasting time at idle amusements, are particularly interesting.

In 1603 appeared Nicholas Breton's Poste with a Packet of Mad Letters, the contents of which, rich in jokes and anecdotes, are amusing and witty. The last edition, published in 1637, contains over 155 letters.

1. Thompson, op. cit., p. 100.
2. Ibid., p. 106
3. Ibid., p. 94
During the seventeenth century, writers were becoming conscious of the value of the letter employed as a literary form. Joseph Hall was one of the first writers to employ the letter for distinctly literary purposes. James Howell, who has sometimes been called the Father of Epistolary Literature, was distressed at the emptiness of the form as then employed. ¹ "I cannot well away with such sleazy Stuff, with such Cobweb-compositions," he declares, and proceeds to prove that the letter can be diverting and filled with interest. Peter Fisher, Poet Laureate to the Protector, edited a short account of Howell in 1664, and says of him:

He teacheth a new way of Epistolizing: and that Familiar Letters may not only consist of Words, and a bombast of Complements, but that they are capable of the highest Speculations and solidest kind of Knowledge. ²

Cowley says of letters, "You will be angry at a Letter that should leave you not at all wiser at the latter end of it, than you were at the Beginning." ³ Robert Lovelady in his Persuasive Secretary (1659) and Thomas Forde in his Familiar Letters (1660) followed Howell's theory. Thomas Forde insisted that the greatest ornament of letters was to be without any. "I would have my letters like the herb Persica," he writes, "which the Egyptians offered to their God Isis, whose fruit was like an heart and the leaf like a tongue."

1. Thompson, op.cit., p. 109
2. Howell, James. Instructions for Foreign Travel, p.3
3. Thompson, op.cit., p. 113
Sir Philip Sidney's method of avoiding dullness was cited as a model for polite letter-writing by Thomas Blount in his *Academy of Elocution* (1654).

The political disturbances of the age have been mentioned. It is difficult to separate the public and private elements in many of the letters. The leading intelligencers of the period, Sir Henry Cottere, John Chamberlain, Sir Dudley Carleton, blended personal, amusing items with their political news. The danger of letters being seized and read was always imminent, particularly during the earlier part of the century. The Puritan simplicity, occasioned by constant study of the Bible, left its mark upon the style of the letters. On the other hand, the courtly style began. In the polite letters generally, figurativeness and a forced eloquence are noticeable. The letters lacked the suppleness which was acquired during the latter part of the century.

The late Sir Walter Raleigh's contention is that "There is no art of letter-writing," and he justifies it by viewing the letter as a part of social machinery. It is true that the changing fashions seen in the letters, and the portraits of persons which we find on the pages constitute the chief value of the letter. To say that the letter is part of the social machinery is superfluous. So, too, we might retort, is the novel, the essay, the biography. These have gained

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2. Ibid., p. 36.
a place in the arts. If there is no art of letter-writing, it is because letter-writing consists of composite arts, of conglomerate elements. Donne's letters are, in some instances, gems of essays; Joseph Hall's are discourses; James Howell's contain many of the best elements of fiction, in that he mastered the art of telling a story briefly and directly; Dorothy Osborne's letters include pictures in biography; Bacon's are of incalculable value historically; Sir Henry Wotton's are excellent travelogues. All these elements go to make up the familiar letter of the seventeenth century. Thus Howell tells us the story of the Pied Piper; Carleton describes the assassination of Buckingham; Milton writes of his blindness; university students write letters to their parents which have a distinctly modern tone; Dryden harangues with his book-seller; Hall condemns Papistry; Harington praises country life; and Dorothy Osborne carries on a love-affair by post.

The changing fashions, the portraits of seventeenth-century characters, amusing stories, details of social life are all illustrated in the letters. From the late Elizabethan letters and their flowery language, to the informal, intimate letters of the late years of the century, letters underwent certain stylistic changes. Each of the letter-writers contributed to this picture of a century.
PART I.

In the midst of political and religious difficulties, Queen Elizabeth died, and in 1603 James I was proclaimed King of England. When James came to the throne, the situation was precarious. General corruption had resulted from the system of monopolies in England. James did not make the best of the situation by any means. He became involved in a quarrel with Parliament, in financial difficulties, in religious struggles, in the question of the succession. His reign was marked by the rise and fall of great men, the Earl of Somerset, the Duke of Buckingham, and Francis Bacon.

Created Baron Verulam and Viscount St. Albans, Francis Bacon was one of the most significant figures of the century. A native of London, he studied law and entered Parliament at thirty-two years of age. At thirty-six he was Lord Chancellor. His contributions to literature are well known, and to philosophy and science no less recognized. The general reader is, however, less familiar with his letters, which, read in their sequence, relate clearly the story of his life. Indeed, it has been said, "Bacon himself was in so many respects greater than his age that the chief significance of his own priceless letters lies in their biographical value."

The Earl of Essex had temporarily fallen from favor in July of 1600, and to him Bacon addresses a pledge of friendship and trust.

My Lord,

No man can better expound my doings with your Lordship, which maketh me need to say the less. Only I humbly pray you to believe that I aspire to the conscience and commendation first of bonus civis, which with us is a good and true servant to the Queen, and next of bonus vir, that is an honest man. I desire your Lordship also to think that though I confess I love some things much better than I love your Lordship, as the Queen's service, her quiet and contentment, her honour, her favour, the good of my country, and the like, yet I love few persons better than yourself, both for gratitude's sake, and for your own virtues, which cannot hurt but by accident or abuse. Of which my good affection I was ever and am ready to yield testimony by any good offices but with such reservations as yourself cannot but allow; for as I was ever sorry that your Lordship should fly with waxen wings, doubting Icarus' fortune, so for the growing up of your own feathers, specially ostrich's, or any other save of a bird of prey, no man shall be more glad. And this is the axletree whereupon I have turned and shall turn, which to signify to you, though I think you are of yourself persuaded as much, is the cause of my writing; and so I commend your Lordship to God's goodness.

From Gray's Inn, this 20th day of July, 1600.

Your Lordship's most humbly,

Fr. Bacon.

Essex welcomed Bacon's advances, with the result that Bacon framed several letters with the intention of restoring his friend to the favor of Queen Elizabeth. Essex was liberated, and Bacon remained in ignorance of half of Essex's case which might have proved him guilty.

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2. Ibid., p. 195
Ever desirous of political advancement, Bacon frequently offered his advice in matters of state. To Secretary Cecil, after the defeat of the Spanish forces in Ireland, he recommends reducing the kingdom to civility:

> For if the wound be not opened again, and come not to a recrudency by new foreign succours, I think that no physician will go on much with letting blood in declinations morbi, but will intend to purge and corroborate.

He complains to Michael Hickes that "the Queen hath done somewhat for me, though not in the proportion I hoped", and writes him, in 1602, requesting aid in political pursuits.

And withal, though we card-holders have nothing to do but to keep close our cards and do as we are bidden, yet as I ever used your mean to cherish the truth of my inclination toward Mr. Secretary, so now again I pray as you find time let him know that he is the personage in this state that I love most; which containeth all that I can do, and expresseth all which I will say at this time.

Even before Elizabeth was dead, Bacon, during her illness, writes letters to Scotland seeking favor from James I, using his brother’s friendship for the men as a straw to cling to in the political storm which approached. Offering his services to King James, he writes:

> And yet further or more nearly, I was not a little encouraged, not only upon a supposal that unto Your Majesty’s sacred ears (open to the air of all virtues) there might perhaps have come

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2. Ibid., p.14
3. Ibid., p.57
4. Ibid., p.62
some small breath of the good memory of my father so long a principal counsellor in your kingdom....

I think there is no subject of your Majesty's, who loveth this island, and is not hollow and unworthy, whose heart is not set on fire, not only to bring you peace-offerings, but to sacrifice himself a burnt-offering to your Majesty's service, amongst which number no man's fire shall be more pure and fervent than mine.

To read Bacon's requests for "the well using of my name...if there be any biting or nibbling at it in that place," and his extravagant praise of the new king is a revelation to the person who knew Bacon only through his writings. This is a new Bacon, ailing for political favors, seeking influential people as friends, scheming, contriving, working for advancement. However, our condemnation of him can only be relative. The age in which he lived demanded these gestures. A man's goods, fortune, honor, even his life depended upon a favorable position in the eyes of the monarch. Bacon seems to have been genuinely impressed with King James, and his letter of praise to Sir Toby Matthews, a lifelong friend, has the ring of sincerity.

Things are here in good quiet. The King acts excellently well; for he puts in clauses of reservation to every proviso. He saith, he would be sorry to have just cause to remove any. He saith, he will displace none who hath served the Queen and state sincerely etc. The truth is, here be two extremes. Some few would have no change, no not reformation. Some many would have much change, even with perturbation.

2. Ibid., p.73
To the Earl of Northumberland he writes: ¹

Your Lordship shall find a prince the farthest from the appearance of vain-glory that may be, and rather like a prince of the ancient form than of the latter time. His speech is swift and cursory, and in the full dialect of his country; and in point of business, short; in point of discourse large. He affecteth popularity by gracing such as he hath heard to be popular, and not by any fashions of his own. He is thought somewhat general in his favours, and his virtue of access is rather because he is much abroad and in press, than that he giveth easy audience about serious things. He hasteneth a mixture of both kingdoms and nations, faster perhaps than policy will conveniently hear.

Bacon’s analysis of King James is remarkably accurate, though formed after one of his first meetings with the monarch.

In the same year, Bacon sought the title of knighthood, and, writing to Sir Robert Cecil, gives his reasons, "both because of this late disgrace, and because I have three new knights in my mess in Gray’s Inn, and because I have found out an alderman’s daughter, an handsome maiden, to my liking."² A later letter contains an added note. "For my knighthood," Bacon writes, "I wish the manner might be such as might grace me, since the matter will not; I mean, that I might not be merely gregarious in a troop."³

With his knighthood and advancements, Bacon won the "handsome maiden," Alice Barnham, as his wife. Dudley Carleton, writing to John Chamberlain on May 11, 1606, gives a description of the marriage.⁴

Sir Francis Bacon was married yesterday to his young wife in Maribone Chapel. He was clad from top to toe in purple, and hath made himself and his wife such store of fine raiments of cloth of silver and gold that it draws deep into her portion. The dinner was kept at his father-in-law Sir John Packington's lodging over against the Savoy, where his chief guests were the three knights, Cope, Hicks and Beetton, and upon this conceit (as he said himself) that since he could not have my L. of Salisbury in person which he wished, he would have him at least in his representative body.

Domestic difficulties occurred on account of the mother-in-law's interference. The latter herself incurred her husband's displeasure, and Chamberlain tells us that "Sir John Packington and his violent little lady are parted upon foul terms." Bacon disposed of the matter with an epistolary masterpiece.

To my Lady Packington, In Answer of a Message by Her Sent.

Madam,

You shall with right good will be made acquainted with anything that concerneth your daughters, if you bear a mind of love and concord; otherwise you must be content to be as a stranger unto us. For I may not be so unwise as to suffer you to be an author or occasion of disension between your daughters and their husbands, having seen so much misery of that kind in yourself.

Andaboveall things I will turn back your kindness, in which you say you will receive my wife if she be cast off. For it be much more likely we have occasion to receive you being cast off if you remember what is passed. But it is time to make an end of these follies. And you shall at this time pardon me this fault of writing to you. For I mean to do it no more till you use me and respect me as you ought. So wishing you better than it seemeth you will draw upon yourself, I rest.

2. Ibid.
Secure finally in his marriage, Bacon sought further political favors for himself and his friends, and turned his attention to writing. In 1605 he mailed copies of the 
Advancement of Learning to his friends and associates. His accompanying letter to Sir Thomas Bodley contains a pretty tribute to that great man:

For books are the shrine where the Saint is, or is believed to be; and you having built an Ark to save learning from deluge, deserve propriety in any new instrument or engine whereby learning should be improved or advanced.¹

To Mr. Matthews, who was a literary critic as well as a friend, Bacon writes:

I have now at last taught that child to go, at the swaddling whereof you were. My work touching the Proficiency and Advancement of Learning, I have put into two books, whereof the former which you saw, I count but as a Page to the latter. I have now published them both, whereof I thought it a small adventure to send you a copy, who have more right to it than any man, except Bishop Andrews, who was my inquisitor.²

Solicitous as to the welfare of his work, writing to Dr. Playfer, he requests the translation of his volume into Latin.

Therefore, since I have only taken upon me to ring a bell to call other wits together, (which is the meanest office,) it cannot but be consonant to my desire, to have that bell heard as far as can be.³

When, in the following year, he wishes the return of his 
Cogitate et Visa, he writes a chiding letter to

¹. The Works, Vol. III, p.253  
². Ibid., p.255  
³. Ibid., p.300
Sir Thomas Bodley, accusing him of slothfulness, and adding, half-humourously, "I would add a Cogitation against Libraries, and be revenged on you that way." ¹

He welcomed criticism, particularly from competent critics, and considered Tobie Mathew one. "The thing which I expect most from you," writes Bacon, "is, that you would read it carefully over by yourself, and to make some little note in writing, where you think (to speak like a critic) that I do perhaps underrate, or where I do indulge genius, or where, in fine, I give any manner of disadvantage to myself." ²

Shortly after, his friend was imprisoned for changing his religion. Bacon, no extremist in these matters, continues their correspondence, remonstrating:

I pray God, that understandeth us all better than we understand one another, contain you (even as I hope he will) at the least within the bounds of loyalty to his Majesty, and natural piety towards your country. And I intreat you much, sometimes to meditate upon the extreme effects of superstition in this last Powder treason, fit to be tabled and pictured in the chambers of meditation, as another hill above the grounds and well justifying the censure of the heathen, that superstition is far worse than atheism; by how much it is less evil to have no opinion of God at all, than such as is impious towards his divine majesty and goodness. Good Mr. Mathew, receive yourself back from these courses of perdition.³

Evidently Mr. Mathew cautioned him about religious matters, advice mingled with a certain bitterness, doubtless, because

² Ibid., Vol. IV, p.9.
³ Ibid., p.10.
of his own experience in this regard. Bacon replies frankly:

For your caution for church-men and church-matters, as for any impediment it might be to the applause and celebrity of my work, it moveth me not; but as it may hinder the fruit and good which may come of a quiet and calm passage to the good port to which it is bound, I hold it a just respect; so as to fetch a fair wind I go not too far about... Myself am like the miller of Huntington, that was wont to pray for peace amongst the willows; for while the wind blew, the wind-mills wrought; and the water-mill was less customed. So I see that controversies of religion must hinder the advancement of sciences.  

Bacon's attitude toward his own writing is clearly reflected in several letters. To Mr. Matthew he expresses an opinion.

And I must confess my desire to be, that my writings should not court the present time, or some few places, in such sort as might make them either less general to persons, or less permanent in future ages... That though many things of great hope decay with youth (and multitude of civil business is wont to diminish the price, though not the delight of contemplations), yet the proceeding in that work doth gain with me upon my affection and desire, both by years and business.

To Bishop Andrews, whom we have already mentioned as Bacon's "inquisitor," the author sends a copy of a book, with a letter requesting criticism.

I hasten not to publish; perishing I would prevent. And I am forced to respect as well my times as the matter. For with me it is thus, and

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2. Ibid., p. 135.
3. Ibid., p. 141.
I think with all men in my case; if I bind myself to an argument, it loadeth my mind; but if I rid my mind of the present cogitation, it is rather a recreation. . . .

My request to you is, that not by pricks, but by notes, you would make unto me whatsoever shall seem unto you either not current in the style, or harsh to credit and opinion, or inconvenient for the person of the writer; for no man can be judge and party; and when our minds judge by reflection of ourselves, they are more subject to error.

Pleased and flattered by the success of his work, Bacon writes rejoiceingly to Mr. Matthew. "They tell me my Latin is turned into silver, and become current," he exclaims. "My great work goeth forward, and after my manner, I alter ever when I add."¹

Turning again to seek political favors, he writes to the King, telling him he has decided that "your Majesty may think it rather a kind of dullness, or want of faith, than modesty, if I should not come with my pitcher to Jacob's well, as others do."²

Inviting a Latin correspondence with Casaubon in 1610, Bacon expresses his purpose in writing:

You are right in supposing my great desire is to draw the sciences out of their hiding-place into the light. For indeed to write at leisure that which is to be read at leisure matters little, but to bring about the better ordering of man's life and business, with all its troubles and difficulties, by the help of sound and true contemplations,—that is the thing I am at.

² Ibid., p. 241.
³ Ibid., p. 147.
Devoted to politics, he complains, “I have laboured like a packhorse in your business, and, as I think, have driven in a nail.” Immediately after Salisbury’s death, Bacon writes to the King:

Your Majesty hath lost a great subject and a great servant. But if I should praise him in propriety, I should say that he was a man fit to keep things from growing worse but no very fit man to reduce things to be much better. For he loved to have the eyes of all Israel a little too much upon himself, and to have all business still under the hammer and like clay in the hands of the potter, to mould it as he thought good.

Your Majesty may truly perceive, that, though I cannot challenge to myself either invention, or judgment, or eloquence, or method, or any of these powers, yet my offering is care and observance; and as my good old mistress was wont to call me her watch-candle, because it pleased her to say I did continually burn (and yet she suffered me to waste almost to nothing), so I must much more owe the like duty to your Majesty, by whom my fortunes have been settled and raised.

He complains justly that he was in the second form “longer than any that now sitteth hath been on the head form,” and professes to be “ready as a chess-man to be wherever your Majesty’s royal hand shall set me.”

Sympathizing with the royal financial troubles, Bacon seeks to advise and console King James. “It is no new thing for the greatest kings to be in debt,” he writes. “I have seen an Earl of Leicester, a Chancellor Hatton, an Earl of Essex, and an Earl of Salisbury all in debt; and yet was it no manner of diminution to their power or greatness.”

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2. Ibid., p. 280.
3. Ibid., p. 281.
Generally upon this subject of the repair of your Majesty's means, I beseech your Majesty to give me leave to make this judgment, that your Majesty's recovery must be by the medicines of the Galenists and Arabians, and not of the Chemists or Paracelsians. For it will not be wrought by any one fine extract or strong water, but by a skilful compound of a number of ingredients, and those by just weight and proportion, and that of some simples which perhaps of themselves or in over-great quantity were little better than poisons, but mixed and broken and in just quantity are full of virtue.

Bacon was made Attorney-General in 1613, and expresses his gratitude in a flattering letter to the King promising two things in particular, "that is integrity and industry." His friendship for Sir George Villiers led to a regular correspondence between the two. In one letter ridiculing greatness, Bacon comments: "But these things are but toys." He explains: "For as they speak of the Turquois stone in a ring, I will break into twenty pieces, before you have the least fall." On rumors of a difference between the Court of Chancery and the King's Bench, Bacon comments, "I know fame hath swift wings, specially that which hath black feathers." He advises him not to "cram in" his fortunes, and to assure himself "that fortune is of a woman's nature, that will sooner follow you by slighting than by too much wooing."
"Certainly," writes Bacon, "no service is comparable to

good counsel; and the reason is, because no man can do so much

for another as a man may do for himself. Now good counsel

helpeth a man to help himself." With Villier's sudden

rise to favor, Bacon recognizes him as "the new rising Star,"

reminds him that "a false friend is more dangerous than an

open enemy," and tenders detailed advice on his duty to the

nation in the influence which he can and should exercise on

the King.¹

Bacon, in 1617, was very distinctly out of favor at court.
The difference was a slight one, Queen's disapproval of a

marriage being forced between Buckingham's brother and

Sir Edward Coke's daughter. Buckingham's letters never

resumed their intimate exchange of ideas; Bacon soon

realized his displeasure.

In 1621, Bacon was charged with bribery and corruption,
deposed from office and fined. Before his formal impeachment,

he writes King James a letter defending himself.

And for the briberies and gifts wherewith I

am charged, when the books of hearts shall be

opened, I hope I shall not be found to have the

troubled fountain of a corrupt heart, in a

depraved habit of taking rewards to pervert

justice; howsoever I may be frail, and partake of

the abuses of the times... I

have been no haughty, or intolerable, or

hateful man, in my conversation or carriage. I

have inherited no hatred from my father, but am a

good patriot born. Wherefore should this be? For

these are the things that use to raise dislikes

abroad.²


2. Ibid., p. 13.

Bacon writes afterwards to Buckingham, telling him, "I am much fallen in love with private life." To King James he writes in 1622, saying, "I was towards you but as a bucket and cistern, to draw forth and conserve, whereas yourself was the fountain," reminding him that "there is, as I conceive, a kind of fraternity between great men that are, and those that have been, being but the several tenses of one verb," and hoping that "I, that desire to live to study, may not be driven to study to live."  

The last years of Bacon's life were devoted to study and scientific writings. Bacon was familiar with Seneca's Epistles to Lucilius, for in 1612 he writes to Prince Henry:

For Seneca's epistles to Lucilius, if one mark them well, are but Essays, that is, dispersed meditations, though conveyed in the form of epistles. . . . But my hope is, they may be as grains of salt, that will rather give you an appetite than offend you with satiety.

He considers the possibility of the publication of his letters in an epistle to the Lord Bishop of Lincoln in 1625.

I find that the ancients (as Cicero, Demosthenes, Plinius, Secundus, and others), have preserved—both their creations and their epistles.—In imitation of whom I have done the like to my own, which nevertheless I will not publish while I live. . . . The letters, many of them, touch too much upon late matters of state, to be published; yet I was willing they should not be lost.

Bacon's letters are his own autobiography, containing an account of minute political affairs, his marriage, his writings, his friendships. They are frequently factual and of contemporaneous interest solely; at other times, they possess details of social relationships that throw a new light on the man; still again, they reveal the literary man, the master of English, who can express in a few words a thought which has evolved from hours of meditation. As biographical and historical material, they are of greatest value.

In all of the detailed political news contained in Bacon's letters, there is a noticeable absence of comments upon upon Sir Walter Raleigh, himself an author and letter-writer. This debonair, adventurous Elizabethan fared badly after the death of good Queen Bess, and during this period when all was not well with him he wrote a number of epistolary masterpieces.

Author, soldier, explorer, courtier, Sir Walter had incurred the dislike of Sir Robert Cecil, a fact commented upon by Sir John Harington at the time of Raleigh's imprisonment. "Cecil doth beare no love to Raleigh, as you well understande in the matter of Essex. I wiste not that he hathe evyll design in pointe of faiths or religyon." It is certain that Raleigh himself harboured

no ill-feeling concerning Cecil, for a letter of condolence upon the death of Cecil's wife in 1596 reflects a friendly, intimate association. Whether Cecil was envious of Raleigh's abilities or not is a question left unanswered by history, but it is remarkable that Cecil should have stood so high in King James' favor, while Raleigh should not find means whereby to approach the king.

In 1603 Sir Walter Raleigh was imprisoned and condemned to death on a charge of secretly allying himself with Spanish interests. Before his trial at Winchester, he writes to King James, requesting consideration in a letter which contains a shaded reference to Cecil's possible influence on the King.

I trust that no man, under colour of making examples, shall persuade your majesty to leave the word merciful out of your style, for it will be no less profit your majesty, and become your greatness, than the word invincible.¹

To the Earls of Southampton, Suffolk and Devonshire, and to the Lord Cecil, Raleigh addresses a declaration of innocence, reminding them, "you may be assured that there is no glory, nor any reward that can recompense the shedding of innocent blood." Regarding the severity of the charges, he warns them, "But as you have not erred, like ill surgeons, to lay on plaisters too narrow for so great wounds, so I trust that you will not imitate unlearned

physicians, to give medicines more cruel than the disease itself." The futility of the entire situation overwhelmed him. "Alas!" he writes, "to what end should we live in the world, if all the endeavors of so many testimonies shall be blown off with one blast of breath, or be prevented by one man's word." 1

The two letters written to his wife while in the Tower are among the best of the entire century. In July, 1603, torn with remorse and a sense of failure, his letter is bitter. "I am now made an enemy and traitor by the word of an unworthy man," he tells her. "Hope and Despair live not together. I know it is forbidden to destroy ourselves; but I trust it is forbidden in this that we destroy not ourselves despairing of God's mercy. The mercy of God is immeasurable; the cogitations of men comprehend it not." He was not tempted by thoughts of suicide. "I am tempted only with Sorrow, whose sharp teeth devour my heart. O God! Thou art goodness itself, Thou canst not but be good to me." 2

Many days later, awaiting execution in the Tower, Raleigh manages to "steal this time, while others sleep" and write a final letter to the woman he loved, a letter showing the man torn between practical business matters and his surging emotions. He writes:

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You shall now receive, my dear wife, my last words, in these my last lines, my Love I send you, that you may keep it when I am dead, and my counsel that you may remember it when I am no more. I would not by my will present you with Sorrows, dear Bess. Let them go into the grave with me, and be buried in the dust.

Raleigh writes likewise to the King, telling him that "the life which I had (most mighty prince) the law hath taken from me; and I am now but the same earth and dust out of which I was first framed," and, concluding in a vein of bantering, "this being the first letter that ever your majesty received from a dead man." ²

Fully prepared for death, Raleigh was granted a reprieve, his sentence changed to perpetual imprisonment. In 1610 he writes to Sir Walter Cope, begging him to permit his wife to share his imprisonment, thus allowing him some hope of "peaceable sorrow." ³

Raleigh remained for fourteen years in the Tower, during which time he received visitors, studied chemistry, having set up a laboratory in a room of the Tower, wrote his History of the World. His interests were many, including a description of a ship's model for the young Prince Henry. "Safety is more to be respected than shows, or niceness for ease;" he writes the young prince, "in sea journeys both cannot well stand together, and therefore the most necessary is to be chosen." ⁴

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In 1617 King James, worried about finances, recalled Raleigh's tales of gold in Guiana, and Raleigh was released with the understanding that he was to discover his golden cities. Writing to Sir Ralph Winwood before his departure, Raleigh deplores still the relations of himself to the king. "Had his majesty known me," he believes, "I had never been here where I now am."¹

The expedition was ill-fated. In March, 1617, Raleigh writes Winwood, telling him of the voyage:

We found the winds so contrary (which is also contrary to nature) and so many violent storms, and raines, as wee spent six weeks in that passage, by reason whereof and that in so great heats, we wanted water (for at the Ile Brake of Cap de Verd, we lost our cables and anchors, and our water cask, being driven from the Island with a hurlican, and weare all lyke to have perished) great sickness fell amongst us and carried away great numbers of our ablest men both for sea and land. The 17. of November we had sight of the coast of Guiana, and some after came to anchor in fivye degrees at the river Caliana, here we stayed till the 4th of December, landed our sick men, set up the barges and shalnups, which we brought out of England in quarters, wash our ships and tooks in fresh water, being feed and assisted by the Indyans of my old acquaintance, with a great deals of love and respect. My selfe having beene in the hands of death without hope some 6 weeks (and not yet hable otherwise to move, then as I was caried in a chayre) gave order to fivye small shippes to sayle into Oranoko.²

Unfortunately, Spanish blood was shed, despite Raleigh's pledge to the contrary, and in the battle Raleigh lost his son, "with whose (to say the truth) all respect of the world hath taken end in me."

¹ The Works, p. 629.
James Howell, in a letter to Sir James Croft,
insinuates that Raleigh "hath tampered with his body by
physic, to make him look sickly." The letter written by
Raleigh himself from Guiana to his wife attests the genuine
illness with which he was afflicted.

I was loath to write, because I know not, how
to comfort you, and God knowes, I never knew
what sorrow meant til now. All that I can say to
you, is, that you must obey the will and
providence of God, and remember, that the Queenes
Majestie bore the losse of Prince Henry, with a
magnanimous heart, and the Lady Harrington of her
only sonne. Comfort your heart (Dear Bease) I
shall sorrow for us both; and I shall sorrow the
lesse, because I have not longe to sorrow, because
I have not longe to live. I refer you to
Mr. Secretary's Wynwoods Letter, who will give
you a copy of it, if you send for itt. Therein
you shall know what hath past, what I have written
by that Letter, For my braines are broken, and
tis a torment to mee, to write, especially of
misere: I have desired Mr. Secretary, to give my
Lord Carew, a Coppie of his Letter. I have
cleansed my shipp of sicke men, and sent them home;
and hope, that God will send us somewhat ere
wee returne. Command mee to all att Loathbury.
You shall heare from mee, if I live, from newe
found Land, where I meanes to cleane my shipp and
revictuall, for I have Tobacco enough, to pay for
itt. The Lord bless ye, and comfort you, that
you may beare patiently, the death of your most
valiant sonne.

Your Wal; Raleigh;
March the 22 th from the
Isle of St. Christophers.

... Now when Kemish came backe and gave me the
former reasons, which moved him not to open the
Myne, The one the death of my sonne, the second,
the weaknesses of the English, and their
impossibilitye, to worke itt, and to bee
visualled, a third that itt was folly to discover
itt for the Spaniard, and the last both my
weaknesses, and my being unpardoned; And that I
rejected all these Arguments, and told him I must
leave him to himself, to answer it to the king and the state, he shutt himselfe into his Cabbin, and shutt himselfe, with a pocket pistoll, which broke one of his Ribbs, and finding that it had not prevailed, he thrust a longe knife under his short Ribbs, upp to the handle, and dyed. . . .

I am sure there is never a base slave in the fleet hath taken the paines and Care, that I have done, hath slept soe little, and travailed soe much, My freinds will not beleive in them, and for the rest I Care not, God in heaven blesse you, and strengthen your heart.

Returning to England safely only to face execution, Raleigh had no gold, and was condemned to death for breaking the Spanish peace. Howell tells us of Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, shouting "Pirates, Pirates, Pirates!" at King James, and his accusations that Raleigh "hath broken the sacred peace betwixt the two kingdoms."²

There was a great deal of sympathy for him. Even Queen Anne, writing to the Marquis of Buckingham, begs him:

If I have any power or credit with you, I pray you let me have a trial of it at this time, in dealing sincerely and earnestly with the king, that sir Walter Raleigh's life may not be called in question.³

Sir Walter Raleigh himself wrote a letter of defense to the king which in its forcefulness and sincerity is the best of his letters. From the Tower on September 24, 1618, Raleigh writes:

May it please your most excellent majestie.

If in my Jorry outward bound I had of my men murdered at the Ilands and spared to take revenge, if I did discharge some Spanish barkes taken, without spoile, if I forbare all partes of the Spanish Indies wherein I might have taken twenty of their townes on the sea cost and didonly follow the enterprise which I undertooke for Guiana, where without any direction from me a Spanish village was burnt, which was newly sett up within three miles of the Mine.

By your majesties favor I finde noe reason wher the Spanish Embassadore should complaine of me. If it were lawful for the Spanish to murther 26 Englishmen tyenge them backe to backe and then to cutt thire throtes, when they had traded with them a whole moneth and came to them on the land without so much as one sword amongst them all, and if it may not be lawfull for your majesties subjects being forced by them, to repell force by force we may justly say O miserable Englishe; If Parker and Matton took Campeach and other places in the Honduras seated in the hart of the Spanish Indies, burnt townes, killed the Spaniards, and had nothing sayed to them on their returns, and that my selfe forbare to looke into the Indies because I would not offend. I may as justly say O miserable Sir Walter Rauleigh. If I had suffred by sickness and otherwise a world of miseries, and if I had resistted with the manifest hazard of my life the rebells and spoilese which my companyes would have made, if when I was poore I could have mad my selfe rich, if when I had gotten my libertye which all men and nature it selfe doth so much prize I rendred it againe, if (when) I might elsewhere have sould my shipp and goods and put five or six thousand pounds in my purse, I have brought her into England. I beseech your Majestie believe that all this I have done because it should be sayed to your Majestie that your majestie had given libertie and trust to a man whose and was but the recovery of his libertie, and whose had not betrayed your majesties trust.

My mutiners teould me that if I returned for England I should be undone, but I beleived more in your majesties goodness then in their arguments. Sure I am that I am the first that being free and able to inrich my selfe, hath embraced povertie, and as sure I am that my example shall make me the last. But your majesties wisdome and goodnes I have made my Judges whose have ever bine and shall
ever remain
Your Majesties

Most humble Vassall
W. Raleigh.

In November, 1608, Raleigh, accompanied by Robert Tounson, chaplain to King James, mounted the scaffold. Tounson, in a letter to Sir John Isham, recounts Raleigh’s death, relating his profession of innocence to the last, how “he was very cheerful that morning he died, ate his breakfast heartily and took tobacco and made no more of his death than if he had been to take a journey. . . . This was the news a week since; but now it is blown over, and he almost forgotten.”

Thus ended the life of Raleigh, and however contemporary events cast into the background the memory of the Elizabethan adventurer and courtier, succeeding ages have preserved the Raleigh legend well. His letters are remarkable in their sincerity and simplicity. His narrative style is racing and modern; in the entire account of his trip to Guiana there is not a dull sentence. His tender considerations for his wife, worries about his children, advice on ship-building to a prince, pride in his own bravery, despair at the lot to which he has fallen, — all reflect in the letters Raleigh the subject, husband and father, rather than

2. Birkenhead, op. cit., p. 84.
the courtier and adventurer of Elizabethan days. His letters, although not well known, a fact accountable, perhaps, to their scarcity are as forceful and as commendable for literary grace and expression as anything Raleigh has written.

The graceful courtiers of Elizabethan days are not yet dead, for the godson of Queen Elizabeth is still living at Kelston. Of all the letters of the century, those of Sir John Harington (1561? - 1612) give the most intimate and illuminating pictures of the court life of the times. His most significant letters appeared first in Maecenas Antiqua, compiled and selected by himself. A light vein of humor runs through the early letters. Late in life, retirement to the country and translation of the psalms become his chief interests. An amiable person, well-liked by both Queen Elizabeth and King James, Harington is one of the few men who seems to have been genuinely uninterested in politics. "I will copy no man's steps so close as to treade on his heel," he writes to Lord Thomas Howard. To Dr. John Still he voices his opinion of honesty in politics:

He that thryvethe in a courte muste put halfe his honestie under his bonnet; and manie we knowe that never parte that commoditie at all, and sleepe with it all in a bag.  

1. The Letters and Epigrams, p. 100.
2. Ibid., p. 108.
Despite the fact that Harington sought the new king's favors before the death of the queen, his devotion to her was genuine and sincere. Sir Robert Sidney, writing to his friend in 1600, comments that "The queen hath tasted your dainties, and saith you have marvellous skill in cooking of good fruits."\(^1\) Harington himself contemplates sending the queen, as a gift, "500 li. in money, and some pretty jewel or garment."\(^2\)

Following orders Harington joined Essex' expedition against the rebel Tyrone in Ireland, and was knighted while away, a fact which he afterwards regretted. "In good sooth I feared her Majestie more than the rebel Tyrone, and wished I had never received my Lord of Essex' honor of knighthood."\(^3\) Threatened with the Fleet after his return, he jocularly narrates that, "I answered poetically 'that coming so late from the land-service, I hoped that I should not be prest to serve in her Majesty's fleet in Fleet-street.'"\(^4\) The Essex rebellion broke out finally in February of 1601.

Harington had been cleared of the suspicion of making up the list of knights who were to be deprived of their titles. He had urged Sir Robert Cecil at the time not to publish the proclamation, claiming that knighthood was to honor what baptism was to Christianity, and "yt seems to hold with

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2. Ibid., p. 85.
3. Ibid., p. 90.
4. Ibid., p. 79.
good reason, for if the sword by error shold out of a
wrong had yt can never bee set on agayn, no yt lay honor
by lyke error, on an unfitte showlder, it cannot bee taken
of agayns. Visiting the court at the time of the Essex
trouble, his description of Elisabeth harassed by new and
sundry worries is vivid and intimate. She orders him away,
with a message to Lord Buckhurst to "tell that witty fool,
my godson, to go home; it is no season now to feele it
here." Wasting no time, the godson in question hurriedly
retires to Kelston, deciding:

    I will eat Aldborne rabbits, and get fish
    (as you recommend) from the man at Curre-Rival,
    and get partridge and hares when I can, and my
    venison where I can, and leave all great matters
    to those that like them better than myself.2

At the time of the Queen's illness the next year he
returns to court, and writes to his wife, Lady Mary, whose
"lips do not wanten out of discretion's path," of his
visit to the Queen's chamber. "She heide in her hands a
goldene cuppe," he writes, "which she often put to her
lripps; but, in soothe, her hearte seemethe too fulle to
lack more fillinge." At dinner with the archbishops and
church pasters, he finds "more corporal than spiritual
refreshements".3

2. See Part II, p. 13
One of the best character studies of Queen Elizabeth is contained in a letter written to Robert Marham by Harington in 1606. Reminiscing, he gives us an intimate and personal picture of the Queen. We learn of her habit of reading when troubled, of her admiration for Seneca's "wholesome advice," of her tact and diplomacy in "fishing for men's souls," of her attitude toward marriage, of her love of fine clothing, and her dealings with Lady Howard who appeared in a gown which Elizabeth "thought exceeded her own." Somewhat naively he confesses, "We did all love her, for she said she loved us, and much wisdom was showed in thy matter."

Harington never forgot the humiliation suffered on account of his services in Ireland, and years after resented Tyrone's honors at court. 2

Harington entertained himself with writing. To Lady Jane Rogers, his mother-in-law, he sends a copy of Orlando, to which he adds "as many of the toyes I have formerly written to you and your daughter, as I could collect out of my scattered papers." He began his translation of David's psalms in 1600, and first sends several copies of them to the Countess of Bedford, his daughter.

1. See Part II, p.
2. Ibid., p. 7
3. Letters and Epigrams, p. 86.
I have presumed to fill up the ample paper with some shallow meditations of my own, not to conjoyne this with them, for that were to pleasethat were to pleasethat were to pleasethat were to pleasethat were to pleasethat were to please sattin with sack-cloth, or patch loose upon gold; much lesse to compare them, that are but as foyle to a damond, but as it were to attend them. So as being bothe of meaneer matter, and lightier manner, yett maie serve to unite as a wanton page is admitted to beare a torch to a chaste matrone.

When King James came to England, Harington wrote to

Lord Thomas Howard:

I am now settynge forthe for the countrie, where I will read Petrarch, Ariosto, Horace, and such wise ones. I will make verses on the maidens, and give my wine to the masters; but it shall be such as I do love, and do love me. . . . Honeste prose will never better a mans purse at courtes, and, had not my fortune been in terra firma, I might, even for my verses, have dasted bare foot with Childe and her school-fellows until I did sweat, and then have gotten nothings to shooke my thirste, but a pitcher of Helicons well. E'en let the beardless god Apollo dip his own chin in such drinke; a paire of my face shall have better entertainment.

In 1603 Harington was imprisoned for debt, and repeated requests for settlement of his case brought no immediate response. Seeing his opportunity to escape, he does so, and writes Lord Cecil explaining his reasons. "My escape was an honest escape," he claims, "They cannot deny the place to be in the gatehouse, and vi ded and viith ayske." He sought and was granted an audience with the king in December of the same year, and describes the visit in a letter to Sir Amin Paulet. Characteristically, he tells us that his

1. Letters and Epigrams, p. 87.
2. Ibid., p. 99.
3. Ibid., p. 104.
replies to King James' remarks were covert, because he was not "willinge a subjecte shoulde be wiser than his Prince, nor even appearre so." Complaining of the monarch's inquiries, he writes:

He soughte much to knowe my advances in philosophie, and uttered profounde sentences of Aristotle, and suche lyke wryters, which I had never reade, and which some are bolde enoughe to saye, others do not understand.

Debts being finally paid, Harington again sought favor at the court. A letter to him from Lord Thomas Howard in 1607 gives a clear picture of Harington's position at court, as well as of King James' peculiarities. "The King hath often enquired after you," his friend tells him, "and would readily see and converse with the 'merry blade,' as he hath oft called you, since you was here." He offers practical advice in the event of a visit:

I would wish you to be well trimmed; get a new jerkin well bordered and not too short; the King saith, he liketh a flowing garment; be sure it be not all of one sort, but diversely colourd, the collar falling somewhat down, and your ruff well stiffened and bushy. We have lately had many gallants who failed in their suits, for want of due observance of these matters. The King is nicely heedfull of such points, and dwelleth on good looks and handsome accoutrements. ... Robert Carr is now most likely to win the Prince's affection, and dothe it wondrously in a little time. The Prince leaneth on his arm, pinches his cheek, smoothes his ruffled garment, and when he looketh at Carr, directeth discourse to divers others.

I will advise one thing:— the roan jennet, whereon the King rideth every day, must not be forgotten to be praised; and the good furniture above all, what lost a great man much notice the day. ... Carr hath all favours, as I told you before; the King teacheth him Latin every morning; and I think some one should teach him English too; for, as he is a Scottish lad, he hath much need of better language.

With best wishes, Howard writes: "God speed your ploughing at the courte: I know you do it rarely at home."¹

Harington bothered no longer with court affairs. During the last years of his life he became interested in the repairs of the Church of SS. Peter and Paul at Bath, three miles from Kelston. His letters to Thomas Sutton advise that "rich men should open your barnes" and offer him lodging at Bath, where he will provide "good dry wood for your fyre; the town hath ever good beefe and bredde."² To Lord Compton he writes urging contributions to the church.

During these years, too, he prepares his psalms for publication. In a letter to an unknown correspondent, he says of them:

For as the fathers call these psalms darts to drive away devills, so I have been an instrument to sharpen up som of them that seem'd to bee dull poyneted, and overgrown with rust, have thearby, I think, offended the sheife enemy of mankynd.

Leaving the handling of the publishing to King James, he praises the monarch's own work as having "faithfully delyverde in smooth verse pure divinity."³

1. Letters and Epigrams, Appendix.
2. Ibid., p. 139.
3. Ibid., p. 142.
4. Ibid., p. 143.
In May, 1612, Harington, "sick of a dead palsie," went to Bath to visit Robert Cecil, who died about a week later. Harington himself, court wit and jester, died in November of the same year.

In an estimate of his letters it is easy to encounter exaggerations, for they are most praiseworthy. He has captured in them the familiar, intimate style which letters should possess. They give an excellent picture of himself, the courtier, the writer in retirement, the older man mellowed by experience and observation. They contain some of the best character portraits of King James and Queen Elizabeth that have ever been written. They give a glimpse of social life and customs unsurpassed by any other letter-writer in the century.

One of the most outstanding literary figures of the times is John Donne, and the fact that an amazing number of his letters were preserved by his correspondents is ample testimony of the value attached to them by his contemporaries. Of his letters 129 were published by John Donne the younger in 1651, without regard to chronology, and, often, with no regard to correct dates and addresses. His letters to Sir George More and Sir Thomas Egerton appeared first in Kempe's Loosey Manuscripts. In 1660 appeared A Collection of Letters Made by Sr. Tobie Mathowe, Esq., which contains many letters to and from Donne. The most recent discovery was the unearthing of a collection of 32
letters, most of them addressed to Sir Henry Wotton, which justify Walton's claims as to the friendship existing between the two men. In 1929 an unrecorded letter was sent to America, which is of singular interest inasmuch as it contains Donne's seal, a sheaf of snakes, peculiarly appropriate to that mystical and metaphysical writer. The value of the letters as masterpieces of epistolary art is admitted by critics, but the chief interest is the psychological development of a man's mind,—the brilliant, insolent young man, the husband who is seeking court favours; the being whose melancholic turn of mind slowly develops into a fervent religion. To turn to the letters themselves, which reveal this development, is an illuminating experience.

In 1601, shortly before Christmas, Donne eloped with Anne More, the daughter of Sir George More. The Earl of Northumberland was designated as the person to break the news to Anne's father, and with him he carried a letter from Donne which explains his actions.

At her (Anne's) lying in town this Parliament I found means to see her twice or thrice. We both knew the obligations that lay upon us, and we adventured equally; and about three weeks before Christmas we married. And as at the doing there

were not used above five persons, of which I protest to you by my salvation there was not one that had any dependence or relation to you, so in all the passage of it did I forbear to use any such person, who by furtherance of it might violate any trust or duty towards you.

The reasons why I did not fore-acquaint you with it (to deal with the same plainness I have used) were these:— I knew my present estate less than fit for her. I knew (yet I knew not why) that I stood not right in your opinion.¹

The irate father caused Donne's dismissal and imprisonment, and from the Fleet Donne reminds him, "How little and how short the comfort and pleasure of destroying is, I know your wisdom and religion informs you."² Sir George More refused all communication, and the young son-in-law turns to Sir Thomas Egerton for aid. "My services never had so much worth in them as to deserve the favours wherewith they were paid," he writes; "but they had always so much honesty as that only this hath stained them."³

Released from prison, he requests permission to write to his wife, a request which seems to have been unanswered. Donne requests Egerton's mercy, and turns to Sir Robert Cotton to seek employment. To his friend with whom he exchanged letters once a week during the greatest part of his life, Donne communicates the news that "Sir George will,

². Ibid., p. 104.
³. Ibid., p. 105.
as I hear, keep her till I send for her; and let her remain there yet, his good nature and her sorrow will work something. I have liberty to ride abroad, and feel not much of an imprisonment."1 To Sir George he expresses his worry, confident that, although not entirely ruined, "I languish and rust dangerously."2

Relenting at last, his father-in-law and the commissioners wish to cease inflicting any punishment upon him, and, knowing this, Donne writes to Sir Thomas in an attempt to regain his position.

"I was four years your Lordship's secretary, not dishonest nor greedy. The sickness of which I died is that I began in your Lordship's house this love. Where I shall be buried I know not. It is late now for me (but yet necessity, as it hath continually an autumn and a withering, so it hath ever a spring, and must put forth) to begin that course which some years past I purposed to travel, though I could now do it, not much disadvantageously. But I have some bridle upon me now more than then by my marriage of this gentlewoman, in providing for whom I can and will show myself very honest, though not so fortunate."3

One can sympathize with Sir Thomas Egerton's position. He had not wished to dismiss Donne in the first instance, and only by the insistence of Sir George More had he been brought to do so. The case had attracted a good deal of comment and observation, and it was almost impossible to restore Donne to his former position.

2. Ibid., p. 112.
3. Ibid., p. 114.
4. Ibid., p. 167.
Donne resided at Pyrford, in Surrey, with Sir Francis Wooley and his wife during the years 1602-1604. The following year they moved to Mitcham, where the discomforts of living conditions first produced in Donne the extreme melancholy and depressive outlook which became so pronounced in later years. During these years most of his letters were addressed to Sir Henry Goodyer, the friend previously mentioned, to whom he wrote each week. During this period, too, Donne began his correspondence with Lady Magdalen Herbert. In 1607 the earliest and probably the first letter to her was written. Of letters, he says:

I am so my letters as rigid as a Puritan, as Caesar was to his wife. I can as ill endure a suspicion and misinterpretable word as a fault. But remember that nothing is flattery which the speaker believes; and of the grossest flattery there is this good use, that they tell us what we should be.¹

Of London, during the plague, Donne remarks that it is "a place full of danger and vanity and vice, though the Court be gone."² During his visits to the city he called on Mrs. Herbert, in one instance on a Sunday, to which he gives a flattering interpretation:

My coming this day is by the example of your St. Mary Magdalen, who rose early upon Sunday to seek that which she loved most; and so did I.³

At Mitcham, he becomes interested in transcendental

2. Ibid., p. 166.
3. Ibid., p. 167.
questions and in "the physic of our soul, divinity."\footnote{1}

Dr. Horton was exerting his influence to obtain Donne's talents for the English Church, but not until 1607, in a letter to Goodyer, does Donne definitely distinguish the English church as "ours."\footnote{2}

Friendship was to Donne a religion, and his attitude is reflected in his letters. To Sir Henry Wotton he writes a letter which he believes may perish before it reaches its destination, but, recalling the Crusades, Donne says, "in all pilgrimages entered in devotion, he which dies in the way enjoys all the benefit and indulgences which the end did afford."\footnote{3}

Donne suffers at Mitcham from ague and cramps. He is compelled to refuse an invitation to accompany Goodyer to Parson's Green because, despite the inducements of such a trip, "an ague fleute them all."\footnote{4} Again, at night, while in bed he writes Goodyer a letter which reflects a new turn of mind.

I have occasion to sit late some nights in my study (which your books make a pretty library), and now I find that that room hath a wholesome emblematic use; for having under it a vault, I make that promise me, that I shall die reading, since my book and a grave are so near.\footnote{5}

In the spring of 1608 Donne writes an unknown correspondent a letter which throws some most interesting lights upon

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\item \footnote{1}{Gosse, op.cit., Vol. I, p. 173.}
\item \footnote{2}{Ibid., p. 169.}
\item \footnote{3}{Ibid., p. 179.}
\item \footnote{4}{Ibid., p. 182.}
\item \footnote{5}{Ibid., p. 195.}
\end{itemize}
his temperament.

Of the diseases of the mind there is no
criterion, no canon, no rule, for our own taste
and apprehension and interpretation should be the
judge, and that is the disease itself. Therefore
sometimes when I find myself transported with
jollity and love of company, I hang leads at my
heels, and reduce to my thoughts my fortunes, my
years, the duties of a man, of a friend, of a
husband, of a father, and all the incumbrances of
a family; when sadness dejects me, either I
countermine it with another sadness, or I kindle
squibs about me again, and fly into sportfulness
and company; and I find ever after all, that I
am like an exorcist, which had long laboured about
one, which at last appears to have the mother, that
I still mistake my disease.1

The Mitcham "hospital" further depresses him. He is unable
to write, and conditions lacking in such convenience annoy
him. "I write from the fireside in my parlour," he tells
Goodyer, "and in the noise of three gamesome children, and
by the side of her whom, because I have transplanted into
such a wretched fortune, I must labour to disguise that from
her by all such honest devises, as giving her my company
and discourse."2 Illness in his family and his wife's
sickness due to worries about the children all depress Donne.

In September of 1608, Donne writes the following
despairing letter to his friend.

Every Tuesday I make account that I turn a
great hour-glass, and consider a week's life is
run out since I write. But if I ask myself what
I have done in the last watch, or would do in the
next, I can say nothing; if I say that I have

2. Ibid., p. 190.
passed it without hurting any, so may the
spider in my window.

Two of the most precious things which God
hath afforded us here, for the agony and exercise
of our sense and spirit, which are a thirst and
inhitation after the next life, and a frequency of
prayer and meditation in this, are often envenomed
and putrid, and stray into a corrupt disease.

... I would not that death should take me
asleep. I would not have him merely seize me, and
only declare me to be dead, but win me and
overcome me.

When I must shipwreck, I would do it in a sea
where mine impotency might have some excuse; not
in a sullen weedy lake, where I could not have so
much as exercise for my swimming. ... Therefore I
would fain do something, but that I cannot tell
what is no wonder. For to choose is to do; but to
be no part of any body is to be nothing.

In the following years Sir George More aided his
daughter, and the struggle for bread and butter ceased.

Donne began his friendship and correspondence with
Lady Bedford, Sir John Harington's daughter; he continued
his letters to Goodyer; he began that curious exchange
of letters with Mrs. Bridget White. Gladly Donne turned
to theological reading, and gave his attitude toward
studies in a letter to Goodyer in 1609.

As all shadows are of one colour, if you respect
the body from which they are cast (for our
shadows upon clay will be dirty, and in a garden
green and flowery) so all retirings into a shadowy
life are alike from all causes, and alike subject
to the barbarousness and insipid dulness of the
country: only the employments and that upon which
you cast and bestow your pleasure, business, or
books, gives it the tincture and beauty.

2. Ibid., p. 218.
To Goodyer he confides his tolerance in saying, "you know I never fettered nor imprisoned the word Religion," and deplores the difficulty of asking favors of God.

Yea, words which are our subllest and delicatest outward creatures, being composed of thoughts and breath, are so muddy, so thick, that our thoughts themselves are so, because (except at the first rising) they are ever leavened with passions and afflictions.¹

Of London he writes to Mrs. White:

Your going away hath made London a dead carcass. A Term and a Court do a little spice and embalm it and keep it from putrefaction, but the soul went away in you; and I think the only reason why the plague is somewhat slackened is because the place is dead already, and nobody left in it worth the killing.²

In 1611 and 1612 Deane visited France, and from Amiens writes to George Gerrard on the possibility of religion suffering at the hands of the French because "French papistry is but like French velvet—a pretty slack Religion, that would soon wear out, and not of the three-piled papistry of Italy and Spain."³ He sends news to Sir Henry Wotton, with comments on letters:

When letters have a convenient handsome body of news, they are letters; but when they are spun out of nothing, they are nothing, or but apparitions and ghosts, with such hollow sounds,⁴ as he that hears them knows not what they said.

Before his return to London he writes to Goodyer telling him of his loneliness for amiable company.

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2. Ibid., p. 234.
3. Ibid., p. 287.
4. Ibid., p. 290.
Sir,—I am not weary of writing; it is the course but durable garment of my love, but I am weary of wanting you. I have a mind like those bodies which have hot livers and cold stomachs; or such a distemper as travelled me at parts a fever and dysentery; in which, that which is physic to one infirmity, nourishes the other. So I abhor nothing more than sadness, except the ordinary remedy, change of company.

And certainly despair is infinitely worse than presumption; both because this is an excess of love, that of fear; and because this is up, that down the hills easier, and more stumbling. Heaven is expressed by singing, hell by weeping.

In October of 1612, Donne writes to the Lord of Rochester to the effect that he has “resolved to make my profession Divinity,” and offers his services to church and state.2

His cessation from writing temporarily may be explained by his letter to Sir Robert Ker:

If my Muse were only out of fashion, and but wounded and maimed like free-will in the Roman church, I should adventure to put her to an epitaphialium. But since she is dead, like free-will in our Church, I have not so much Muse left as to lament her loss.3

London begins to pall on him, a feeling expressed to Sir Robert Ker:

We are condemned to this desert of London for all this summer, for it is company, not houses, which distinguishes between cities and deserts. When I begin to apprehend that, even to myself, who can relieve myself upon books, solitariness was a little burdensome, I believe it would be much more so to my wife, if she were left alone. So much company, therefore, as I am, she shall not want, and we had not one another at so cheap a rate, as that we shall ever be weary of one another.4

2. Ibid., p. 20.
4. Ibid., p. 47.
In 1614 Donne decides to publish his poems, and communicates his plans to Sir Henry Goodyer: "I apprehend some incongruities in the resolution, and I know what I shall suffer from many interpretations. By this occasion I am made a rhapsoder of mine own rage, and that cost me more diligence to seek them than it did to make them."  

In 1615 Donne takes holy orders, and becomes the famous churchman and Dean of St. Paul's. In April of 1619 he sends a copy of his volume justifying suicide to Sir Robert Ear, saying of Biathanatos:

> Let any that your discretion admits to the sight of it know the date of it, and that it is a book written by Jack Donne and not by Dr. Donne. Reserve it for me if I live, and if I die, I only forbid it the press and the fire; publish it not, but yet burn it not, and between these do what you will with it.  

Donne becomes whole-heartedly absorbed in "the wife of mine age, Divinity," and makes careful preparations for his sermons, which reflect themselves in his last letters. "God is sometimes called a giant, running a race, and sometimes is so slow-paced as that a thousand years make but a day with God, and yet the same God," he writes to Sir Robert. He writes to the Countess of Montgomery sending a copy of a sermon:

> I know what dead carcases things written are in respect of things spoken. But in things of this kind, that soul what animates them never departs from them; The Spirit of God that dictates them in the speaker or writer, and is present in his tongue or hand, meets himself again (as we meet ourselves in a glass) in the eyes and ears and hearts of the hearers and readers.

3. Ibid., II, p. 176.  
4. Ibid., p. 123
To Sir Thomas Roe, in 1622, he remarks upon the gossip regarding the prince's marriage, and the letter contains that eloquence which is so apparent in his sermons.

Many grains make up the bread that feeds us, and many thorns make up the crown that must glorify us, and one of the thorns is, for the most part, the stinging calumny of others' tongues.

To Goodyer, "almost at midnight" in October, 1622, he expresses his tendency to melancholy:

Sir:—All our moralities are but our outworks, our Christianity is our citadel, and a man who considers duty but the dignity of his being a man is not easily bent from his outworks, but from his Christianity never; and, therefore, I dare trust you who contemplates them both. Every distemper of the body now is complicated with the spleen, and when we were young men we scarce ever heard of the spleen. In our declinations now every accident is accompanied with heavy clouds of melancholy, and in our youth we never admitted any. It is the spleen of the mind, and we are affected with vapours from thence; yet, truly, even this sadness that overtakes us, and this yielding to the sadness, is not so vehement a poison (though it be no physic neither) as those false ways in which we sought our comforts in our looser days.

To Lady Hingwell he addresses an eloquent letter of condolence upon the death of her husband.

Madame,—Those things which God dissolves at once, as He shall do the sun and moon and those bodies at the last conflagration, He never intends to reunite again; but in those things which He takes in pieces, as He does man and wife in these divorces by death, and in single persons by the divorce of body and soul, God hath another purpose to make them up again. That piece which He takes to Himself is presently cast in a mould, and in an instant made fit for His use; for heaven is not a place of a proficiency, but of present perfection.
In 1628 his letters to his sister, Mrs. Colman, concern the state of his health. "We do but borrow children of God, to lend them to the world," he writes to her, and enlarges upon his idea of separation.

Our souls are truly said to be in every part of our bodies; but yet, if any part of the body be cut off, no part of the soul perishes, but is sucked into that soul that remains, in that that remains of the body. When any limb or branch of the family is taken away, the virtue, the love, and (for the most part) the patrimony and fortune of him that is gone, remains with the family. The family would not think itself the less, if any little quillet of ground had been evicted from it; nor must it, because a clod of earth, one person of the family, is removed. In these cases there is nothing lost; one part, the soul, enjoys a present gain; the other, the body, expects a future. We think it good husbandry to place our children's portions so, as that in so many years it may multiply to so much; shall we not be as glad to lay their bodies there, where only they can be mellowed and ripened for glorification?

Two years later, Donne expresses a needless fear to her:

My noble sister, I am afraid that death will play with me so long, as he will forget to kill me, and suffer me to live in a languishing and useless age, a life, that is rather a forgetting that I am dead, than of living.

He had no need to fear, for death came to meet the man who had dwelt with him for so long a time, and posterity has clothed the name of this preacher-poet with honor and glory. His letters are documents of a spiritual and mental development and change; are testimonials of friendship which he held at so dear a price; are evidence of literary merit and might well be noted as examples of epistolary perfection.

2. Ibid., p. 271.
We have noted in our opening chapter that Joseph Hall was one of the first writers to employ the epistle for distinctly literary purposes. While still a student at Cambridge, Hall claimed the honor of being the first English satirist. Although his claim is unjustified, he was the first to discover Juvenal as a true model for Elizabethan and Jacobean satire. Likewise, in 1608, with the publication of *Characters of Virtues and Vices*, he was one of the first to employ the method of Theophrastus, using it to expound the practice of a moral system. It is not, therefore, surprising that he should see in the epistle the same means of expressing argumentative views.

Bishop of Exeter and Norwich, Joseph Hall employed the letter as a means of discourse. His *Six Decades of Epistles*, 1607-1610, contains a dedication to Prince Henry, in which he states his reasons for using the epistle as the medium of literary expression:

Further, which these times account not the least praise, your grace shall herein perceive a new fashion of discourse, by epistles, new to our language, usual to others; and, as novelty is never without some plea of use, more free, more familiar. Thus, we do but talk with our friends by our pen, and express ourselves no whit less easily, somewhat more digestedly.

His views on religion are extreme. A passionate hatred of Popery and all the customs of the Roman church.

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a belief that "miracles are wrought by Satan," a conviction that the Christian religion is a cheerful one, preoccupation with study and the economic use of his time are all reflected in the letters.

Writing to a friend recently converted to Catholicism, he states: "Jacob wrestled with an angel, and prevailed; you grapple but with a Jesuit, and yield. Jacob supplanted his brother, an Esau hath supplanted you." Always opposed to worldly pleasures, he queries Lord Denny:

What is fame, but smoke? and metal, but dross? and pleasure, but a pill in sugar? Let some gallants condemn this as the noise of a melancholic scholar, I speak that which they shall feel, and shall confess. Go then, ye wise idolotrous parasites, and erect shrines, and offer sacrifices to your god, the world, and seek to please him with your base and servile devotions; it shall be long enough ere such religion shall make you happy; you shall at last forsake those altars empty and sorrowful. . . . Alas! how ill agrees a gay coat and a festered heart! what avails an high title with an hell in the soul?

To Lord Hay he expresses similar views, commenting, "A false method is the bane of many hopeful endeavours." Writing later to Mr. R. B., he asks, "What if we cannot turn the stream, yet we must swim against it. Even without conquest, it is glorious to have resisted. In this alone they are enemies that do nothing."

His is no morbid religion, however. He invites his friends to Christian cheerfulness, disclaiming any pretense

1. The Works, p. 129.
2. Ibid., p. 131.
3. Ibid., p. 242.
that religion is a sorrowful thing. To a martyr suffering at the hands of inquisitors in Spain, he writes, asking him to rejoice in his ability to prove his faith and integrity in religious matters. ¹ To Mrs. A.P. he offers a remedy for sorrow. "Let me sell you some of that spiritual eyesalve which the Spirit commends to his Laodiceans, that you may clearly see how well you are. There is nothing but this betwixt you and happiness." He reminds her that "there is no comfort in a secret felicity. To be happy, and not know it, is little above miserable." ²

That a man of this type should love travel is surprising; that he should affect retiredness is not.

Of travel he states his opinion briefly:

Travel perfecteth wisdom; and observation gives perfection to travel; without which a man may please his eyes, not feed his brain; and, after much earth measured, shall return with a weary body and an empty mind. ³

During his own travels abroad, he writes to Sir Thomas Challoner of his delight in "foreign pleasures," and his realization that "even little streams empty themselves into great rivers, and they again into the sea." ⁴ He observes the building of Jesuits' colleges, the vestal rites in which

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2. Ibid., p. 231.
3. Ibid., p. 173.
4. Ibid., p. 138.
some Englishwomen participated at Brussels, the workings of the mind of a Capuchin monk with whom he conversed at Ghent, the wild deserts near Spa which "are haunted with three kinds of cattle: freebooters, wolves, and witches," and concludes with the opinion that "loquacity is the natural fault of travellers." Thus, with a wisdom seasoned by actual experiences, he gives the Earl of Essex advice on his travels.  

To a friend, solicitous as to the danger of overwork, he gives assurance: "Fear not my immoderate studies. I have a body that controls me enough in these courses; my friends need not." Nevertheless, he meticulously outlines the use of his days, claiming that those who lose a day are "dangerously prodigal; those that dare mispend it, desperate." From rising in the morning till retiring, his mind is busily working. After dinner, he "would shut up my thoughts and clear my mind," and, calling together the family, "we end the day with God." He marvels at those who live without study.

I can wonder at nothing more than how a man can be idle; but, of all other, a scholar, in so many improvements of reason, in such sweetness of knowledge, in such variety of studies, in such impropriety of thoughts. Other artisans do but practise; we, still learn; others run still in the same gyre, to weariness, to satiety; our choice is infinite; our labours require recreations; our very labour recreates our sports; we can never want, either somewhat to do, or somewhat that we would do. ...  

2. Ibid., p. 171.  
3. Ibid., p. 280.
How is it, then, that those gallants, which have privilege of blood and birth, and better education, do so scornfully turn off these most manly, reasonable, noble exercises of scholarship? An hawk becomes their fist better than a book, not dog, but is a better companion, anything, or nothing, rather than what we ought.

Because he loved study and contemplation, he sought solitude. "To live hidden was never but safe and pleasant," he writes to Sir Edmund Bacon, "but now so much better as the world is worse." Urging him to retiredness, he pleads his case.

Every evil we see doth either vex or infect us. Your retiredness avoids this; yet so, as it equally escapes all the evils of solitariness. You are full of friends, whose society, intermixed with your closeness, makes you want little of public. The desert is too wild; the city too populous; the country is only fit for rest.

Hilton later ridiculed Hall for his apparent belief that all sentences "above three inches long were confiscate." It is true that the short, pithy sentence is employed by Hall in all of his epistles. It is unusual to meet a clipped, direct prose in a period which was accustomed to complex, profound writing. He tells us that "nothing can overturn him that hath power over himself"; that "every day is a little life"; that "still the devil begins with Eve." In stylistic differences and in the very fact that Hall employed the epistle as a form in which to communicate his ideas, his volume is a landmark in letter-writing of the early years of the century.

2. Ibid., p. 160.
Sixteen letters of the pious priest, George Herbert, have been preserved, six of which are addressed to his stepfather, Sir John Danvers, four to his brother Henry, three to Nicholas Ferrar, one each to his mother, his sister and the Countess of Pembroke. His biographer, commenting on the individuality and homesty of the letters, says, "The correspondence of the seventeenth century does not usually convey this impression. Verbiage, compliment, conventional modes of utterance, distortion of sincerity through literary desire, make many of the letters of this period tiresome reading. This is the case with Donne's voluminous letters, with Herbert's letters in Latin,—yes, even with Milton's."

Whatever opinion we may reserve to ourselves in regard to Donne's "voluminous letters," and Milton's intellectual discourses, we must admit that George Herbert's letters possess a freshness and a spontaneity that make us wish we had more of them.

As a student at Trinity College, his longing for books expresses itself, and he writes his stepfather frequently to request them. Grateful always for favors received, he rarely indulges in extravagant desires, for, as he said, "since your favours come a-horseback, there is reason that my desires should go a-foot." Expressing his needs, he does not evade the issue. "Therefore I will open my case unto

you," he writes, "which I think deserves the reading at the least; and it is this, I want books extremely. You know, Sir, how I am now setting foot into Divinity, to lay the platform of my future life: and shall I then be fain always to borrow books, and build on another's foundation? What tradesman is there who will set up without his tools?"

He gives an interesting picture of contemporary school life in his plea.

This also is aggravated, in that I apprehend what my friends would have been forward to say if I had taken ill courses. Follow your book, and you shall want nothing. You know, Sir, it is their ordinary speech, and now let them make it good, for since I hope I have not deceived their expectations, let them not deceive mine. But perhaps they will say, You are sickly, you must not study too hard. It is true (God knows) I am weak, yet not so but that every day I may step one step toward my journey's end; and I love my friends so well as that if all things proved not well, I had rather the fault should lie on me than on them. But they will object again, What becomes of your Annuity? Sir, if there be any truth in me, I find it little enough to keep me in health. You know I was sick last vacation, neither am I yet recovered, so that I am fain ever and anon to buy somewhat tending towards my health: for infirmities are both painful and costly. Now this Lent I am forbid utterly to eat any fish, so that I am fain to dye't in my chamber at my own cost; for in our public halls, you know, is nothing but fish and white meats, out of Lent also twice a week, on Fridayes and Saturdays, I must do so, which yet sometimes I fast. Sometimes also I ride to Newmarket, and there lie a day or two for fresh air, all of which tend to avoiding of costlier matters, if I should fall absolutely sick."

He finds himself buying books nevertheless and deplores the fact. "And yet if a book of four or five shillings come in my way, I buy it, though I fast for it, yea, sometimes of ten shillings. But, alas Sir, what is that to the infinite volumes of Divinity, which yet every day swell and grow

1. The Works, p. 401.
bigger?"

His stepfather's generosity provided the books, and further letters contain thanks for them.

Adjusting himself to study conditions, he soon was "to make an oration to the whole University, of an hour long in Latin," and answers his stepfather's queries as to the possibility of a civil office interfering with his study of divinity with, "this dignity hath no such earthiness in it but it may very well be joined with heaven."¹

He tells us exactly what the orator's place was.

The Orator's place (that you may understand what it is) is the finest place in the University, though not the gainfullest; yet that will be about 30l. per an. But the commodiousness is beyond the revenue; for the orator writes all the University letters, makes all the orations, be it to King, Prince, or whatever comes to the University, to requite these pains, he takes place next the doctors, is at all their assemblies and meetings, and sits above the proctors, is regent, or non-regent at his pleasure, and such like gaynesses, which will please a young man well.

George Herbert was installed as orator on January 18, 1619, and continued his studies in divinity until he was finally ordained priest in 1630.

His family relations as reflected in the letters are almost ideal. To his brother Henry, travelling in Paris, he tenders advice. "You live in a brave nation, where, except you wink, you cannot but see many brave examples." His ambitions extend to his brother. "Let there be no kind of excellency which it is possible for you to attain.

². Ibid., p. 398.
to, which you seek not. And have a good conceit of your wit, mark what I say, have a good conceit of your wit; that is, be proud not with a foolish vaunting of yourself when there is no cause, but by setting a just price of your qualities. 1

As a student, he rides two hundred miles to visit a sister who is ill, in a day when travelling conditions were far from comfortable. He writes to her the year following, "God, who knows and sees this writing knows also that my soliciting Him has been much and my tears for you. Judge me then by these waters and not by my ink." 2

To his mother, when ill, he brings a religious hope. "I have alwaies observ'd the thred of life to be like other threds or threads of silk, full of narles and incumbrances. Happy is he whose bottom is wound up and laid ready for work in the New Jerusalem." 3

His marriage was a happy one, and his activities in the church, and writings have made the name of this quiet, unassuming man a notable one. As he wrote to the Countess of Pembroke after his ordination, "A priest's blessing, though it be none of the court style, yet doubtless, madam, can do you no hurt." 4

Among the intelligencers of the period, the most

2. Ibid., p. 402.
5. Ibid., p. 412.
outstanding are Sir Henry Wotton, John Chamberlain, and Sir Dudley Carleton. All were vitally interested in matters of state, of court life, of the politics of the day. The value of their letters as historical and social documents cannot be overestimated.

Of the three, Chamberlain was the most prolific. His sole interest in life was letter-writing, and, being a gentleman of private means, he spent the major portion of his time indulging in his favorite pastime. His letters are filled with bits of gossip, political and military news, preparations for Christmas at court, weather conditions and births and deaths. Told in a lively style, enriched with anecdotes, they are excellent examples of the best journalistic writings, although journalism at that time was not yet a profession. His correspondence with Carleton contains valuable information of the entertainments of the day, the theatre and court life.

Sir Henry Wotton was one of the most voluminous letter-writers of his age. Dr. A. A. Ward estimates the character of his writings, commenting that his "semi-official letters blend the report of high affairs of state and the offer of grave political advice with table-talk."¹ His biographer, Logan Pearsall Smith, is even more generous in his praise.

"Sir Henry Wotton was the most widely cultivated Englishman of his time," he says. "Among the somewhat formal and colourless epistles of that age his letters are remarkable for their wit, their beauty of phrase, and the impress of his kindly and meditative nature."¹

A student at Oxford, Ambassador to Venice, and finally Provost of Eton, Sir Henry Wotton gives evidence in his letters of an alert eye, a thoughtful, reflective nature, and an insatiable curiosity on all matters. His diplomatic correspondence containing observations on continental affairs, particularly in civil and religious struggles in Italy, remains of intense interest to the student of history. Interested in mosaic work, architecture and art, he requests that the Earl of Salisbury send him his "Coat armour in the true colours, with the mantling and crest; for I have thought that being done here in mosaic, it may afterwards be very fitly placed in the front of your buildings over the portal."²

He is amazed at the revolutionary discoveries of Galileo, realizing that "he hath first overthrown all former astronomy ... and next all astrology."

Returning to London, he is replaced by Sir Dudley Carleton, and writes his successor presenting Lady Carleton with the "new carnation satin coverlet" left in Venice.³ Back in London, he recounts theatre activities,⁴ the

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² Ibid., p. 419.
³ Ibid., p. 501.
⁴ See Part II, p. 104.
burning of the Globe theatre, and Overbury’s arrest. The latter makes him resort once more to contemplation.

Where methinks we are all overclouded with that sleep of Jacob, when he saw some ascending, and some descending, but that those were angels, and these are men; for in both, what is it but a dream?

At Eton, Wotton enjoys the respect and friendship of Donne and Isaac Walton. The latter, in writing his biography, notes the intimate friendship existing between Wotton and Donne. Donne’s biographer is skeptical as to the truth of this, because of the few letters which passed between them. A recent discovery substantiates Walton’s claims. Conscientious about his work, Wotton, though ever interested in oddities as triangular salt-cellers, amber rings, or a fire eater in London, still maintains his interest in foreign affairs. Realizing the futility of this interest, he comments upon it in a letter to Sir G. Clifton, during 1635. "That business was hatched in an eagles’ nest, above my reach." He adds: "And I confess it is not fit for me at this age to climb for aerics."²

Events moved rapidly. Religious struggles continued in England; a French marriage alliance was successfully arranged; Buckingham was assassinated; continental struggles continued. Archbishop Laud was in power; George Herbert, preaching in the small country parish; Sir John Eliot; and Sir Thomas Wentworth debating in Parliament. The height

2. Ibid., p. 352.
of the Puritan movement was at hand, and with it a new spirit of things which expressed itself in each instance in the familiar letters of the next period.

Thomas Carlyle has given the name Cromwelliad to that period of Puritan revolt which was dominated largely by the personality of Oliver Cromwell. The three volumes of Cromwell's _Letters and Speeches_ were edited by Carlyle and published in 1845. More than any work heretofore this one presents a true picture of the man Cromwell, uncolored by favoritism, unshornished by political views. Carlyle himself is very modest in attempting the work and refers to it as "one other dull book added to the thousand." Of Cromwell's letters themselves, Carlyle gives an excellent analysis:

I called these Letters good,—but withal only good of their kind. No eloquence, elegance, not always even clearness of expression, is to be looked for in them. They are written with far other than literary aims; written, most of them, in the very flames and conflagration of a revolutionary struggle, and with an eye to the despatch of indispensable pressing business alone; but it will be found, I conceive, that for such and they are well written. Superfluity, as if by a natural law of the case, the writer has had to discard; whatsoever quality can be dispensed with is indifferent to him. With unwieldy movement, yet with a great solid step he presses through, towards his object, has marked out very decisively what the real steps towards it are; discriminating well the essential from the extraneous—forming to himself, in short, a true, not an untrue picture of the business that is to be done. There is, in these Letters, as I have said above, a silence still more significant of Oliver to us than any speech they have. Dimly we discover features of an Intelligence, and Soul of a Man, greater than any speech. The Intelligence that can, with full satisfaction to itself, cease out in eloquent speaking, in musical singing, is, after all, a small Intelligence. He that works and does some Poem, not he that merely says one, is worthy
of the name of Poet. Cromwell, emblem of the dumb English, is interesting to me by the very inadequacy of his speech. Heroic insight, valor and belief, without words, — how noble is it in comparison to the adroit flow of words without heroic insight! 1

Previous to the first civil war (1642-1646) there are very few letters of any worth. Those few which are noted reflect chiefly Cromwell’s religious convictions, and the earnestness of his faith. In August of 1643 Cromwell was made a colonel under Manchester’s command. The following month was occupied in fighting. Cromwell’s characteristic pride in his troops is reflected in a letter. “I have a lovely company,” he writes to Oliver St. John, “you would respect them, did you know them. They are no ‘Anabaptists,’ they are honest sober Christians — they expect to be used as men.” 2 In March of the same year he wrote to Major-General Crawford concerning the dismissal of an officer whom Cromwell wished restored:

Ay, but the man ‘is an Anabaptist.’ Are you sure of that? Admit he be, shall that render him incapable to serve the Public? ‘He is indiscreet.’ It may be so, in some things, we have all human infirmities. Sir, the State, in choosing men to serve it, takes no notice of their opinions, if they be willing faithfully to serve it — that satisfies.

On the evening of July 2, 1644, was fought the bloody battle of Marston Moor, which gave the whole north to the Parliamentary party. Cromwell writes to his brother-in-law,

2. Ibid., p. 163.
3. Ibid., p. 177.
Valentine Walton, to tell him of his son's death.

We never charged but we routed the enemy. The Left Wing, which I commanded, being our own horse, saving a few Scots in our rear, beat all the Prince's horse. God made them as stubble to our swords. .. Give glory, all the glory, to God.

Sympathetically he informs the father of the death, saying of the boy:

Truly he was exceedingly beloved in the Army, of all that knew him. But few knew him, for he was a precious young man, fit for God.

Soon after Cromwell is indignant with Manchester for being "much slow in action." Following the construction of the New Model Army, Cromwell is for a time inactive until placed in command of the cavalry under Lord General Fairfax. The king's army was utterly shattered at Naseby. Cromwell writes to Lenthall: "We, after three hours' fight very doubtful, at last routed his Army; killed and took about 5,000,— very many officers, but of what quality we yet know not."

After the storming of Bristol the war is practically ended. To Lenthall Cromwell again writes:

Presbyterians, Independents, all have here the same spirit of faith and prayer; the same presence and answer; they agree here, have no names of difference; pity it is it should be otherwise anywhere! .. In other things, God hath put the sword in the Parliament's hands,— for the terror of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do well."

2. Ibid., p. 186.
3. Ibid., p. 222.
The first civil war ended with the king's surrender of himself to the Scots. During this period of negotiation Cromwell writes an interesting letter to Bridget Cromwell, wife of Colonel Ireton.

Your Friends at Ely are well; your sister Claypole is, I trust in mercy, exercised with some perplexed thoughts. She sees her own vanity and carnal mind, bewailing it; she seeks after (as I hope also) what will satisfy. And thus to be a seeker is to be of the best seek next to a finder; and such an one shall every faithful humble seeker be at the end. Happy seeker, happy finder! Who ever tasted that the Lord is gracious, without some sense of self, vanity, and badness? . . . Dear Heart, press on; let not Husband, let not anything cool thy affections after Christ.¹

Cromwell's attentions are monopolised for a period by the quarrel between Parliament and the Army. Thrown into turmoil by the King's escape from Hampton Court in November of 1647, he writes Lenthall:

The manner is variously reported, and we will say little of it at present, but that his Majesty was expected at supper, when the Commissioners and Colonel Whalley missed him; upon which they entered the Room— they found his Majesty had left his cloak behind him in the Gallery in the Private Way. He passed, by the back stairs and vault, towards the Water-side.²

News of the Scottish Army aroused the Parliament once again, and Cromwell was voted to march. From Leaguuer before Pembroke he writes concerning his provisions. "We have not got our Guns and Ammunition from Wallingford as yet." Preston Battle detained him in the north for some time. Of this he relates an interesting anecdote to Oliver St. John:

2. Ibid., p. 283.
I am informed from good hands, that a poor godly man died in Preston, the day before the fight; and being sick, near the hour of his death, he desired the woman that took to him, to fetch him a handful of grass. She did so; and when he received it, he asked whether it would wither or not; how it was eaten? The woman said 'Yea.' He replied, 'So should this Army of the Scots do; and come to nothing, as soon as ours did but appear,' or words to this effect; and so immediately died.

The second civil war closed with the signing of King Charles I's death warrant.

In August, Cromwell writes his brother, Richard Mayor, of the Irish rebellion.

The Marquis of Ormonde besieged Dublin with nine thousand men or thereabouts; seven thousand Scots, and three thousand more were coming to (join him in) that work. Jones issued out of Dublin with four thousand foot and twelve hundred horses; hath routed this whole Army, killed about four thousand upon the place; taken 2,517 prisoners, above three hundred (of them) officers, some of great quality.

The same letter contains advice regarding his son, who had married Dorothy Mayor shortly before:

I have committed my Son to you; pray give him advice. I envy him not his contents; but I fear he should be swallowed up in them. I would have him mind and understand Business, read a little History, study the Mathematics and Cosmography:-- these are good, with subordination to the things of God. Better than idleness, or mere outward worldly contents.

The same month finds him in Ireland, bearing with him the conviction that he is a soldier of God, performing God's judgments on his enemies. Surrenders at Drogheda and Wexford followed almost immediately upon summons. At the request of

Parliament he returned to England to attend to other matters.

The Scots were demanding the signing of the Covenant, and Cromwell was ordered to march once more. Finding Lesley entrenched between him and Edinburgh, he finds it necessary to fall back on Dumber. Instead of awaiting attack, Lesley, hemming Cromwell in, opens hostilities, resulting in the defeat of the Scots at Dumber Battle. A vivid and detailed description of this is contained in a letter to Lenthall. "The Enemy's word was The Covenant, which it had been for divers days. Ours, The Lord of Hosts." It is easy to say," he continues, "The Lord hath done this. It would do you good to see and hear our poor foot to go up and down making their boast of God. . . . Be pleased to reform the abuses of all professions;-- and if there be any that makes many poor to make a few rich, that suits not a Commonwealth."2

A letter from Cromwell's wife urges him to write oftener. Writing to her he states: "I have not leisure to write much. . . . Truly, if I love you not too well, I think I err not on the other hand much. Thou art dearer to me than any creatures; let that suffice."3

Skirmishes in Scotland continued until September of 1651, when the Scotch army was completely crushed in the battle at Worcester.

2. Ibid., p. 140.
3. Ibid., p. 145.
Returning to London, Cromwell writes few letters, and none of them notable. The Rump Parliament is in session, worrying about a new Representative body. To this period belongs a domestic letter to Lieutenant-General Fleetwood: "Salute your deare wife from me. Bid her beware of a bondage spirit. Fear is the natural issue of such a spirit; — the antidote is Love."¹ At the close of the Long Parliament of 1653, Cromwell was named Protector of the Commonwealth.

From the period of the establishment of the Protectorate to Cromwell's death there is a surprising decline in the number of letters. Busied with Parliamentary difficulties, and plots on all hands, active work in London occupies his time. Seeking to send armies against the Spaniards, he writes to Goodsen at Jamaica: "We are sending you, with all possible speed, seven more stout men-of-war, some of them forty guns, and the rest not under thirty, for your assistance." Still moved by religious convictions, he continues: "The Lord Himself hath a controversy with your Enemies; even with that Roman Babylon, of which the Spaniard is the great underpropper."²

Henry Cromwell, now Major-General of the army in Ireland, needs and receives his father's advice. "Ory to the Lord to give you a plain simple heart. Take heed of

². Ibid., Vol. III, p. 28.
being over-jealous, lest your apprehensions of others cause you to offend." He continues: "Be not troubled with the late Business; we understand the men." ¹

The Spanish plot for Charles Stuart's invasion is afoot, and Cromwell realises the necessity of fighting by land as well as by sea. After the famous dissolution speech, no more letters are written. On September 3, 1658, "Oliver is gone; and with him England's Puritanism, laboriously built together by this man, and made a thing far-shining, miraculous to its own Century, and memorable to all the Centuries, soon goes." ²

Mr. A. A. Ward has made the statement that Cromwell "was a born letter writer." ³ It is certain that without Carlyle's comments and elucidations, most of the letters would remain an inextricable maze of strange names and references. Cromwell's accounts of the battles and the few domestic letters which have been preserved are the chief documents of general interest. Factual, business-like, the letters reflect the writer's intolerance of ornament and elaborate writing. They are the letters of a soldier.

To an appendix Carlyle has relegated a number of interesting short notes, for which he should be chastised. The authenticity of the letters found in the Journal of Samuel Squire is certainly questionable, inasmuch as Carlyle

2. Ibid., p. 299.
never saw the Journal, but received, from an unknown correspondent, copies of thirty-five or more of Cromwell's letters. The details in these are valuable. He writes to Squire to forward silks for his mother, to purchase certain Italian velvets for his wife, to fetch a case of arms down from Costessey, "also his harness,--it lies in the wall by his bed-head; fetch it off; but move not his old weapons," to purchase a new helmet for him, and to "get one fluted, and good barrets; and let the plume-case be set on well behind. I would prefer it lined with good shawmy leather to any other." He advises Squire not to let his son, Henry, borrow more money. He tells him to look for "one landed at the Quay from Holland, who was let go, and now gone on by way of Lynn. I hear he has a peaked beard, of a blue-black color; of some twenty-five years old; I think from my letters, a Spaniard." Impatiently, he adds, "Haste,--ride on spur."¹

In December of 1643, he wrote to Squire advising him to remove "a relation" from the Munbery at Loughborough. "I like no war on women," Squire did so, and the same night the troops rode over and wrecked the Munbery by order of Parliament.²

Orders for cured fish and strong waters are of interest

2. Ibid., p. 85.
solely as little intimate and personal details which give a modern reader some picture of the every-day life, the food these people ate, the necessities which they employed in common activities. By far the greatest value is, of course, attached to Cromwell's campaign letters, particularly those of the First Civil War and the campaign into Scotland. These give such a detailed description of the battle, the ammunition, the equipment, the men in action, that a reader could reenact the battle after reading a letter. A curious enthusiasm runs through all the letters. Cromwell never for a moment doubted that God was with his cause because it was the just cause, and that, in fighting for the Commonwealth, in fighting against the Spaniard, in putting down a rebellion in Ireland, he was fighting the battles of the just God who watched and ruled and approved of his Puritan soldier.

It is justly to be deplored that less than forty of John Milton's *Familiar Letters* have been preserved. Indeed, he wrote too few. His tutor, Thomas Young, complains of this in a letter to Milton, to which the writer replies, "I do not grieve at the omission of so pleasantable a duty, so much as I rejoice at having such a place in your regard as makes you anxious often to hear from me. ... And I am anxious that if my letters have nothing else to recommend them, they might be recommended by their rarity."¹

Unfortunately the letters follow no chronological pattern, but stand as isolated documents of great interest and literary value. Interested in young people and in all intelligent writers, he devotes a number of his letters to young students. While still a student himself at Cambridge, he writes to Alexander Gill, also a poet, congratulating him upon his poem celebrating Henry Hazzel's victory. He entertains a high regard for Gill, whose mind he compares to "an emporium of literature." It is unusual for a boy of twenty to isolate himself for purposes of study, but in 1628 Hilton determines to "spend the summer vacation in the depths of literary solitude." For this purpose he plans to visit Thomas Young in the country, and writes to him accordingly.

Having an invitation into your part of the country in the spring, I shall readily accept it, that I may enjoy the deliciousness of the season as well as that of your conversation, and that I may withdraw for a short time from the tumult of the city to your rural mansion... where you live on your little farm, with a moderate fortune, but a princely mind, and where you practice the contempt, and triumph over the temptations of ambition, pomp, luxury, and all that follows the chariot of fortune, or attracts the gaze and admiration of the thoughtless multitude.

There is a noticeable absence of letters from that year until 1634 save for one interesting document to an unknown friend, in which Hilton gives his reasons for the

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2. Ibid., p. 490.
3. Ibid.
delay in selecting a profession.

Nature, therefore, would presently work the more prevalent way, if there were nothing but this inferior bent of herself to restrain her. Lastly, the love of learning, as it is the pursuit of something good, it would soon follow the more excellent and supreme good known and presented, and so be quickly diverted from the empty and fantastic chase of shadows and notions, to the solid good flowing from due and timely obedience to that command in the gospel set out by the terrible fencing of him that hid the talent.

During this period, however, Milton is not idle, but is devoting his time to poetry. In the above mentioned letter he encloses his famous sonnet on arriving at the age of twenty-three. Two years later, in acknowledgement of "an elegant and beautiful poem in Hendecasyllabic verse" sent to him by Alexander Gill, Milton sends him an ode in Greek heroic verse, with the comment that "this is the first and last piece I have ever composed in Greek; since, as you know, I have attended more to Latin and English composition.

He who at this time employs his labour and his time in writing Greek, is in danger of writing what will never be read.

Adieu, and expect to see me, God willing, at London on Monday among the booksellers."²

In 1637 a letter to Charles Diodati throws an interesting light upon Milton's activities. In it he says:

I am letting my wings grow and preparing to fly, but my Pegasus has not yet feathers enough to soar aloft in the fields of the air. I will now tell you seriously what I design; to take chambers in one of the inns of

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1. Monby, op.cit., p. 84.
court, where I may have the benefit of a pleasant and shady walk, and where with a few associates I may enjoy more comfort when I choose to stay at home, and have a more elegant society when I choose to go abroad. In my present situation, you know in what obscurity I am buried, and to what inconveniences I am exposed.

In 1638-39 Milton visited Italy, and two letters written by him at Florence are of superior interest. One of these, addressed to a Florentine, Benedetto Buonmattei, testifies that Milton has "become quite enamoured of your nation" and indulges in extravagant praise of the Italian language. He says in admiration:

"For I hold him to deserve the highest praises who fixes the principles and forms the manners of a state, and makes the wisdom of his administration conspicuous both at home and abroad. But I assign the second place to him, who endeavours by precepts and by rules to perpetuate that style and idiom of speech and composition which have flourished in the purest periods of the language, and who, as it were, throws up such a trench about it, that people may be prevented from going beyond the boundary almost by the terrors of a Romanian prohibition. . . . I am inclined to believe, that when the language in common use in any country becomes irregular and depraved, it is followed by their ruin or their degradation. . . . I, who certainly have not merely wetted the tips of my lips in the stream of those languages, but, in proportion to my years, have swallowed the most copious draughts, can yet sometimes retire with avidity and delight to feast on Dante, Petrarch, and many others."

To Luke Holstein, himself an Oxford student, Milton writes, expressing his thanks and praises for the kindness paid him during his visit. The occasion for this was

1. Prose Works, p. 494.
Holstein's arrangement for Milton to examine manuscripts in the Vatican museum, a permission usually refused the most famous scholars.\(^1\)

He returned in 1647 to a London plunged in civil strife, a fact which he deplores in a letter to Deodati. "For can you imagine that I could have leisure to taste the sweets of literary ease while so many battles were fought, so much blood shed, and while so much ravage prevailed among my fellow-citizens?"\(^2\)

In 1652 comes an exchange of letters with the famous Athenian, Leonard Philaras, in which Milton is loud in his praises of the Greek authors, to him "I am indebted for all my proficiency in literature."\(^3\) His work absorbs him, and, despite the blindness which he sees growing upon him, he continues his writing. In answer to a request by Philaras, Milton gives a description of the sensations experienced while losing his eyesight.

It is now, I think, about ten years since I perceived my vision to grow weak and dull, and, at the same time, I was troubled with pain in my kidneys, and bowels, accompanied with flatulence. In the morning, if I began to read, as was my custom, my eyes instantly ached intensely, but were refreshed after a little corporeal exercise. The candle which I looked at seemed as it were encircled with a rainbow. Not long after, the sight in the left part of the left eye (which I lost some years before the other) became quite obscured, and prevented me from discerning any object on that side.

\(^1\) Prose Works, p. 498.
\(^2\) Ibid., p. 500.
\(^3\) Ibid., p. 504.
The sight in the other eye has now been gradually and sensibly vanishing away for about three years, some months before it had entirely perished, though I stood motionless, everything I looked at seemed in motion to and fro. A stiff, cloudy vapor seemed to have settled on my forehead and temples, which usually occasions a sort of semiolent pressure upon my eyes, and particularly from dinner till evening.

"I bid you adieu with no less courage and composure than if I had the eyes of a lynx," he concludes.

To Henry Oldenburgh, Aulie Counsellor to the Senate of Bremen, Milton states that "an active indolence was never my delight." Indeed, Milton's respect for learning led him to work despite his loss of sight, a fact commended by Emeter Bigot in a letter to which Milton replies, "And indeed why should I not submit with complacency to this loss of sight, which seems only withdrawn from the body without, to increase the sight of the mind within."

His interest in learning expresses itself most clearly in his letters to Richard Jones, whose mother was the recipient of Milton's highest regard and respect. "Though you write that you are pleased with Oxford, you will not induce me to believe that Oxford has made you wiser or better." He enlarges and explains his viewpoint:

For why need we wonder if the wethers of our country are born with horns which may better down cities and towns? Do you learn to estimate great characters, not by the quality of their animal strength, but by the habitual justice and temperance of their conduct.

Milton's contempt for "frivulous subtelties and barren...

disputations" leads him to commend the "noble Youth's" preoccupation with books.

In that agreeable and healthy spot, to which you have retired, there are books enough for the purposes of academical education. If beauty of situation contributed as much to improve the wit of the inhabitants as it does to please the eye, the felicity of that place would be complete. The library there is rich in books; but unless the minds of the students be improved by a more rational mode of education, it may deserve the name of a book repository better than of a library.¹

In 1659 he writes to the boy as follows:

On the theatre of the world on which you have entered, you have rightly chosen the path of virtue; but know there is a path common to virtue and to vice, and that it behoves you to advance where the way divides.

When Oldenburgh wishes Milton to write a history of his times, the latter refuses, because he believes "they seem rather to require oblivion than commemoration."² However, in his correspondence with Henry de Brae, he draws a sharp line of distinction between the duties of a rhetorician and an historian. Commending Sallust and Tacitus highly, he sets forth in complete form his impression of the qualities a good historian should possess.

My opinion is that he who would describe actions and events in a way suited to their dignity and importance, ought to write with a mind imbued with a spirit, and enlarged by an experience, as extensive as the actors in the scene, that he may have a capacity properly to comprehend and to estimate the most momentous affairs, and to relate them, when comprehended, with energy and distinctness, with purity and perspicuity of diction. The decorations of style I do not greatly need, for I require an historian and not a rhetorician.³

¹ Prose Works, p. 513.
² Ibid., p. 521.
³ Ibid., p. 520.
⁴ Musky, op. cit., p. 23.
The chief value in the letters is neither biographical, historical nor literary. They stand as a glimpse of the every day habits of the great Milton. There are no unnecessary compliments to women. Every letter is addressed to a man. He recommends Andrew Marvell for a job; complains of the expense of books; derides the selection of an “infamous priest” for a church position; discusses authors and languages; and guides young students through the perplexing maze of the Oxford educational system. All the subjects dealt with are peculiar in their absence of small details not noticeable in most of the familiar letters. The broad scope of understanding and interest is visible in the letters of Milton, written as they originally were in Latin, and translated into English by Mr. Jellaves.

Unfortunately, the letters of the man who was generally considered the outstanding poet of his time, Abraham Cowley, are almost entirely lost. For this omission we have to blame Dr. Thomas Sprat.

With the best of intentions, Sprat undertook the task of editing Cowley’s work, omitting that which he deemed unfit for print. In an account of Cowley’s writings written to Mr. Clifford, he explains his attitude toward the letters;

In these he always express’d the Native tenderness and Innocent gayety of his Mind. I think, Sir, you and I have the greatest Collection of this sort. But
I know you agree with me that nothing of this Nature should be publish'd; And herein you have always consented to approve of the modest Judgment of our Country-men above the practice of some of our Neighbours, and chiefly of the French. ... The truth is, the Letters that pass between particular friends, if they are written as they ought to be, can scarce ever be fit to see the light. They should not consist of fulsome Complements, or tedious Politicks, or elaborate Elegancies, or general Pancies. But they should have a Native clearness and shortness, a Domestical pains, and a peculiar kind of Familiarity, which can only affect the humour of those to whom they were intended. The very same passages which make Writings of this Nature delightful amongst Friends will lose all manner of taste when they come to be read by those that are indifferent. In such Letters the Souls of Men should appear undress'd; And in that negligent habit they may be fit to be seen by one or two in a chamber, but not to go abroad into the Streets. Fortunately, a few of Cowley's letters escaped Sprat's watchful eye; and the one most generally known is, as Cowley's biographer claims, "pickled for posterity" by Dr. Johnson in "the rather bitter brine of his Lives of the Poets." This letter was written to Dr. Sprat himself shortly after Cowley's arrival at Chertsey in 1665. In a charming and characteristic style he deplores his misfortunes.

The first night that I came hither I caught so great a cold, with a defluxion of rheum, as made me keep my chamber ten days. And, two after, had such a bruise in my ribs after a fall, that I am yet unable to move or turn myself in my bed. This is my personal fortune here to begin with. And, besides, I can get no money from my tenants, and have my meadow eaten up every night by cattle put in by my neighbours. What this signifies, or, may come to in time, God knows; if it be ominous, it can end in nothing less than hanging.

The poet also corresponds with John Evelyn, and writes to him from Barn Elms in 1663 on gardening.

I have already sowed such of your seeds as I thought most proper upon a hot-bed, but cannot find in all my books a catalogue of these plants which require that culture, nor of such as must be set in pots, which defects and all others, I hope shortly to see supplied.1

Evelyn's letter to Cowley requesting an ode for the Royal Society is well known. Cowley carelessly fails to reply for several months, when he writes complying with the request "by Mr. Sprat's desire."2

The unusual factor regarding Sprat's attitude toward the letters is the publication of a letter to Mr. S.L., who remains unidentified save for the possibility of the initials standing for Mr. Sprat of Lincoln. The letter is a definite link between Cowley's epistolary and essay styles,3 and concerns the dangers of procrastination. "Begin," he advises; "the getting out of doors is the greatest part of the journey." Furthermore, ever conservative in his own habits, he recommends economy and use of time to his correspondent.

The sum of this is, that for the uncertain hopes of some conveniences, we ought not to defer the execution of a work that is necessary, especially when the use of these things which we would stay for may otherwise be supplied, but the loss of time never recovered.4

The loss of the letters is to be deplored, but a large body of political correspondence remains. An ardent Royalist, Cowley followed Queen Henrietta Marie into exile, and undertook the management of the secret correspondence between her and King Charles in England. His political documents written to friends in England are factual, direct and of infinite historical value.

In the days of the Commonwealth and the Restoration women are first beginning to enter the literary profession. It is notable that the names of Katherine Phillips, Aphra Behn, and the Duchess of Newcastle are still remembered. Greater tribute has been accorded one who had a contempt for letters as a profession for a woman, while her own letters are an ample testimony of her own literary talents. This is Dorothy Osborne, wife of Sir William Temple.

Lady Martha Gifford, remarking upon the letters, states: "The letters yt pass't between them (might make) a Volum; & though I cannot ventor of it my selfe, I have often wish'd the(y) might bee printed, for to say nothing of his writing, whch the world has since bin made judge off, I never saw any thing more extraordinary then hers."¹ A modern writer, Virginia Woolf, accords Dorothy a pretty tribute in a charming essay.² It is to Macaulay that we

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our gratitude, for in a review of Thomas Courtenay's two-volume work on the Memoirs of the Life, Work and Correspondence of Sir William Temple, he recognizes the value of the letters which Courtenay had relegated to the appendix, and says of them, "Very little indeed of the diplomatic correspondence of that generation is so well worth reading."

A young man of twenty who professed himself a Royalist in politics left Cambridge to travel. Macaulay continues the story:

On his road to France he fell in with the son and daughter of Sir Peter Osborne. Sir Peter held Guernsey for the King, and the young people were like their father, warm for the royal cause. At an [in] where they stopped in the Isle of Wight, the brother amused himself with inscribing on the windows his opinion of the ruling powers. For this instance of malignity the whole party were arrested, and brought before the governor. The sister, trusting to the tenderness which, even in those troubled times, scarcely any gentleman of any party ever failed to show where a woman was concerned, took the crime on herself, and was immediately set at liberty with her fellow-travellers. . . . This incident, as was natural, made a deep impression on Temple. He was only twenty. Dorothy Osborne was twenty-one.1

Thus their romance began. Difficulties stood in their way, for Temple's father sat in the Long Parliament; Dorothy's held Guernsey for King Charles. After the civil war, Sir Peter Osborne returned to Chicksands, and from here Dorothy wrote what E.A. Barry considers the "very

mainland of the epistolary archipelago that we are exploring." For seven years, despite the opposition of Dorothy's relations, the courtship continued, and the letters written during the years 1653-4 are among the best of the century. Of them Macaulay again expresses himself:

Mr. Courtenay proclaims that he is one of Dorothy Osborne's devoted servants, and expresses a hope that the publication of her letters will add to the number. We must declare ourselves his rivals. She really seems to have been a very charming young woman, modest, generous, affectionate, intelligent, and sprightly; a royalist, as was to be expected from her connexions, without any of that political asperity which is as unwomanly as a long beard, religious, and occasionally gliding into a very pretty and endearing sort of preaching, yet not too good to partake of such diversions as London offered under the melancholy rule of the puritans, or to giggle a little at a ridiculous sermon from a divine who was thought to be one of the great lights of the Assembly at Westminster; with a little turn of coquetry, which was yet perfectly compatible with warm and disinterested attachment, and a little turn for satire, which yet seldom passed the bounds of good nature. She loved reading, but her studies were not those of Queen Elizabeth and Lady Jane Grey. She read the verses of Cowley and Lord Braghill, French Memoirs recommended by her lover, and the Travels of Fernando Mendez Pinto. But her favorite books were those ponderous French romances which modern readers know chiefly from the pleasant satire of Charlotte Lennox. She could not, however, help laughing at the vile English into which they were translated. Her own style is very agreeable; nor are her letters at all the worse for some passages in which raillery and tenderness are mixed in a very engaging namby-pamby.

Temple himself is most noted as the author of the Triple Alliance and the man who concluded the diplomatic negotiations concerning it. His diplomatic correspondence

I was collected and published after his death by
Jonathan Swift, his one-time amanuensis. His letters
reflect that modesty and quietness which accompanied his
endeavors. Of his justice and fairness there is no
question. In an interesting letter to Lord Lisle he
comments upon Edmund Waller’s turning burlesque:

I never knew him enough to adore him as many have
done, and easily believe he may be, as your Lordship
says, enough out of fashion, yet I am apt to think
some of the old cut-work bands were of as fine
thread, and as well wrought, as any of our new points;
and, at least, that all the wit he and his company
spent, in heightening love and friendship, was better
employed, than what is laid out so prodigally by
the modern wits, in the mockery of all sorts of
religion and government.¹

Dorothy Osborne holds the opinion that “all letters
should be free and easy as one’s discourse; not studied as
an oration, not made up of hard words like a charm.” Her
own letters are spontaneous, personal, and intimate in the
details of her life. Gay and melancholy by turns, she
addresses her love letters to her future husband. These
letters written during her life at Chicksands are the most
important, and reveal “the everyday life of the English
Royalist aristocracy and gentry during the reign of
Cromwell.”²

Her first letters are written during the winter of

¹ Seccome, op.cit., p. 122.
² The Letters of Dorothy Osborne, ed. E.A. Parry, p.viii.
1682-3. Temple was then twenty-four years of age; Dorothy a year older. Her father’s health worried her.

"I am in continual fear of him," she writes, "and dare not often make use of the leave he gives me to be from home, lest he should at some time want such little services as I am able to render him." Justinian Isham, laughingly termed the "Emperour" by Dorothy, proposed to her. He had two daughters almost her own age, "but he had a great estate, was as fine a gentleman as ever England bred, and the very pattern of wisdom." She confesses that when she saw him "‘twas the vainest, impertinent, self-conceited learned scurvy that ever yet I saw." She is troubled during this winter with a "scurvy spleen" which continued to bother her at Chicksands. Tender and solicitous she inquires "how my medicine agrees with your cold." During January of this year, she had a dream which she recounts in a characteristic manner. It follows as she told Temple of it:

The night before I received your first letter, I dreamt one brought me a packet, and told me ‘twas from you. I, that remembered you were by your own appointment to be in Italy at that time, asked the messenger where he had it; she told me my lady, your mother, sent him with it to me; there my memory failed me a little, for I forgot you had told me she was dead, and meant to give her many humble thanks if ever I were so happy as to see her. When I had opened the letter I found in it two rings; one was, as I remember, an emerald doublet, but broken in the

2. Ibid., p. 25.
3. Ibid., p. 32.
carriage, I suppose, as it might well be, coming so far, 'tither was plain gold, with the longest and the strangest posy that ever was; half as was Italian, which for my life I could not guess at, though I spent much time about it; the rest was, 'there was a Marriage in Cana of Galilee,' which, though it was Scripture, I had not that reverence for it in my sleep that I should have had; I think, if I had been awake, for in earnest the oddness on't put me into that violent laughing that I waked myself with it, and as a just punishment upon me from that hour to this I could never learn when those rings were for, nor what was in the letter besides.¹

Interested in seals, she recalls one of his which 'was a Neptune; I think, riding upon a dolphin,' she sends to Italy to order some; she tells of Mrs. Smith who, gossip has it, 'wears twenty strung upon a ribbon, like the nuts boys play withal.'²

In February the family moved to Chicksands, and from here begins that regular correspondence which is of so much value. 'Lord!' she writes Temple, 'that you had the invisible ring, or Fortunatus his wishing hat; now, at this instant, you should be here.'³ Instead, she sends three volumes of César for his reading. She requests that he go to The Flower Pott and get 'a quart of orange flower water' from the man Hearns. She drinks his health each morning 'in a drench that would poison a horse I believe, and 'tis the only way I have to persuade myself to take it.'⁴ Dreaded her brother's arrival, she tells Temple that 'I was born

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1. The Letters, p. 36.
2. Ibid., p. 40.
3. Ibid., p. 49.
4. Ibid.
to be very happy or very miserable, I know not which, but I am certain that as long as I am anything I shall be your most faithful friend and servant." She is tending her father constantly. "I have had so little sleep since my father was sick that I am never thoroughly awake." This tension and worry doubtless did not aid her own difficulties, and she complains from time to time of ailments, of taking the waters at Epsom, and of having to take an "ugly drink" for a fortnight.

Dorothy Osborne does not lack suitors during this period of her life. Most prominent on the list is Henry Cromwell. Noting her fondness for large dogs, Henry procures a fine Irish greyhound for her. She tells Temple of the gift, with the comment: "A masty (mastiff) is handsomer to me than the most exact little dog that ever lady played withal."2

How does she spend her days at Chicksands? She herself tells us:

You ask me how I pass my time here. I can give you a perfect account not only of what I do for the present, but of what I am likely to do this seven years if I stay here so long. I rise in the morning reasonably early, and before I am ready I go round the house till I am weary of that, and then into the garden till it grows too hot for me. About ten o'clock I think of making me ready, and when that's done I go into my father's chamber, from thence to dinner, where my cousin Helie and I sit in great state in a room and at a table that would hold a great many more. After dinner we sit and talk till

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1. The Letters, p. 75.
2. Ibid., p. 88.
Mr. B. comes in question, and then I am gone. The heat of the day is spent in reading or working, and about six or seven o'clock I walk out into a common that lies hard by the house, where a great many young wenches keep sheep and cows, and sit in the shade singing of ballads. I go to them and compare their voices and beauties to some ancient shepherdesses that I have read of, and find a vast difference there; but, trust me, I think these are as innocent as those could be. I talk to them, and find they want nothing to make them the happiest people in the world but the knowledge that they are so. Next commonly, when we are in the midst of our discourse, one looks about her, and spies her cows going into the corn, and then away they will run as if they had wings at their heels. . . . When I have supped, I go into the garden, and so to the side of a small river that runs by it, where I sit down and wish you with me (you had best say this is not kind neither.).

Dorothy is amused at eccentricity. Of Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, she comments: "Sure, the poor woman is a little distracted, she could never be so ridiculous else as to venture at writing books, and in verse too." After reading the volume, her conclusion is that "there are many soberer people in Bedlam. I'll swear her friends are much to blame to let her go abroad."

During this period at Chicksands, the one thread which runs through all the letters is the marriage problem. On one occasion, Dorothy, jestingly speaking of the Emperor, sees her brother "put on his sober face" and lectures her sternly on "all the people that I had ever in my life refused." "As before we were thought the kindest brother and sister," she says, "we are certainly now the most complimental

1. The Letters, pp. 84-5.
2. Ibid., p. 80.
On one occasion her brother waylaid the letter-carrier and received scant satisfaction from his inquiries. After this, worried and perplexed, Dorothy "was in the garden till 11 o'clock. It was the sweetest night that e'er I saw. The garden looked so well and the jasmine smelt beyond all perfumes. And yet I was not pleased." In a letter to Temple on love and friendship, she says:

Sure the whole world could never persuade me (unless a parent commanded it) to marry one that I had no esteem for, and where I have any, I am not less scrupulous than your father, or I should never be brought to do them the injury as to give them a wife whose affections they could never hope for; besides that, I must sacrifice myself in't and live a walking misery till the only hope that would then be left me were perfected.

Observing the outcome of marriages in the lives of her friends, she notes particularly one of the Lord of Venetia's daughters who married "an old fellow that is some three-score and ten, who has a house that is fitter for the hogs than for her," and comments:

Ah! 'tis most certain I should have chosen a handsome chain to lead my apes in before such a husband, but marrying and hanging go by destiny, they say.

In a letter in October of 1653, she explains her marriage views:

What an age do we live in, where 'tis a miracle
if in ten couples that are married, two of them live so as not to publish to the world that they cannot agree. I begin to be of the opinion of him that (when the Roman Church first propounded whether it were convenient for priests not to marry) said that it might be convenient enough, but sure it was not our Saviour's intention, for He commanded that all should take up their cross and follow Him; and for his part, he was confident there was no such cross as a wife. This is an ill doctrine for me to preach, but to my friends I cannot but confess that I am afraid much of the fault lies in us; for I have observed that generally in great families, the men seldom disagree, but the women are always scolding; and 'tis most certain, that let the husband be what he will, if the wife have but patience (which, sure, becomes her best), the disorder cannot be great enough to make a noise; his anger alone, when it meets with nothing that resists it, cannot be loud enough to disturb the neighbours. And such a wife may be said to do as a kinswoman of ours that had a husband who was not always himself; and when he was otherwise, his humour was to rise in the night, and with two bedstrawes labour upon the table and hour together. She took care every night to lay a great cushion upon the table for him to strike on, that nobody might hear him, and so discover his madness. But 'tis a sad thing when all one's happiness is only that the world does not know you are miserable.

For my part, I think it were very convenient that all such as intend to marry should live together in the same house some years of probation; and if, in all that time, they never disagreed, they should then be permitted to marry if they pleased; how few would do it then! 1

Dorothy Osborne knows what she wishes in a husband herself, and her description of her ideal is a worthy character sketch.

There are a great many ingredients must go to the making me happy in a husband. First, as my cousin Franklin says, our humours must agree; and to do that he must have that kind of breeding that I have had.

1. The Letters, pp. 170-1.
and used that kind of company. That is, he must not be so much a country gentleman as to understand nothing but hawks and dogs, and be fonder of either than of his wife; nor of the next sort of them whose aim reaches no farther than to be Justice of the Peace, and once in his life High Sheriff, who reads no books but statutes, and studies nothing but how to make a speech interlarded with Latin that may amuse his disagreeing poor neighbours, and fright them rather than persuade them into quietness. He must not be a thing that began the world in a free school, was sent from thence to the university, and is at his furthest when he reaches the Inns of Court, has no acquaintance but those of his form in those places, speaks the French he has picked out of old laws, and admires nothing but the stories he has heard of the revels that were kept there before his time. He must not be a town gallant neither, that lives in a tavern and an ordinary, that cannot imagine how an hour should be spent without company unless it be in sleeping, that makes court to all the women he sees, thinks they believe him, and laughs and is laughed at equally. Now a travelled Monsieur whose head is all feather inside and outside, that can talk of nothing but dancing and duels, and has courage enough to wear slashes when everybody else dies cold to see him. He must not be a fool of no sort, nor peevish, nor ill-natured, nor proud, nor covetous; and to all this must be added, that he must love me and I him as much as we are capable of loving. Without all this, his fortune, though never so great, would not satisfy me; and with it, a very moderate one would keep me from ever repenting my disposal.

Life at Chicksands is a busy one. Dorothy dines "at a rich widow's" and entertains guests at home. She wonders if Temple drank the Epsom waters from the well, and states that "the well is so low, and there is such a multitude to be served on't, that you can hardly get any but what is thick and troubled." A gentleman whom she

2. Ibid., p. 130.
once admired brings his wife to Chicksands for a visit, to Dorothy's disappointment, who observes that now he is "wholly taken up with running on errands for his wife, and teaching her little dog tricks."¹ She giggles over the sermon of Stephen Marshall who claimed that "if there were no kings, no queen, no lords, no ladies, nor gentlemen, nor gentlewomen, in the world, 'twould be no loss at all to God Almighty."²

The autumn and winter of 1653 are unhappy days for Dorothy. Obsessed by a growing melancholy, worried about her father's health, she writes: "I am convinced of the wileness of the world and all that's in 't, and that I deceived myself extremely when I expected anything of comfort from it."³ Apparently the lovers had a misunderstanding, for she urges friendship and resignation to the situation as it exists. She trembles at "the desperate things you say in your letter." Temple came down to see her at the end of the year and the quarrel was ended.

Arrangements are made for their marriage. She writes to him for "good French tweezers" and reminds him that "I must have a ring from you, a plain gold one; if I ever marry it shall be my wedding ring."⁴ "A blush," she comments in a further letter, "is the foolishest thing that

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¹ The Letters, p. 130.
² Ibid., p. 143.
³ Ibid., p. 185.
⁴ Ibid., p. 197.
can be, and betrays one more than a red nose does a drunkard; but yet I would not so wholly have lost them as some women that I know has, as much injury as they do me."

In a letter to Temple, Dorothy asks: "Can there be a more romance story than ours would make if the conclusion should prove happy?" The story of their marriage is a romance indeed. In November of 1654, Dorothy was taken ill with small-pox, and one small proof of Temple's love is his devotion to her despite the loss of physical beauty. Their life was a happy one; Temple busied himself with his gardens and orchards and diplomatic work; Dorothy remained ever constant and silent in the background at Sheen.

The learned and eccentric Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, had left a document which well reflects her personality. Of her letters to her husband, the most interesting is written from London in 1667, wherein the learned lady discusses the criticism of her own writings.

Certainly, my Lord, you have had as many enemies and as many friends as ever any one particular person had; nor do I so much wonder at it, since I, a woman, cannot be exempt from the malice and aspersions of spiteful tongues which they cast upon my poor writings, some denying me to be the true authoress of them, for your grace remembers well, that those books put out first to the judgment of this censorious age were accounted not to be written by a woman, but that

somebody else had writ and published them in my name; ... but it pleased God to command his servant Nature to endue me with a poetical and philosophical genius, even from my birth; for I did write some books in that kind before I was twelve years of age, which for want of good method and order I would never divulge. But though the world would not believe that these conceptions and fancies which I writ were my own, but transcended my capacity, yet they found fault, that they were defective for want of learning, and on the other hand, they said I had plucked feathers out of the universities, which was a very preposterous judgment. ...

But I am not so passionate to burn my writings for the various humours of mankind, and for their finding fault; since there is nothing in this world, be it the noblest and most commendable action whatsoever, that shall escape blameless.

Indeed, my lord, I matter not the censures of this age, but I am rather proud of them, for it shows that my actions are more than ordinary, and according to the old proverb, it is better to be envied than pitied; for I know well that it is merely out of spite and malice whereof this present age is so full that none can escape them, and they'll make no doubt to stain even your lordship's loyal, noble, and heroic actions as well as they do mine; though yours have been at war and fighting, mine of contemplating and writing; yours were performed publicly in the field, mine privately in my closet; yours had many thousand eye-witnesses, mine none but my waiting-maids. ... 

The Letters and Papers of the Verney Family likewise throw a light upon the family relations and spirit of the day. Sir Edmund Verney was the standard-bearer for Charles I. His grandson, Edmund, was brought up in the country by his grandmother, Lady Denton, and upon returning to town gave his parents no end of trouble. To Ralph the indulgent grandmother writes:

I hear he is disliked, he is so strange. Son, you did see he was not so, nor is not so, to any where he is acquainted, and he must be won with fair means. Let me beg of you and my mother that nobody whip him but Mr. Parry, if you do go a violent

way with him, you will be the first that will rue it, for I verily believe he will receive injury by it. And I pray, bear with him the rather for father and mother and grandfather were never so forward upon the first acquaintance. I hope he will prove the wiser man in that very quality. Indeed, Ralph, he is too young to be strudgoted in any forcing way. I had intelligence your father was troubled to see him so strange. I pray, tell him from me I thought he had more wit than to think a child of his age would be acquainted presently. He knows the child was fellow good enough in my house. I pray, show him what I have written about him, and be sure he is not fretted by no means; he is of a gentle, sweet nature, soon corrected.

To his son Ralph, Sir Edmund offers an allowance as an undergraduate of "forty pound a year, and he shall have a cloth suit made him against Easter, or sooner, if need require."

In 1634, Mr. Sadler writes to Lady Verney, giving her advice on provisions to take if colonizing. He advises taking sheets, bolsters, pillow, blankets, feather bed and rugs with them because "although many households in Virginia are so well provided as to entertain a stranger with all things necessary for the belly, yet few or none are better provided for the back as yet than to serve their own turns."

It was impossible that the Puritan movement should fail to leave its imprint upon the life of the times, and more especially upon the familiar letters. Lady Brilliana Harley, living in Herefordshire, has written some excellent intimate letters giving a glimpse of Puritan life.

In 1627 she writes to her husband, giving news of
affairs at home, and sending him "a little hamper" and a partridge pie. Her pride in her children expresses itself in devotion to her son Ned at Oxford. She sends him a kid pie, and says of it that "one half of the pie is seasoned with one kind of seasoning, and the other with another." She sends strawberry butter to her husband. She sends Ned's tutor a Lenten gift of a box of dried plums. She presents Ned with an old watch, a family heirloom, with the caution that he "must not overwind it, and it will go very well." To Ned, too, she offers religious advice. "Keep always a watch over your precious soul, tie yourself to a daily examination," she advises him.

She had need of her faith. Despite the Puritan triumph over the Bishops in 1640, at which time she expressed a belief "that hierarchy must down, and I hope now," she suffered at the hands of Royalist troops who besieged her home for six weeks in July 1643. In October of the same year she died. Her few letters afford an interesting glimpse of an undaunted faith and a genuine family attachment.

The last period of the seventeenth century belongs, from the literary standpoint, to John Dryden. His age creates a new prose, simple, lucid, direct. Heretofore these qualities are found solely in familiar letters, those which are not intended for the public eye. Now literary criticism becomes precise and clear. This is due, partially,
to the influence of French fashions and partially to the new interest in science. In the field of letters, those of Balzac had been translated in 1638, and Pascal’s in 1657.

Sir Walter Scott, editing Dryden’s complete works, says of the letters: "The letters of Dryden, so far as hitherto given to the public, are, with a few exceptions, singularly uninteresting. ... There is, however, a satisfaction in seeing how such a man expressed himself, even upon the most trivial occasions; and I have therefore retained those complimentary acknowledgments of turkeys, marrow-puddings, and bacon, which have nothing but such a consideration to recommend them."1 We can express our gratefulness to Scott for the retention of these letters, for it is the expression of news "upon the most trivial occasions" which constitutes the chief interest of them, and gives such an excellent picture of Dryden’s life.

The most illuminating letters are addressed to Mr. Jacob Tonson and Mrs. Steward. The former, Dryden’s publisher, is the recipient of the famous author’s ire as well as his gratitude. In 1684, Dryden acknowledges a gift of “two melons you sent” of which he “tasted one of them, which was too good to need an excuse; the other is yet untouched.” In the same letter he declares that “Homer shall

To a letter from Tonson scolding him for offering his Ovid to another bookseller and quibbling about the number of lines, Dryden replies:

I have translated six hundred lines of Ovid, but I believe I shall not compare his 772 lines under nine hundred or more of mine. This time I cannot write to my wife, because he who is to carry my letter to Cudie, will not stay till I write another. Pray, Sir, let her know that I am well; and for fear the few damns shou'd be all gone, desire her to buy me a sieve-full, to preserve whole, and not in mash.²

In 1695 Dryden is working on the Aeneid, and declares that the sixth book is his favorite.³ In another epistle to Tonson he gives a vivid and personal description of the arrival of unexpected guests:

Having been obliged to sit up all last night almost out of civility to strangers, who were benighted, and to resign my bed to them, I am sleepy all this day; and if I had not taken a very lusty pike that day, they must have gone supperless to bed, for Mr. Dudley and I were alone, with but one man and no mayde in the house.⁴

In the fall of the same year he gives vent to a quarrel with the publisher, declaring that "upon triall I find all of your trade are sharpers, and you not more than others." The quarrels between Tonson and Dryden are short-lived, and the poet returns to request his publisher to pay a goldsmith's bill "for two and twenty pounds" for two watches purchased to send his sons as a gift. The publication of the translation of Virgil was the result of small troubles.

2. Ibid., Letter 9.
3. Ibid., Letter 14.
4. Ibid., Letter 11.
and Dryden complains to his sons that Tonson "in every figure of Aeneas, he has caused him to be drawn like King William, with a hooked nose."\(^1\) The letters throw an interesting light upon the methods of publishers, the means of obtaining subscriptions, the installment method of payment as the work progressed.

The "woeful sample of the gallantry of the time"\(^2\) is addressed to Honor Dryden, the writer's cousin, in response to a gift of writing materials sent to him.

If you have received the lines I sent by the reverend Levite, I doubt not but they have exceedingly wrought upon you; for being so long in a clergyman's pocket, assuredly they have acquired more sanctity than their author meant them. Alas, Madame! for ought I know, they may become a Sermon ere they could arrive at you; and believe it, having you for the text, it could scarcely prove bad, if it light upon one that could handle it indifferently.

A letter to the Earl of Rochester in 1673 accounts his interesting opinions of idleness and occupation. "You may think on what you please," he writes, "and that as little as you please; for, in my opinion, thinking it selfe is a kind of pain to a witty man; he finds so much more in it to disquiet than to please him." Characteristically, he adds, "Tis a strange quality in a man to live idleness so well as to destroy his estate by it, and yet, at the same time, to pursue so violently, the most toilsome and most unpleasant part of business."

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2. Ibid., p. 89.
3. Ibid., Letter 1.
To the Reverend Doctor Busby he addresses two interesting letters. One week his son came home ill, and he wrote the teacher to the effect that he was recovering from a violent cold and cough. "The truth is," reveals Dryden, "this constitution is very tender, yet his desire of learning, I hope, will enable him to brush through the college." The same year, another son, Charles, was expelled from school for a fault in which the companions who had joined him were not reported. Dryden's letter to Busby is final, forceful and derogatory.¹

In March of 1693-4, John Dennis, an admirer and later a friend of Dryden's, writes to him expressing his admiration for Dryden's work. "The recourse to your verse," he confesses, "has calmed my soul, or raised it to transports which made it contemn tranquillity," and continues with his compliments.

Thus, 'tis plain, that your Muse has done me an injury, but she has made me amends for it. For she is like those extraordinary women, who, besides the regularity of their charming features, besides their engaging wit, have secret, unaccountable, enchanting graces; which though they have been long and often enjoyed, make them always new and always desirable. ... They (the people) are but the keepers, as it were, of the lottery which Fortune sets up for renown; upon which Fame is bound to attend with her trumpet, and sound when men draw the prizes. Thus I had rather have your approbation than the applause of Fame. Her commendation argues good luck, but Mr. Dryden's implies desert.²

In reply, Dryden writes a letter which contains his opinion on contemporary drama, entertaining the idea that

¹ The Works, Letter 5.
² Ibid., Letter 10.
the English tragedy, as well as comedy, surpasses the ancients. Concerning the writing of King Arthur and the Black Prince, Dryden states: "But the guardian angel of monarchies and kingdoms are not to be touched by every hand; a man must be deeply conversant in the Platonic philosophy, to deal with them." Of the corruption of the writing profession, Dryden complains: "We poor poets militant (to use Mr. Cowley's expression) are at the mercy of wretched scribblers; and when they cannot fasten upon our verses, they fall upon our morals, our principles of state, and religion."¹

To his sons at Rome, Dryden communicates the success of his Virgil, stating "the profite might have been more, but neither my conscience nor my honour would suffer me to take them."² At this time, September 1697, he is writing a song for St. Cecilia's feast, "who, you know, is the patroness of music. This is troublesome, and in no way beneficial." In December of the same year a letter to Jacob Tonson contains the information that "my ode is esteem'd the best of all my poetry, by all the town."³

We have mentioned Dryden's correspondence with Mrs. Steward, a cousin as well as an accomplished painter and poetess, noted for her beauty and virtue. Dryden frequently visited her home at Cotterstock, and the exchange

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2. Ibid., Letter 23.
of letters is interesting for its mass of small details. Mrs. Steward's frequent gifts to the Drydens are gracefully acknowledged. Once it was a plover; again it is a marrow-pudding; another time Dryden hesitantly requests, "if beggars might be choosers, a part of a shire of honest bacon you'd please my appetite more than all the marrow-puddings; for I like them better plain, having a very vulgar stomach." again he requests "some small beer to be brew'd for me without hops" and explains his distaste for sour beer, and at still another instance his thanks are returned for "a turkey hen with eggs, and a good young goose."

With Mrs. Steward, too, Dryden exchanges comments on his writing. Modest and unassuming, he speaks of himself as "always a poet, and never a good one," claiming that "it is not impossible, but ere the summer be pass'd, I may come down to you with a volume in my hand, like a dog out of the water, with a duck in his mouth." To her he expresses his opinion of the censorship of drama, claiming that "a deep disease is not to be cur'd with a slight medicine." To

In religion, Dryden is a Roman Catholic. When, in March of 1698-9, a proclamation is issued against Papists and Popish recusants he is perplexed but unwilling to change his religion. He believes himself in favor with

2. Ibid., Letter 35.
the government, but writes his cousin to the effect
that "I can neither take the oaths, nor forsake my
religion, because I know not what church to go to, if I
leave the Catholique; they are all so divided amongst them-
selves in matters of faith necessary to salvation, and,
yet all assuming the name of Protestants."¹

To Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas, hack writer better known
as Corinna, Dryden addresses a few letters. Commending her
verse, he believes them "too good to be a woman's. ... "
'Tis not over-gallant, I must confess, to say this of the
fair sex, but most certain it is, that they generally write
with more softness than strength." Whimsically, he adds,
"I would have call'd you Sapho, but that I hear you are
handsomer."² He recommends Theocritus above Virgil for
"softness of thought, and simplicity of expression."
Cautioning her against poetry as a profession, he admits
its virtues as a pleasureable avocation, "always avoiding
(as I know you will) the license which Mrs. Behn allow'd
her self, of writing loosely, and giving, if I may have
leave to say so, some scandal to the modesty of her sex."³

Two of the most interesting letters are those to and
from Samuel Pepys. In 1699, Dryden writes him:

Pardon Mio,
I remember, last year, when I had the honour of
dining with you, you were pleased to recommend to me

¹. The Works, Letter 40.
². Ibid., Letter 41.
³. Ibid., Letter 42.
the character of Chaucer's "Good Parson". Any desire of yours is a command to me; and accordingly I have put it into my English, with such additions and alterations as I thought fit. In the mean time, my Parson desires the favour of being known to you, and promises, if you find any fault in his character, he will reform it. Whenever you please, he shall wait on you, and for the safer conveyance, I will carry him in my pocket. 1

To this letter Pepys replies:

I shall with great pleasure attend you on this occasion, when you'll permit it, unless you would have the kindness to double it to me, by suffering my coach to wayte on you (and who you can gayne me ye same favour from) hither, to a cost chicken and a sallade, any noone after Sunday, as being just stepping into the ayre for 2 days. 2

In a letter of criticism to William Walsh, written sometime before 1691, Dryden gives a complete and excellent analysis of Walsh's essay. Among other things, he says: "Be pleased therefore, to avoid the words, don't, can't, shan't, and the like abbreviations of syllables, which seem to me to savour of a little rusticity." 3

Dryden's style itself, in the letters, is guilty of possessing this same "abbreviation of syllables." The modernity of expression is amazing. Whether he expresses surprise at the weather in Italy, thanks Tomson for some snuff, comments on the theatre, discusses his work, harangues over the payment of lines with his publisher, he is completely himself, modest, unassuming, and professional.

2. Ibid., Letter 36.
3. Ibid., Letter 49.
in his attitude toward his writing. As a glimpse of the habits of his life and opinions of his own work, the letters are noteworthy, though neither as forceful, as meaty or as well-written as his other prose.

That curious antiquary, Sir Thomas Browne, who is well-beloved by all readers, left the impress of his unusual personality in his domestic letters and letters to friends. Edmund Gosse says of Browne's style: "It is all veneered with the tortoise-shell of his learning, the stained ivory of his meditations upon life, and it is not carved out in bold forms, with a chisel or on a lathe, but, with the daintiest care, fragments, sometimes of no great intrinsic value, are fitted into the brilliant surface-pattern."

The earliest letters which Browne has written are addressed to his son Thomas "when he went into France, at 14 years of age." To "Honest Tom" his father offers advice, guidance and genuine affection. While at Bordeaux, Thomas receives a letter from his father with the following caution:

Be not dejected and melancholy because you can yet have little comfort in conversation, and all things seem strange unto you. Remember the sameness back and be not troubled for any thing that other ways would trouble your patience here, be courteous and vivil to all, put on a decent boldness and avoid pudor rusticus, not much known in France. Hold firm to the Protestant religion and be diligent in going to church when you have any little knowledge of the language.

He sends him news of the "humiliation and faste kept -
to divert the judgments of God upon us and our posteritie
for the abominable murther of King Charles the first and is
by act of Parliament to be kept yearly on that day for ever";
of the addition to his coin collection effected by the
findings in a grave; of the sweet organ of Christ church;
of the observance of Lent "which made Yerseugh and fisher-
men rejoice;" of the hanging of their home; of the prices
of corn and wheat; of the uprisings of the Anabaptists.
The same exhaustless fund of interest expresses itself in
his advice to Thomas:

If you live with an apothecarie you may get some
good by observing the drugs and practice which will
be no burden and may somewhat help you in latin; I
would be at some reasonable charge if any young man
would assist you and teach you french and latin
daily as they are to be found commonly; you are not
only to learn to understand and speak French but to
write it which must be done by practice and ob-
servation because they write and speak differently,
and in what you write in English, observe the points
and date your letters.

His advice is endless. In one letter he requests his son
to save "any pretty insects" he might find; in another,
"observe the manner of trade, how they make wine and
vinegar, by what we call the rope, which is the husks
and stalks of the grape, and how they prepare it for that
use;" to be wary of Rochelle which was a "place of too
much good fellowship and a very drinking town;" to visit
the salt works on the Isle of Rhe; to take notes or
drafts in notebooks.

During this same period Edward Browne is travelling in France and Italy, and studying medicine. His father rejoices that he had "seen more cutt for the stone, and of different sex and ages." He advises him to "take notice of their instruments, and at least make such a draught thereof, and especially of the dilator and director."

His son, Thomas, enters the navy in 1664. His father still guides his study. He advises him to study the stars by a globe; to learn the names of "all parts and roupes about the shippe, what proportion the masts must hold to the length and depth of a shippe, and also the sayles;" to get a box of Jesuit's powder in Calais; to note the mineral water at Tangier and to "take notice of such plants as you meet with, either upon the Spanish or African coast" and to save the leaves in a book; to continue his violin work. Sir Thomas is justly proud of his namesake, who utilizes practically every moment of his time, and returns from his journey with "six jarras of tent, each containing about three gallons, which I intend to present unto my friends; and a roll of excellent tobacco, as they tell me who have taken of it, very noble sweet waters, and orange flower butter, which may prove welcome presents to some friends."

1. The Works, p. 419.
In 1667 Edward Browne takes his degree of Doctor of Physick at Merton College, Oxford, and the following year leaves for the continent. His father's letters to him as well as his to Sir Thomas Browne are characteristic of the two men. The letters show the preoccupation of Sir Thomas Browne's mind with varied bits of information. He calls to his son's attention the "politicie and government of places", the red marking stone for drawings, how "the Dutch make defences agaynst sea inundations", the fish and fowl for sale in the markets, the map of Germany, the cellars of Vienna, the "halfe moone" of St. Stephen's. He is ever solicitous of his son's welfare and health, and worries when he hears that he is travelling sometimes for three days and nights.

Dr. Edward Browne's letters show that keen observation which later made him one of the outstanding physicians of his age. To his sister, Betty, who was practicing drawing at the time, he addresses a pretty compliment:

"Though I make many journeys, yet I am confident your pen and pencill are greater travellers. How many fine plains do they passe over, and how many hills, woods, seas doe they designe? You have a fine way of not onely seeing but making a world, and whilst you set still, how many miles doth your hand travell."

Against his father's will, he plans a trip into Turkey, of which his father disapproves as being a country "of small literature."

In 1673 Edward returns to London, and finally, in 1675, resides in Salisbury-court on Fleet-street where he lives for the remainder of his life. It is not an unusual thing for fortune and time to play tricks on the memory of great men. In his day, Dr. Edward Browne was a far greater man than his father, but posterity has placed its approval upon the work of that strange, lovable writer.

During the following years of his life, Sir Thomas interests himself in his son’s work. He recommends Martial to him for reading; he sends him Lucretius with the comment that “there being divers impieties in it” which cause him hesitancy in recommending it to his reading, because “it containeth the Epicurean naturall philosophie”; he tells him of Vansleb’s eight-volume work on Egypt, and his trip into “divers caves of the mummies” where he found “many sorts of birds, embalmed, and included in putts, one whereof hee sent into France,” of his visit to the pyramids when he discovered that “the north side is larger than that of east and west”; he buys as a gift Ricaut’s history of the last three Turkish emperors.  

In more direct connection with his son’s medical work, Sir Thomas is no less helpful. He recalls the dissection of a dolphin:

If the dolphin were to be showed for money in Norwich, little would bee got, if they showed it in London, they are like to take out out the viscera.

1. The Works, p. 442.
and salt the fish, and then the dissection will be inconsiderable. You may remember the dolphin opened when the king was here, and Dr. Clark was at my house, when you took a draught of several parts very well, which Dr. Clark had sent unto him.

He recommends for his consideration in a lecture on the ear the possibility of horse-leeches getting in the ear despite the bitter quality of the ear-wax. He advises him, "when the wether proves cold and fitt for dissections if you have opportunity, take notice of a beare: 'tis commonly sayd that a beare hath no breast bone, and that hee cannot well runne down a hill, his heart will so come up toward his throat. Examine therefore the pectorall parts, and endeavour to find out the ground of such an opinion at opportunity." In similar vein he advises him to examine the vocal apparatus of a hound. His respect for the Royal Society leads to his advice that his son read their published readings "of a flying man, and a shippe to sayle in the ayre, wherein here are some ingenuous discourses" and of Lewenhoeck's discovery of "such a vast number of little animals in the melt of a cod, or the liquor that runnes from it."

The letters contain, too, a portrait of life at that time. Sir Thomas Browne kept himself aloof from the politics of the day, his chief interest in it being manifested in the excitement concerning local elections, of which he always

1. The Works, p. 443.
2. Ibid., p. 447.
3. Ibid., p. 457.
4. Ibid., p. 464.
sends Edward news. In one instance the winning candidates were "carried on chariots about the market place after eleven o'clock, with trumpets and torches, candles being lighted at windows, and the market place full of people."¹

For royalty, he has the greatest respect. "It is high treason to calculate the nativitie of the king," he declares, and worries about the reduction of the king's household expenses.

I am sorry to find that the King of England is fayne to reduce his household expenses to twelve thousand pounds p. annum, especially hee having a farre greater revenue than any of his predecessors. God keeps all honest men from penury and wants men can bee honest no longer then they can give every one his due; in funde parsimonia seldome recovers or restores a man.

He advises his son to be frugal and save money, recalling the expense which the education, christening and burials of his children had cost him.

Sir Thomas Browne also corresponds with many outstanding and intelligent men, among whom Dr. Power, Mr. Dugdale and John Evelyn are worthy of mention. His Religio Medici "still finds reception and esteem abroad."³ John Evelyn consults him on his work, which was never completed, but intended to result in a complete plant catalogue. Evelyn says of gardens' "The model ... will abundantly testify my abhorrence of those pointed and

¹. The Works, p. 454.
². Ibid., p. 474.
³. Ibid., p. 486.
and formal projections of our coakney gardens and plottin, which appears like gardens of past-board and marchpane, and smell more of paynt then of flowers and verdure."¹

Mr. Dugdale shares Sir Thomas Browne's interest in archaeology, and his letters concern the finding of old Roman coins, urns dug up, bones of a strange and unknown fish.

During 1663, Dr. Browne became interested in the Natural History of Norfolk, a work being undertaken by Dr. Merritt. The letters exchanged between the two men concern identification of birds, fungi, animals. Of the pelican, Browne says: "I have one hung up in my house, which was shot in a fen ten miles off, about four years ago; and because it was so rare, some conjectured it might be one of those which belonged unto the king, and flew away."² He likewise writes: "Four squirrels I have kept in large cages."

Dr. How, planning a book on plants, writes to Dr. Browne. The noted herbalist says:

I have numbered about 2 roote of nep; in my garden 16 cats who never destroyed those plants, but have totally spoyle the neighboring births in that bedd to a yard's distance, rending the place hard, and smooth like a walks with their frequent tredings.³

Browne's letters belong as completely to him as anything he has written. Individual, unusual in their

¹ The Works, p. 488.
² Ibid., p. 505.
³ Ibid., p. 516.
sharp turns of attention and interest, affectionate and kindly, reflecting a sincere love of study and an inexhaustible capacity for absorbing small details of knowledge. Sir Thomas Browne's letters provide a book which should be more widely known and read. The picture of his family relationships is clearly one of an affectionate, understanding family. The portrait of the scholar and antiquarian is an unaffected, genuine one. Perhaps no greater tribute can be paid to his style than that quoted previously from his biographer, Edmund Gosse.

The daughter of a barber and the wife of a Dutch merchant, Aphra Behn was one of the first women to achieve success in English literature. Her novel, "Oroonoko" was a great success in her day, and today is regarded as a literary curiosity.

Self-styled Astrea, she acted as a spy in Holland under Charles II. Because her political negotiations were both unappreciated and unpaid, she is advised by friends to abandon politics. To this Astrea replies with a spirited letter telling of her adventures, an epistle deserving mention.

"I have made two Dutchmen in love with me," she writes, "Dutchmen! do you mind me, that have no soul for anything but Gain, that have no Pleasure but Interest in the Battle." Vander Albert's affections were

2. Ibid.
exploited for political knowledge, while Van Bruin,
"this old piece of worm-eaten Touchwood," is the object
of mirth because of his portly build and his extreme
sentimentality. To his love letter comparing Astrea to
a ship's parts, the oliver lady responds with a jibe at
his nationality.

"I never expected so wise a Nation should at last set
out for the Island of Love...may, I should as soon have
suspected them guilty of becoming Apostles to the
Samozoids, and of preaching the Gospel to the Laplanders,
where there is nothing to be got, and for which reason the
very Jesuite deny them Baptism." Laughing to herself, she
administers him with threats of a possible scandal. "Alas!
Alas! how deplorable a Spectacle would it be to these Eyes
to see that agreeable Bulk, dismember'd by the enraged
Rabble, and Scallops of your Flesh sold by Fish-wives for
Guilders and Duchateens!"¹

Van Bruin continues in his suit, which ends after a
letter containing an amusing speculation. "Well," writes
the irrepressible Astrea, "I don't know, if our Planets
should happen to be in Conjunction, what strange Things
might Come to pass, and what a wonderful Race we should
produce, but I'm satisfy'd, that betwixt the Gaiety of the
Mother, and the robust portly Activity of the Father, it
could not be less than dancing Elephants."²

². Ibid., p. 50.
Returning finally to England, she made her home a rendezvous of the wits of the town. She began to work in the theatre, and wrote at least fifteen dramas between the years 1671-1689, all of which were popular during the Restoration period.

One document of Mrs. Behn's deserves particular mention inasmuch as it reveals as clearly as any letter in the period the unstable circumstances of the literary life. To Tonson, the Bookseller, Aphra Behn addresses her concerns:

Dear Mr. Tonson, I am mightily obliged to you for the service you have done me to Mr. Dryden, in whose esteem I would choose to be rather than anybody's in the world. And I am sure I never, in thought, word, or deed, merited other from him, but if you had heard what was told me, you would have excused all I said on that account. Thank him most infinitely for the honour he offers, and I shall never think I can do anything that can merit so vast a glory; and I must owe it all to you if I have it. As for Mr. Creech, I would not have you afflict him with a thing (that) can not now be helped, so never let him know my resentment. I am troubled for the line that's left out of Dr. Gorth, and wish your man would write it in the margin, at his leisure, to all you sell. As for the verses of mine, I shall really have thought them worth thirty pounds, and I hope you will find it worth 25 pounds, not that I should dispute at any other time for 5 pound where I am so obliged; but you cannot think what a pretty thing the Island will be, and what a deal of labour I shall have yet with it. And if that pleases, I will do the second voyage, which will compose a little book as big as a novel by itself. But pray speak to your brother to advance the price to one 5 pound more, 'twill at this time be more than given me, and I vow I would not ask it if I did not really believe it worth more. Alas I would not lose
my time in such low gettings; but only since I am about it I am resolved to go through with it as soon as you please; for I shall finish as fast as you can go on. Methinks the Voyage should come last, as being the largest volume. You know Mr. Cowley's "David" is lost, because a large poem; and Mrs. Phillips her plays for the same reason. I wish I had more time. I would add something to the verses that I have a mind to, but good dear Mr. Tomson, let it be 5 pound more, for I may safely swear I have lost the getting of 50 pound by it, though that's nothing to you, or my satisfaction and humour, but I have been without getting so long that I am just in the point of breaking, especially since a body has no credit at the playhouse for money as we used to have; fifty or sixty deep, or more; I want extremely or I would not urge this.

A.B.

Pray send me the loose papers to put to those I have, and let me know which you will go about first, the songe and verses of that. Send me an answer today.

Aphra Behn's Love Letters to a Gentleman leaves us in no doubt as to her sex, despite her contention that "You need not have caution'd me, who so naturally hate these little arts of my Sex, that I often run on freedoms that may well enough bear a Censure from People so scrupulous as Lycidas."²

The eight letters to Lycidas tell an amusing love story, garnished with flowery and emotional language. In one turn she remonstrates with him because of his "unkind Departure the previous night while she was unable to speak to him,"³ and vows that she will not call him back, "because he has so unkindly taken himself back," asking him at the same time to call that evening. Reproaching his coolness, she denies any change in her own attitude. "'Tis I was

3. Ibid., p. 56.
first in Friendship, and shall be last in Constancy," Astrea asserts. After her apparent disapproval of her vows of constancy, she maintains her stand. "I have heard, when two Souls kindly meet, 'tis a vast Pleasure, as vast as the Curse must be, when Kindness is not equal; and why should you believe that necessary for me that will be so very incommod for you?"

Reconciled by a meeting, she offers literary criticism of his articles, and gives us a glimpse of some "rallying Love-Discourse after supper," and once again indulges in an emotional tirade against her "charming unkind."

The final letter presents an amusing picture of Lycidas, Astrea vowing never to marry again, for, she says, "I cannot either not Love, or have a thousand Arts of hiding it." Her reproaches continue. "How could any Thing, but the Man that hates me, entertain me so unkindly? Witness your excellent opinion of me, of loving others; witness your passing by the End of the Street where I live, and squandering away your time at any Coffee-House, rather than allow me what you know in your soul is the greatest Blessing of my Life,—your dear, dull melancholy Company. I call it dull, because you can never be gay or merry where Astrea is."

Her reproachful accusations of indifference must have been

2. Ibid., p. 63.
ineffective, for the letters end thus, abruptly. It is
obvious to a reader that these letters were never intended
for the public eye, for in spite of the use of fictitious
names, the pictures given of both Lycomedes and Astrea are
genuine ones, natural, and intensely personal. The
artificiality of the theatrical woman, the sense of
dramatic values, the inconstancy of her own emotions are
therein reflected, with the result that we know the woman
who adopted the Restoration Stage as a means of livelihood.

Those who turn to the letters of Samuel Pepys
expecting to find in them some reflection of the diarist
are doomed to certain disappointment. The letters do not
possess that scintillating wit and interest which have been
linked with Pepys' name. On the contrary, they are proper
and conventional, dealing, in the main, with naval
preparations and equipment. They throw an interesting
light upon the development of the English navy during the
period in which Pepys held the position of Secretary of the
Admiralty.

This, however, is not our chief interest. Scattered
among the dull business letters are a few documents which,
though they fail to catch the personality of the man, are of
some importance. Among these letters is the correspondence
with John Evelyn. In 1682 Evelyn sends his friend a copy
of the History of the Dutch War which he is writing.
In 1688, when Pepys' political career ceases with the fall of James II, Evelyn writes him a sympathetic and intimate letter:

I left you indisposed, and send on purpose to learn how it is with you, and to know if, in any sort, I may serve you in this prodigious Revolution. You have many friends, but no man living who is more sincerely your servant, or that has a greater value for you.

Not until ten years after the papers were first sent to him did Pepys, in assorting and arranging his papers, make any effort to return Evelyn's history. There is no record of the manuscript ever being returned, although it was Pepys' intention to do so. Besides this, he writes:

Another piece of restitution I have to make you is your Columna Trajani, which, out of a desire of making the most use of, with the greatest care to my eyes, I put out unfortunately to an unskilful hand for the washing its prints with some thin stain to abate the too strong lustre of the paper; in the execution whereof part of it suffered so much injury, that not knowing with what countenance to return it, I determined upon making you amends by the first fair book I could meet with.

The same year, from Wotton, Evelyn writes a further letter which is proof of his friendly feeling even while "philosophizing and world-despising".

Here is wood and water, meadows and mountains, the Dryads and Hamadryads; but here's no Mr. Pepys, no Dr. Gale. Nothing of all the cheer in the parlour that I taste; all's insipid, and all will be so to me till I see and enjoy you again. . . . I am

here with Boccalini, and Erasmus' Praiso of Folly, and look down upon the world with wondrous contempt when I consider for what we keep such a mighty bustle. O fortunate Mr. Pepys! who knows, possesses, and enjoys all that's worth the seeking after.1

This friendship continues until Pepys' last days. From Clapham in 1700 Pepys writes to his friend of his illness.

I have no herds to mind, nor will my Doctor allow me any books here. What, then will you say, too, are you doing? Why, truly nothing that will bear naming, and yet I am not, I think, idle; for who can, that has so much of past and to come to think on, as I have?2

Letters, too, pass between the famous Isaac Newton and Samuel Pepys concerning Newton's famous problem of the dice.3 In 1665 Pepys sends Lady Carteret news of the

plague in London.

The absence of the Court and emptiness of the city takes away all occasion of news, save only such melancholy stories as would rather sadden than find your Ladyship any divertissement in the hearing; I having stayed in the city till above 7400 died in one week, and of them above 6000 of the plague, and little noise heard day or night but tolling of bells; till I could walk Lumber-street, and not meet twenty persons from one end to the other, and not 50 upon the Exchange; till whole families, 10 and 12 together, have been swept away; till my very physician, Dr. Burnet, who undertook to secure me against any infection, having survived the month of his own house being shut up, died himself of the plague; till the nights, though much lengthened, are grown too short to conceal the burials of those that died the day before, people being thereby constrained to borrow daylight for that service; lastly, till I could find neither meat nor drink safe, the butcheries

2. Ibid., p. 297.
being everywhere visited, my brewer's house shut up, and my baker, with his whole family, dead of the plague. 1

In 1681 Pepys is having his portrait painted by Antonio Verrio, and seeks to borrow Sir Thomas Beckford's scarlet gown. Sir Samuel Morland writes Pepys the story of his marriage difficulties and his consequent divorce. Pepys tells John Jacson of the strange death of the Duke of Gloucester in 1700, who, "being overheated with dancing on his birthday, is, for the consequences of it, not to be omitted. His distemper turned to the small-pox, which killed him in five days."

The most interesting documents of the collection are those addressed to Lord Reay, a Scottish nobleman, and from his addressee, relating to the Second Sight pretended by the Highlanders. Lord Reay, in 1699, sends Pepys information, citing various cases with which he is acquainted by hearsay. Lord Tarbut, writing to Mr. Boyle on the same subject, ventured a comment upon the fact that "when transported to America, (they) quite lose this quality; as it was told me by a gentleman who knew some of them in Barbadoes, that did not see any visions there, although he knew them to be Seers when they lived in the Isles of Scotland." 2 Pepys himself, replying to Lord Reay's letter, is surprised at the "conviction of the reality of

1. Pepys, op. cit., p. 192.
2. Ibid., p. 272.
it? His conclusion, after examining the material, is stated:

But, my Lord, where, as in the matter before us, the power pretended to is so far from being of any advantage to the possessors, as, on the contrary, to be attended with constant uneasiness to them, as well as for the most part of evil and serious import, and irresistible so, to the persons it is applied to; in consequence whereof, as your Lordship well notes, your Seers are both desirous to be themselves rid of it, and ready to communicate it to any other that will adventure on it; I say, these considerations, joined to that of its being so abundantly attested by eyewitnesses of unquestionable faith, authority, and capacity to judge, will not permit me to distrust the truth of it, at least till something shall arise from my further deliberations upon your Lordship's papers leading up thereto, than, I must acknowledge, there yet does.

Note: See Part II for some of the stories related.

Pepys' friend, John Evelyn, was himself a diarist, and distinguished himself far more than did Pepys in the field of letter writing, although his diary is less read and less known.

John Evelyn, living quietly at his family home at Sayes Court, or visiting in London, or touring the continent, was alert and thinking. A Royalist, he still enjoyed the friendship of members of the Commonwealth. An Anglican, he corresponded with a Roman Catholic priest, and explains the attitude of the English church toward the Holy Eucharist to him. A writer and traveller, he gives an account of his writings in his letters. Busy always with trivial as well as monumental works, he finds time to write a detailed criticism of Edward Thurland's
Evelyn's friendship with Jeremy Taylor is such as is rarely found in the letters. Evelyn himself was of a religious nature, a mellowed nature which had settled all the controversial points which harassed the thinkers of the day. Jeremy Taylor, believing firmly in immortality of the soul, writes to Evelyn:

The soul returns to God; and that, in no sense is death. And I think the death of the soul cannot be defined; and there is no death to spirits but annihilation. I am sure there is none that we know of or can understand. For, if ceasing from its operations be death, then it dies sooner than the body: for oftentimes it does not work any of its nobler operations. In our sleep we neither feel nor understand. If you answer, and say it animates the body, and that is a sufficient indication of life; I reply, that if one act alone is sufficient to show the soul to be alive, then the soul cannot die; for in philosophy it is affirmed, that the soul desires to be reunited; and that which is dead desires not.

During the Second Civil War, Evelyn carried on a secret correspondence with his father-in-law, Sir Richard Browne, at that time ambassador from England to the Court of France. The signature adopted for the letters was "Aplanos", a corruption of a Greek word signifying constancy of the opinions. The letters embrace the period preceding and following the death of the King, and give an excellent account of the busy and exciting events of those days, as well as a picture of the parliamentary difficulties.

2. Ibid., pp. 98-9.
as they then existed.

Of his own times Evelyn held a conflicting opinion.

When the lord of Northumberland planned to send his son to the continent to travel, John Evelyn gives his views of youth and the characteristics of the age in a letter to Edward Thurland in 1658:

Youth is the seed time in which the foundation of all noble things is to be laid; but it is made the field of repentance. For what can become more glorious than to be ignorant of nothing but of vice, which indeed has no solid existency, and therefore is nothing? And unless thus we cultivate our youth, and noblemen make wiser provisions for their educations abroad, above the vanity of talk, feather, and ribbon, the ordinary commerce and import of their wild preoccupations. I despair of ever living to see a man truly noble indeed; they may be called "My Lord;" titles and sounds are inferior trifles; but when virtue and blood are coincidents, they both add lustre and natural excellencies.

Evelyn's mind is akin to that of Sir Thomas Browne inasmuch as it is unlimited in its interests. Evelyn queries Boyle about the new essence of roses; sends Boyle a recipe for varnish; reproaches Lord Cornbury for not closing the theatres during Lent; outlines complete and detailed plans for an Infirmary at Chatham, the plans of which were formulated after the plague; sends detailed suggestions for the improvement of the English language to the Royal Society; requests an ode from Cowley; expresses an interest in earthquakes and red peppers, French salons and melon seeds, the Royal Society and the London fire.

The Royal Society was one of Evelyn's greatest interests. To Robert Boyle he sent complete plans for a college
to be begun by the Society, plans which include a description of the buildings and a price list of the expenses which would be involved. Of the critics of the society Evelyn writes to Rev. Joseph Glanvil: "Let the moon-dogs bark on, till their throats are dry: the Society every day emerges, and her good genius will raise up one or other to judge and defend her." After the death of Robert Boyle, Evelyn answers a request from William Wotton for information concerning Boyle. He says of him:

He was rather tall and slender of stature, for most part valetudinary, pale and much emaciated; nor unlike his picture in Gresham College; which, with an almost impudent importunity, was, at the request of the Society, hardly extorted, or rather stolen, from this modest gentleman by Sir Edmund Kng, after he had refused it to his nearest relations.

In his first addresses, being to speak or answer, he did sometimes a little hesitate, rather than stammer, or repeat the same word; imputable to an infirmity, which, since my remembrance, he had exceedingly overcome. This, as it made him somewhat slow and deliberate, so, after the first effort, he proceeded without the least interruption, in his discourse. And I impute this impediment much to the frequent attacks of palsies, contracted, I fear, not a little by his often attendance on chemical operations. It has plainly astonished me to have seen him so often recover, when he has not been able to move, or bring his hand to his mouth: and indeed the contexture of his body, during the best of his health, appeared to me so delicate, that I have frequently compared him to a chrysat, or Venice glass; which, though wrought never so thin and fine, being carefully set up, would outlast the hardier metals of daily use; and he was withal as clear and candid; not a blemish or spot to tarnish his reputation.

1. Evelyn, op. cit., p. 204.
2. Ibid., pp. 351-2.
Evelyn likewise offers a tribute to his friend, Margaret Godolphin, in his biography of her. He reprints many of her letters, saying of them that "they were so many and in so excellent natural and easy a style, that as for their number, one would believe she did nothing else but write, see for their weight and ingenuity, that she ought to doe nothing else."¹

Regardless of Evelyn's own opinion, none of Mrs. Godolphin's letters possess the charm and personality that Mrs. Evelyn's have captured.

Her letters reflect a calm life in the country. Their chief interest lies in their homeliness, sincerity, and simplicity. Her correspondents were friends, not noblemen, not kings or queens, not diplomatic favorites. For this reason, her letters throw a new light on the common life of an English family.

In spite of her belief that women should busy themselves at little services and household duties, Mrs. Evelyn was an alert and intelligent woman. She gives her opinion on letters in an epistle to Mrs. Bohun, a regular correspondent and friend. Of Balzac, she remarks: "I do not admire his style, nor emulate the spirit of discontent which runs through all his letters." Of Doctor Donne, "who, had he not been really a learned man, a

¹ Evelyn, Life of Mrs. Godolphin, p. 185.
a libertine in wit and a courtier, might have been allowed to write well," she believes the praises accorded
his letters exceed their value. Veitune, she remarks,
"seems to excel both in quickness of fancy, easiness of
expression." Far from being a professional writer or har­
boring any desire of being such, Mrs. Evelyn expresses
herself as follows:

I wonder at nothing more than at the ambition
of printing letters: since, if the design be to pro­
duce wit and learning, there is too little scope for
the one; and the other may be reduced to a less com­
pass than a sheet of gilt paper, unless truth were
more communicative. Business, love, accidents, secret
pleasure, family intrigues, generally make up the body
of letters; and can signify very little to any besides
the persons they are addressed to, and therefore must
lose infinitely by being exposed to the unconverted.
Without this declaration, I hope I am sufficiently
secure never to run the hazard of being censured that
way; since I cannot suspect my friends of so much
unkindness, nor myself of the vanity to wish fame on
so doubtful a foundation as the caprice of mankind.1

The comments on the theatre interspersed with news
in the letters are of singular interest. Of the censor­
ship of drama Mrs. Evelyn remarks that Catiline is "well
set out with clothes and scenes; Horace, with a farce and
dances between every act."2 During this period of de­
cline of morality in the theatre, Mrs. Evelyn rejoices at
seeing the Siege of Granada, "a play so full of ideas that
the most refined romance I ever read is not to compare

with it." She does not judge drama by hard and fast rules, believing that the "present world is so enlightened that the old dramatic must bear no sway.\(^1\)

Her family relationships were almost ideal. Solicitous always of her children's welfare, she writes her college son a reprimanding letter:

"Much is to be wished in your behalf: that your temper were humble and tractable; your inclinations virtuous, and that from choice, not compulsion, you make an honest man. Whatever object of vice comes before you, should have the same effect in your mind of dislike and aversion that drunkenness had in the youth of Sparta when their slaves were presented to them in that brutish condition, not only from the deformity of such a sight, but from a motive beyond theirs—the hope of a future happiness, which these rigorous heathens in moral virtue had little prospect of, finding no reward for virtue, but in virtue itself. You are not too young to know that lying, defrauding, swearing, disobedience to parents and persons in authority, are offences to God and man; that debauchery is injurious to growth, health, life, and indeed to the pleasures of life; therefore, now that you are turning from child to man; endeavour to follow the best precepts, and choose such ways as may render you worthy of praise and love. You are assured of your father's care and my tenderness; no mark of it shall be wanting at any time to confirm it to you, with this reserve only, that you strive to deserve kindness by a sincere honest proceeding, and not flatter yourself that you are good whilst you only appear to be so. Fallacies will only pass in schools.\(^2\)

For her niece she fitted "a mantle coat, bodice, coat, petticoat, narrow shoes and stockings;"\(^3\) to her brother, travelling in France, she confesses that she mentions Paris "with that affection persons in age remember the

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2. Ibid., pp. 21-2.
3. Ibid., p. 31.
satisfaction of their youth;" on the loss of a well-beloved daughter she believes "she was too great a blessing to me, who never deserved anything, much less such a jewel." In keeping with the custom of the times, Mrs. Evelyn employs classical names in an absurd fashion while writing to her husband. Of her life in the country she accounts that "though I live in the country and converse with sea-nymphs, now and then with a tarpaulin hero," she nevertheless understands the happiness of Court life.

The same kindly affection and understanding which prevailed in her family relationships extends to her considerations for her neighbors. She offers just praise at the death of Samuel Take, and addresses his wife with infinite tenderness and understanding. To Mrs. Saul, contemplating a divorce from her husband, she writes a letter which, for its evidence of insight into the friendship of two women, is of value. Women, she realizes, choose to bear all infirmities rather than seek to break the permanence of the marriage vow. Sympathizing with her friend's domestic difficulties, Mrs. Evelyn's advice is:

Pray be so kind to yourself and him to return to all the duties of a wife; to forgive past faults like a Christian, to forget them like a friend; to begin your friendship upon a new account; and as caution for him, give me leave to be the person; your word if sufficient for yourself. Since he desires so earnestly to make you happy, banish all obstacles; do not entertain a thought that may check a blessing offered to you both... Make an experiment which if successful will prove worth your while.

2. Ibid., pp. 36-7.
Elements of the proverbial match-maker appear when Mrs. Evelyn seeks to arrange a marriage between Lady Lewtner and her brother Granvil. Recently widowed, Lady Lewtner was the sister of Mrs. Evelyn of Woodcot. To her, Mrs. John Evelyn expresses her desire. Evidently her plans were in vain, for the next letter is cool, mentioning her sister-in-law's dislike of second marriages. To Glanville she complains of widows, "are they not odd creatures?" She wonders how the Lady Lewtner "can resist her own happiness in making yours?" Frankly, she is disturbed by the "slight reception" her sister gave to the plan.

For the height of naturalness and charm, her letters possess the homely virtues of patchwork quilts and lavender. Busied with her country life, concerned with the welfare of her children and her relatives, Mrs. Evelyn's letters are personal exchanges of friendship and kindly affection.

With the correspondence of Evelyn was found a most valuable collection of historical documents consisting of the correspondence between Charles I. and his secretary-of-state, Sir Edward Nicholas, begun at the time of the journey to Scotland. The letters reflect the wisdom and devotion of Nicholas. The value as historical documents

1. Diary, Vol. IV, p. 27.
lies in their minute accounts of the Scottish struggle.
So intimate and secret were these communications that many
entire letters are written in code and are not yet entirely
deciphered.

Among the Nicholas correspondence is a letter from
the king to Sir Edward Nicholas, written in 1646, in which
he deals with his published letters, which seem to have
aroused criticism on the part of his secretary. "(I) am
glad to fynde that you there make so faire (indeed just,
as concerning my religiou, kingdome & frends) an interpre­
tation of them & particularly that you have so great a
confidence in my constancy to my just cause: and now me
thinkes I wer too blame if I didnot justifie the treuth
of your opinions concerning me."1 Of the surrender of
Bristol, the king bids Nicholas "Tell my Sone that I shall
lease greeve to heere that he is knoked in the head then
that he should do see means an action as is the rendring
of Bristoll Castell & Fort upon the terms it was."2

After the death of the king, the Nicholas correspon­
dence embraces the correspondence with royalists on the
continent. The deceased king's sister, Elisabeth, Queen
of Bohemia, wrote regularly to Nicholas, and her letters
are a strange mixture of social doings and political and
religious worries. Her contempt for Cromwell is revealed

1. Diary, Vol. IV, p. 159.
2. Ibid., p. 165.
fully in the following comment: "Sure Cromwell is the beast in the Revelations that all kings and nations doe worship; I wish him the like end and speedilie, and you a hapie new yeares."¹

Among the papers of Sir Richard Browne is found a correspondence with Edward Hyde, later Earl of Clarendon. Hyde spent much of his time on the continent with the Royalists, and his letters show the intrigues, jealousies and fears of the exiled Court.²

The poets of the century, although they have not contributed a large body of letters, have left some most interesting epistles, which, though few in number, are valuable reflections of their personalities.

The most outstanding of all these poets is Sir John Suckling, whose Letters to Divers Eminent Personages was published in 1646. A traveller and soldier of fortune, Suckling interested himself in politics, and a letter to Henry Jermyn shows a serious side of his nature which is usually kept hidden. In it, he is most concerned for the King's safety and the success of the expedition to Scotland. In May, 1641, Suckling took an active part in the plot to rescue Strafford from the Tower, and was compelled to flee to France, where he died the following year.

William Hazlitt, in his Lectures on the English Comic

¹. Diary, Vol. IV, p. 222.  
². Ibid., p. 232.
Writers, states: "Suckling's letters are full of habitual
gaiety and good sense." Despite his frivolous attitude
toward women, he wrote to Aglaura regularly throughout
his whole life. Of the loss of a mistress he humorously
remarks that it "kills men only in romances, and is still
digested with the first meat we eat after it."¹ To Lady
Southcote, whose husband had deserted her and committed
suicide, he writes:

You are now free; and what matter is it to a
prisoner whether the fetters be taken off the ordi-
nary way or not? If instead of putting off handsomely
the chain of matrimony, he hath rudely broken it, 'tis
at his own charge, nor should it cost you a tear.

He relates the story of Leonina, the Spanish princess,
who so begrudged her tears that she held up the post until
the secretary arrived to tell her of the death of her
husband. "Of ill things the less we know the better," he
philosophizes. To dissuade a young man from love, he
advises travelling. To Aglaura he confesses: "Abrupt-
ness is an eloquence in parting, when spinning out of time
is but the weaving of new sorrow."² His Royalist views
are clearly shown in a letter to an unknown friend:

So that it is more than possible to be great and
good; and we may safely conclude, if there be some
that are not so exact, as much as they fall short of
it just so much they have gone from the great original,
God, and from the best copies of him on earth, the
king and queen.

¹ The Works of John Suckling, Letter XIII.
² Ibid., Letter XVIII.
During the same period, Edmund Waller writes a spirited, humorous and mocking letter to Lady Lucy Sidney upon the occasion of her sister's marriage. Robert Herrick's letters are those of a whining college student to his uncle begging for money and books. "Suffer not the distance to hinder that which I know your disposition will not deny," he cautions him. Andrew Marvell's letters give an unusual picture of the dark side of the time. His letters to William Skinner might have been of interest and greater enlightenment had not the pastry-maid put them under pie-bottoms.

The most significant figure of the century in the field of letters is James Howell. Four editions of his Epistolae-Ho-Elianae were published within ten years after its first appearance. James Howell has been called the Father of Epistolary Literature in England. The historical value of the letters is small, thanks to the fact that many of them are spurious, and it is difficult to select those which are genuine from the others. Howell possessed a knack of selecting interesting subjects for his writing, which was the result of imprisonment in the Fleet throughout the Civil War.\(^1\) With the Restoration, he received 200 pounds from the crown and the office of historiographer royal. He himself has described his Familiar Letters as

\(^1\) Hartmann, Cyril, The Cavalier Spirit, p. 61.
"the Keys of the Mind; they open all the Boxes of one's Breast, all the cells of the Brain, and truly set forth the inward Man; nor can the Pencil so lively represent the Face as the Pen can do the Fancy."

Qualities of both the reporter and the essayist are visible in the subjects and methods of dealing with them. Of Buckingham, he writes, "Sir George Villiers, the new favorite, tapers up apace, and grows strong at Court." To Sir James Croft he writes of Raleigh's return from Guiana. Of the fall of Bacon, he writes:

The fairest diamond may have a flaw in it, but I believe he died poor out of contempt of the self of fortune, as also out of an excess of generosity; which appeared, as in divers other passages, so once when the King had sent him a stag, he sent up for the underkeeper, and having drunk the King's health unto him in a silver-gilt bowl, he gave it him for his fee."

He tells the story of the white bird which appeared at the death of members of the Oxenham family. He recounts an amusing evening spent with Ben Jonson, whereat "T. Ca. bussed me in the ear that though Ben had barreled up a great deal of knowledge, yet it seems he had not read the Ethics, which among other precepts of morality forbid self-commendation, declaring it to be an ill-favored solecism in good manners." He is no exception to the contemporary belief in witchcraft. He tells the story of

2. Ibid., p. 595.
the Pied Piper for the first time. He tells of Buckingham-
ham's assassination, giving nearly as accurate an account
as that written by Sir Dudley Carleton, an eye-witness.
To a lady he sends a pretty compliment: "There is a French
saying that courtesies and favours are like flowers, which
are sweet only while they are fresh, but afterwards they
quickly fade and wither."
A picturesque, animated style;
Keen sense of observation; narrative ability; great scope
of interests and sympathies—these are Howell's chief
claims to distinction.

His theory of letters is expressed in an essay-letter
to Sir J. S.:

Sir,
It was a quaint difference the ancients did
put 'twixt a letter and an oration, that the one
should be attired like a woman, the other like a
man. The latter of the two is allowed large side
robes, as long periods, parentheses, similes, ex-
amples, and other parts of rhetorical flourishes; but
a letter or epistle should be short-coated, and close-
ly couched; a hungerlin becomes a letter more hand-
somely than a gown. Indeed we should write as we
speak, and that's a true familiar letter which ex-
presseth one's mind as if he were discoursing with
the party to whom he writes in succinct and short
terms. The tongue and the pen are both of them
interpreters of the mind, but I hold the pen to be
the more faithful of the two.

The eighteenth century was to achieve the habit of
discoursing of common things in letters. Howell is a link
between the letter-writers of this seventeenth century and

1. Sseomes, op. cit., p. 79.
2. Ibid., p. 71.
those of the next. Humphrey Wanley, an antiquary of the late seventeenth century, recounts an amusing impersonation of the Duke of Monmouth's death. John Ray expands and explains botanical classifications. Lady Rachel Russell considers "how few of ability and integrity this age produces." John Locke is formulating his theories of human understanding. Jonathan Swift is beginning his writing, and is to contribute his much loved Journal to Stella. The century has freed itself from the elaborateness of the Elizabethans, the emotional utterances of religionists, the harassed speculations of political leaders. Science is advancing by leaps and bounds. The Royal Society is leaving its impress upon the minds of thinking men. A new, discursive, intimate writing takes the place of vague speculations and abstractions. Around the corner is the eighteenth century, with Lord Chesterfield waiting to write to his son, Swift waiting to exchange letters with Stella, Lady Mary Montagu beginning her amusing letters. Around the bend is Pope and his school of formalists. The seventeenth century is gone, but the letters of the great men remain, living memorials to the thoughts and actions of common life.
Part II

An Anthology of Selections from
Seventeenth-Century Letters
Introduction to Part II.

In selecting passages from the letters, we have endeavoured to keep in mind those topics which are of most interest to the twentieth-century reader. The Parliamentary differences of the day are represented only in part, inasmuch as the diplomatic documents are the province of the student of history rather than the average reader, who usually prefers letters giving details rich in life. Where it is necessary, explanatory notes have been added. Inasmuch as the views on the religious, political, domestic and literary issues of the day are of greatest interest, a topical arrangement has been chosen in preference to a chronological one. Thus the reader may learn of strawberry butter and parliamentary quarrels, of oyster fishing and of Buckingham's assassination, of coin collections and highway robberies, of voyages and love affairs,—in short, "of cabbages and kings".
I. ON LETTERS.

On Letters

Sir,

It was a quaint difference the ancients did put 'twixt a letter and an oration, that the one should be attired like a woman, the other like a man. The latter of the two is allowed large side robes, as long periods, parentheses, similes, examples, and other parts of rhetorical flourishes: but a letter or epistle should be short-coated, and closely couched; a hungerlin becomes a letter more handsomely than a gown. Indeed we should write as we speak, and that's a true familiar letter which expresseth one's mind as if he were discoursing with the party to whom he writes in succinct and short terms. The tongue and the pen are both of them interpreters of the mind, but I hold the pen to be the more faithful of the two. The tongue in udo posita, being seated in a moist slippery place, may fail and falter in her sudden extemporal expressions; but the pen, having the greater advantage of premeditation, is not so subject to error, and leaves things behind it upon firm and authentic record. Now, letters, though they

be capable of any subject, yet commonly they are either narratory, objugatory, consolatory, monitory, or congratulatory. The first consists of relations, the second of reprehensions, the third of comfort, the last two of counsel and joy; there are some who in lieu of letters write homilies, they preach when they should epistolize; there are others that turn them to tedious tractates; this is to make letters degenerate from their true nature. Some modern authors there are who have exposed their letters to the world, but most of them, I mean among your Latin epistolizers, go freighted with mere Bartholomew ware, with trite and trivial phrases only, lifted with pedantic shreds of schoolboy verses. Others there are mong our next transmarine neighbors eastward, who write in their own language, but their style is so soft and easy that their letters may be said to be like bodies of loose flesh without sinews, they have neither joints of art nor arteries in them; they have a kind of simpering and lank hectic expressions made up of a bombast of words and finical affected compliments only. I cannot well away with such sleazy stuff, with such cobweb compositions, where there is no strength of matter, nothing for the reader to carry away with him that may enlarge the motions of his soul. One shall hardly find an apothegm, example, simile, or anything of philosophy, history, or solid knowledge, or as much as one new created phrase, in a hundred of them;
and to draw any observations out of them were as if one
went about to distil cream out of froth; inasmuch that it
may be said of them, what was said of the echo, "That she
is a mere sound, and nothing else."

I return you your Balsae by this bearer, and when I
found those letters, wherein he is so familiar with his
king, so flat, and those to Richelieu, so puffed with pro-
fane hyperboles, and larded up and down with such gross
flatteries, with others besides which he sends us urinals
up and down the world to look into his water for discovery
of the crazy condition of his body, I forbore him further.—
So I am your most affectionate servitor,

J.H.

-- James Howell to Sir J.S. at Leeds Castle, 1625.

On Letters

If you were here, you would not think me importune
if I bid you good-morrow every day; and such a patience
will excuse my often letters. No other kind of conveyance
is better for knowledge, or love. What treasure of moral
knowledge are in Seneca's letters to only one Lucilius?
and what of natural in Pliny's? how much of the story of
the time is in Cicero's letters? And how all of these
times, in the Jesuit's eastern and western epistles? where

can we find so perfect a character of Phaleris as in his own letters, which are almost so many writs of execution? Or of Brutus, as in his privy seals for money? The Evangelists and Acts teach us what to believe, but the Epistles of the Apostles what to do. And those who have endeavoured to dignify Seneca above his worth, have no fitter way than to imagine letters between him and St. Paul. As they think also that they have expressed an excellent person, in that letter which they obtrude, from our blessed Saviour to King Agabarus.

The Italians, which are most discursive, and think the world owes them all wisdom, abound so much in this kind of expressing, that Michel Montaigne says he hath seen (as I remember) 400 volumes of Italian letters. But it is the other capacity which make most of mine acceptable, that they are also the best conveyers of love. But, though all knowledge be in those authors already, yet, as some poisons, and some medicines, hurt not, nor profit, except the creature in which they reside contribute their lively activity and vigour; so, much of the knowledge buried in books perisheth, and becomes ineffectual, if it be not applied, and refreshed by a companion or friend. Much of their goodness hath the same period which some physicians of Italy have observed to be in the biting of their tarantula, that it affects no longer than the fly lives.

For with how much desire we read the papers of any
living now (especially friends) which we would scarce allow a box in our cabinet, or shelf in our library, if they were dead? And we do justly in it, for the writings and words of men present we may examine, control, and expostulate, and receive satisfaction from the authors; but the other we must believe, or discredit; they present no mean. Since, then, at that time I am upon the stage, you may be content to hear me.

And now that perchance I have brought you to it (as Thomas Badger did the King), now I have nothing to say. And it is well, for the letter is already long enough, else let this problem supply, which was occasioned by you, of women wearing stones; which, it seems, you were afraid women should read, because you avert them at the beginning with a protestation of cleanliness. Martial found no way fitter to draw the Roman matrons to read one of his books, which he thinks most moral or cleanly, that to counsel them by the first epigram to skip the book, because it was obscene. But either you write not at all for women, or for those of sincerer palates. Though their unworthiness and your own ease be advantages for me with you, yet I must add my entreaty that you let go no copy of my problems till I review them. If I be too late, at least be able to tell me who hath them.

Yours,

J. Donne

-- John Donne to Sir George More.
"A Mixed Parenthesis"¹

Sir,— In the history of or style of friendship, which is best written both in deeds and words, a letter which is of a mixed nature; and hath something of both, is a mixed parenthesis; it may be left out, yet it contributes, though not to the being, yet to the verdure and freshness thereof. Letters have truly the same office as oaths. As these amongst light and empty men are but fillings and pauses and interjections; but with weightier they are sad attestations. So are letters to some complement, and obligation to others.

For mine, as I never authorized my servant to lie in my behalf (for if it were officious in him, it might be worse in me), so I allow my letters much less that civil dishonesty, both because they go from me more considerately and because they are permanent; for in them I may speak to you in your chamber a year hence before I know not whom and not hear myself. They shall therefore ever keep the sincerity and intemperateness of the fountain, whence they are derived. And as wheresoever these leaves fall, the root is in my heart, so shall they, as that sucks good affections towards you there, have ever true impressions thereof.

Thus much information is in the very leaves, that they

can tell what the tree is, and these can tell you I am a friend and an honest man. Of what general use the fruit should speak, and I have none; and of what particular profit to you, your application and experimenting should tell you, and you can make none of such a nothing; yet even of barren sycamores, such as I, there were us, if either any light flashings, or scorching vehementes, or sudden showers, make you need so shadowy an example or remembrancer.

--- John Donne to Sir Henry Goodyer
Mitcham, 16th August, 1607

II. MONARCHY AND COURT NEWS.

Portrait of a Queen

(This description of Queen Elizabeth is one of the most vivid and valuable bits of characterization of that monarch which we have, and, curiously, occurs in a reminiscent letter of one of her favorite courtiers.)

... In good soothe our late Queene did enfolde them all together. I blesse her memorye, for all hir goodness to me and my familie; and now wyll I shewe you what strange temperament she did sometyme put forthe. Her mynde was oftime like the gentle air that comethe from the westerly pointes in a summer's morn; 'twas sweete and refreshinge to

all arounde her. Her speech did winne all affections, and hir subjects did trye to shewe all love to hir commandes; for she woude saye "hir state did require her to commande, what she knew hir people woude willingly do from their owne love to hir." Herein did she shewe her wysdome fullie: for who did chuse to lose hir confidence; or who woude wythholde a shewe of love and obedience, when their Se­vereign said it was their own choise, and not hir compulsion? Surely she did plaie well hir tables to gain obedience thus without constraint: again, she coude pute forthe suche ateracions, when obedience was lackinge, as lefte no doubt­ynes whose daughter she was. I saie thys was plain on the Lorde Deputy's cominge home; when I did come into her presence, she shaffed much, walkede fastly to and fro, looked with discomposure in her visage; and, I remember, she caught my girdle when I kneelede to hir, and swore, "By God's Son I am no Queen; this man is above me;--who gave him commande to come here so soon? I did sende hym on other busynesse." It was longe before more gracious discourse did fall to my hearynge; but I was then put oute of my trouble, and bid "Go Home." I did not stay to be bidden twice; if all the Iryshe rebelles had been at my heels, I shoude not have had better speeds, for I did now fle from one whom I both lovede and fearede too.

Hir Highnesse was wont to soothe hir rufflede temper wyth readings every morninge, when she had been stirred to
passion at the council, or other matters had overthrown her gracious disposition. She did much admire Senaca's wholesome advisinges, when the soul's quiet was flown awaie; and I saw much of hir translating thereof. By art and nature together so blended, it was difficulte to fynde hir right humour at any tyme. Hir wisest men and best counsellors were oft sore troublede to knows hir wyle in matters of state; so covertly did she pass hir judgements, as seemed to leave all to their discreet management; and, when the busynesse did turn to better advantage, she did moste cunningly commit the good issue to hir owne honour and understandinge, but, when ought fell oute contrarie to hir wyll and intente, the council were in great straite to defende their owne actinge and not blemyshe the Queen's goode judgementes. Herein hir wyse men did ofte lack more wysdome; and the Lord Treasurer woudo ofte shed a plenty of tears on any miscarriage, well knowynge the difficulte parte was, not so much to mend the matter itself, as his mistresse's humor; and yet he did most share hir favour and good wyll; and to his opinion she woude keeps him till late at nyghte in discoursinge alone, and then call oute another at his departure, and try the depthe of all arounde hir sometyme. Walsingham had his turn, and each displaied their witte in pryvate.

On the morrowe, everye one did come forthe in hir presence and discourse at large; and, if any had dissembled
withe her, or stood not well to her advysinges before, she did not let it go unheeded, and sometymes not unpunishede. Sir Christopher Hatton was wont to saye, "The Queene did fish for man's souls, and had so sweete a baite, that no one coude escape her network." In truth, I am sure hir speeche was suche as none coude refuse to take delyghts in, when frowardness did not stand in the way. I have seen her smile, soothe with great semblance of good likinge, to all arounde, and cause everie one to open his moste inwarde thought to her; when, on a sudden, she woud ponder in pryvate on what had passed, write down all their opinions, draw them out as occasion required, and sometyme disprove to their faces what had been delivered a month before. Hence she knew every one's parte and by thus fishinge, as Hatton sayed, she caught many poor fish, who little knew what snare was laid for them.

I will now tell you more of hir Majesty's discretion and wonder-working to those about her, touchyng their myndes and opinions. She did oft aske the ladies around hir chamber, If they lovede to thinke of marriage? And the wise ones did conceal well their liking hereto; as knowing the Queene's judgment in this matter. Sir Matthew Arundel's fair cosin, not knowing so deeply as hir fellowes, was asked one day hereof, and simply said—"she had thought muehe about marriage, if her father did consent to the man she lovede."—"You seeme honeste, i'faithe, said the Queen;
I will sue for you to your father." — The damsel was not displeased hereat; and, when Sir Roberte came to court, the Queen asked him hereon, and pressede his consentinge, if the match was discreet. Sir Roberte, much astonied at this news, said—"he never heard his daughter had liking to any man, and wantede to gain knowledge of hir affection; but woulde give free consente to what was moste pleasinge to hir Highnesse wyll and advise."—"Then I will do the reste;" sith the Queene. The ladde was called in, and the Queene toould her father had given his free consente. "Then, replied the ladde, I shall be happye and please your Grace."—"So thou shalt; but not to be a foole and marrye. I have his consente given to me, and I woue thou shalt neuer get it into thy possession: so, go to thy busynesse. I see thou art a bolde one, to owne thy foolishnesse so readilye."

I coude relate manye pleasante tales of hir Majestie's outwititinge the wittiest ones; for few knew how to aim their shaft against hir cunninge. We did all love hir, for she said she loved us, and much wysdom was shewed in thys matter. She did well temper herself towards all at home, and put at variance those abroad; by which means she had more quiet than hir neighbours. I need not praise her frugality; but I wyll tell a storie that fell oute when I was a boye. She did love riche cloothyng, but It happenede that Ladie M. Howarde was possessede of a rich
border powdered with gold and pearls, and a velvet suit belonging thereto, which moved many to envy; nor did it please the Queen, who thought it exceeded her own. One day the Queen did send privately, and got the ladies rich vesture, which she put on herself, and came forth the chamber among the ladies; the kirtle and border was far too short for her Majesty's height; and she asked every one, "How they liked her new-fancied suit?" At length, she asked the owner herself, "If it was not made too short and ill-becoming?" which the poor lady did presentlie consent to. "Why then, if it become not me, as being too short, I am minded it shall never become thee, as being too fine; so it fitteth neither well." This sharp rebuke abashed the lady, and she never adorned her herewith any more. I believe the vestment was laid up till after the Queen's death.

--- Sir John Harington to Robert Markham 1606

The Queen's Visit

(Sometime in 1600 Queen Elizabeth visited the home of Sir Robert Sidney, who tells of the visit in a letter to Sir John Harington)

The women did dance before her, whilst the cornets did salute from the gallery: and she did vouchsafe to eat two morsels of a rich comfit cake, and drank a small

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cordial from a gold cup. She had a marvellous suit of velvet borne by four of her first women attendants in rich apparel; two ushers did go before, and at going up stairs she called for a staff, and was much wearied in walking about the house, and said she wished to come another day. Six drums and six trumpets waited in the court, and sounded at her approach and departure. My wife did bear herself in wondrous good liking, and was attired in a purple kyrtle, fringed with gold; and myself, in a rich band and collar of needlework, and did wear a underbody of silver and loops. . . . The younger Markham did several gallant feats on a horse before the gate, leaping down and kissing his sword, then mounting swiftly on the saddle, and passed a lance with much skill. The day well nigh spent, the Queene went and tasted a small beverage that was set out in divers rooms where she might pass; and then in much order was attended to her palace, the cornets and trumpets sounding through the street.

-- Sir Robert Sidney to Sir John Harington

A Visit to the Court of Queen Elisabeth

My honoured Friend,

I humbly thank you for that venison I did not eat, but my wife did it much commendation. For six weeks I

left my oxen and sheep, and ventured to Court, where I find many lean-kinded beastes, and some not unhorned. Much was my comfort in being well received, notwithstanding it is an ill hour for seeing the Queen. The maddcaps are all in riot, and much evil threatened. In good sooth I feared her Majestie more than the rebel Tyrone, and wished I had never received my Lord of Essex' honor of knighthood. She is quite disfavourd, and unattird, and these troubles waste her mucho. She disregardeth every costlie cover that cometh to the table, and taketh little but manchet and succory potage. Every new message from the city doth disturb her, and she frowns on all the ladies. I had a sharp message from her brought by my Lord Buckhurst, namely thus, "Go tell that witty fool, my godson, to go home: it is no season now to foole it here." I liked this as little as she doth my knighthood, so took to my bootes and returned to the plow in bad weather. I must not say much, even by this trustie and sure messenger; but many evil plots and designs have overcome all her Highness' sweet temper. She walks much in her privy chamber, and stamps with her feet at ill news, and thrusts her rusty sword at times into the arras in great rage. My Lord Buckhurst is much with her, and few else since the city business; but the dangers are over, and yet she always keeps a sword by her table. I obtained a short audience at my first coming to courte, when her Highness told me, "If ill counsel had brought me
so far from home, she wish'd Heaven might marr that fortune
which she had mended." I made my peace in this point, and
will not leave my poor castle of Kelston, for fear of
finding a worse elsewhere, as others have done. I will eat
Aldeborne rabbits, and get fish (as you recommend) from the
man at Curry-Rival; and get partridge and hares when I can,
and my venison where I can; and leave all great matters to
those that like them better than myself. Commend me to
your ladie and all other ladies that ever heard of me. Your
books are safe, and I am in liking to get Erasmus for your
entertainments.

John Harington

From Kelston, Oct. 9, 1601

I could not move in any suit to serve your neighbor B.
such was the face of things; and so disordered is all order,
that her Highness hathes wore but one change of raiment
for many days; and swears much at those that cause her
grievs in such wise, to the no small discomfiture of all
about her, more especially our sweete Lady Arundel, that
Venus plus quam venusta.—

— John Harington to Sir Hugh Portman

A Portrait of a King

Your Lordship shall find a prince the farthest from

the appearance of vain-glory that may be, and rather like a prince of the ancient form than of the latter time. His speech is swift and cursory, and in the full dialect of his country; and in point of business, short; in point of discourse large. He affecteth popularity by gracing such as he hath heard to be popular, and not by any fashions of his own. He is thought somewhat general in his favours, and his virtue of access is rather because he is much abroad and in press, than that he giveth easy audience about serious things. He hasteneth to a mixture of both kingdoms and nations, faster perhaps than policy will conveniently hear.

-- Francis Bacon to the Earl of Northumberland

A King's Advice to a Son¹

(Upon his accession to the English throne, James writes to his son, Prince Henry the following letter which gives the reader a new insight into the monarch's mind.)

Let not this news make you proud or insolent, for a king's son ye were, and no more are you yet; the augmentation that is hereby like to fall to you is but in cares and heavy burden. Be merry, but not insolent; keep a greatness, but sine fastu; be resolute, but not wilful; be kind, but in honourable sort. Choose none to be your

playfellows but of honourable birth; and, above all things, never give countenance to any, but as ye are informed, they are in estimation with me. Look upon all Englishmen that shall come to visit you, as your loving subjects, not with ceremoniousness as towards strangers, but with that heartiness which at this time they deserve.

This gentleman, whom the bearer accompanies, is worthy, and of good rank, and now my familiar servitor, use him, therefore, in a more homely, loving sort than others. I send you herewith my book, lately printed, (the Basilicon Doron); study and profit in it as you would deserve my blessing; and as there can nothing happen unto you, whereof ye will not find the general ground therein, if not the particular point touched, so must ye level every man's opinions or advices with the rules there set down, allowing and following their advices that agree with the same, mistrusting and frowning upon them that advise you to the contraire.

Be diligent and earnest in your studies, that at your meeting with me I may praise you for your progress in learning. Be obedient to your master for your own soul, and to procure my thanks; for in reverencing him ye obey me and honour yourself. Farewell.

Your loving father,

James R.

— James I to Prince Henry, April, 1603.
The Death of a King

It was my fortune to be on Sunday was fortnight at Theobalds, where his late Majesty King James departed this life, and went to his last rest upon the day of rest, presently after Sermon was done: A little before the break of day, he sent for the Prince, who rose out of his bed, and came in his night-gown; the King seem'd to have some earnest thing to say unto him, and so endeavour'd to rouse himself upon his Pillow, but his spirits were so spent that he had not strength to make his words audible. He died of a fever which began with an Ague, and some Scotch Doctors mutter at a plaster the Countess of Buckingham applied at the outside of his stomach.

-- James Howell to his Father, 1625.

Guests for the Royal Family

(From July 24-29, King James and his brother-in-law, Christian IV, King of Denmark, were entertained at Theobalds, Cecil's country home. His record of expenditures for the five days' visit totals 1160 pounds.)

My good Friend,

In compliance with your asking, now shall you accept my poor accounte of rich doings. I came here a day or two before the Danish King came, and from the day he did come

1. Scoones, op. cit., p. 73.
untill this hour, I have been well nigh overwhelmed with carousel and sports of all kinds. The sports began each day in such manner and such sorte, as well nigh persuaded me of Mahomets paradise. We had women, and indeed wine too, of such plenty, as would have astonished each sober beholder. Our feasts were magnificent, and the two royal guests did most lovingly embrace each other at table. I think the Dane hath strangely wrought on our good English nobles; for those, whom I never could get to taste good liquor, now follow the fashion, and wallow in beastly delights. The ladies abandon their sobriety, and are seen to roll about in intoxication. In good sooth, the parliament did kindly to provide his Majestie so seasonably with money, for there hath been no lack of good living; shews, sights, and banqueting, from morn to save.

One day, a great feast was held, and, after dinner, the representation of Solomon his Temple and the coming of the Queen of Sheba was made, or (as I may better say) was meant to have been made, before their Majesties, by device of the Earl of Salisbury and others. But, alass! as all earthy things do fail to poor mortals in enjoyment, so did prove our presentment hereof. The Lady who did play the Queens part, did carry most precious gifts to both their Majesties; but, forgetting the steppes arising to the canopy, overset her caskets into his Danish Majesties lap, and fell at his feet, tho I rather think it was in his face. Much
was the hurry and confusion; cloths and napkins were at hand, to make all clean. His Majesty then got up and would dance with the Queen of Sheba; but he fell down and humbled himself before her, and was carried to an inner chamber and laid on a bed of state; which was not a little defiled with the presents of the Queen which had been bestowed on his garments; such as wine, cream, jelly, beverage, cakes, spices, and other good matters. The entertainment and show went forward, and most of the presenters went backward, or fell down; wine did so occupy their upper chambers. Now did appear, in rich dress, Hope, Faith, and Charity: Hope did assay to speak but wine rendered her endeavours so feeble that she withdrew and hope the King would excuse her brevity: Faith was then all alone, for I am certain she was not joyned with good works, and left the court in a staggering condition: Charity came to the King's feet, and seemed to cover the multitude of sins her sisters had committed; in some sorte she made obeyance and brought giftes, but said she would return home again, as there was no gift which heaven had not already given his Majesty. She then returned to Hope and Faith, who were both sick and spewing in the lower hall. Next came Victory, in bright armour, and presented a rich sword to the King, who did not accept it, but put it by with his hand; and, by strange medley of versification, did endeavour to make suit to the King. But Victory did not triumph long; for, after
much lamentable utterance, she was led away like a silly captive, and laid to sleep in the outer steps of the antechamber. Now did Peace make entry, and strive to get foremost to the King; but I grieve to tell how great wrath she did discover unto those of her attendants; and, much contrary to her semblance, most rudely made war with her olive branch, and laid on the pates of those who did oppose her coming.

I have much marveled at these strange pageantries, and they do bring to my remembrance what passed of this sort in our Queens days; of which I was sometime an humble presenter and assistant: but I neer did see such lack of good order, discretion, and sobriety, as I have now done. I have passed much time in seeing the royal sports of hunting and hawking, where the manners were such as made me devise the beasts were pursuing the sober creation, and not man in quest of exercise or food. I will now, in good sooth, declare to you, who will not blab, that the gunpowder fright is got out of all our heads, and we are going on, hereabouts, as if the devil was contriving every man should blow up himself, by wild riot, excess, and devastation of time and temperance. The great ladies do go well-masked, and indeed it be the only show of their modesty, to conceal their countenance; but, alack, they meet with such doings, that I marvel not at aught that happens. The Lord of the mansion is overwhelmed in preparations at
Theobalds, and doth marvelously please both Kings, with good meat, good drink, and good speeches. I do often say (but not aloud) that the Danes have again conquered the Britains, for I see no man, or woman, either, that can now command himself or herself. I wish I was at home: — O rus, quando te aspiciam?—And I will; before the Prince Vaudemont cometh.

— Sir John Harington to Secretary Barlow Theobalds, July, 1606.

Sundry Events¹

(John Chamberlain is one of the most prolific letter-writers of the century, and made this his profession. The example of the news-letter at its best is this communication to Mrs. Alice Carleton).

London, February 16, 1614

Yesterday I received your letter of the 29th of January. It is no marvel if the post keeps not their ordinary days and times, for we have had such weather that I think they had much ado to come at all. Ever since Sunday was three weeks we have had continual frost and snow, whereof we have had such plenty as I never knew the like; for there hath not passed one day since that time but it hath snowed more or less, and Sunday last it began at seven o'clock in the morning, and never ceased till Monday after nine that night; so

¹. The Five Hundred Best English Letters, ed. First Earl of Birkenhead, pp. 56-7.
that it lay very deep, and we fear we shall hear of much harm. But the greatest part of it went away on Tuesday and yesterday with a kindly thaw, but this night it is frozen again, and grown very cold.

The Lady Beauchamp, sister to the Earl of Dorset, and wife to the Earl of Hertford's grandchild, is brought a-bed of a son, and I hear the like of the Lady Haddington, daughter to the Earl of Sussex. Sir Edward Montagu's young lady brought him a son likewise of late, but it lasted not above two or three days. Mrs. Bartlett, Mr. Conyer's daughter, lies in now of a son at Highgate.

The Lady Cheke, Mr. Osbourne's sister, of the Exchequer, would needs be let blood the last week, for a little heat or itching in her arm, but by mishap the queen's surgeon pricked her too deep, and cut an artery, which fell to rankle, and in a few days grew to a gangrene, whereof she died on Saturday, and was buried by night, with above thirty coaches and much torchlight attending her, which is of late come much into fashion, as it should seem, to avoid trouble and charge. But I rather think it was brought up by papists, which serve their turn by it many ways. She left no children, nor ever had any; so that it is thought her husband, Sir Thomas, will not be long unprovided of a new lady, for that his land, for want of heirs male, is to return to the crown, and some Scot or other hath begged the reversion.

Touching the Lady Edmonds' body, I know not whether it
be yet come over, but I am sure he wrote to her mother to know where she would have it buried, yet giving his advice that he thought it best at Cambridge, as next to the place where it was to arrive. Whereunto the Lady Wood assented; so that it is done, or to be done there, without any solemnity.

Sir George Haywood, the Lady Scott's son by old Rowland, is fallen mad. The Lord of Somerset hath the government and custody of his land till he recover. His friends make all the means they can by physic to cure him, whereof there is the less hope, for that he hath a sister married to Sir Richard Sandys, now in the same case, and much about a year since was well recovered, but within this month fallen into a relapse. I never in my life heard of so many distracted people of good sort, as I have done within these two or three years.

Your neighbour, Burckshaw, hath lain this month or five weeks in the Marshalsea, with six or seven of his companion brewers, for that they will not yield to have their drink taken to serve the king without money; for the king's brewer cannot get a groat of 16,000 that is owing to him for beer; so that he hath neither money nor credit to hold out any longer. This term they attempted by law to remove themselves and to try their case; but they could not be relieved, for that there came a mandate from the king, whereby it is become a matter of state, and out of the compass of
The Arrival of a Queen

(This is a particularly vivid narrative of Henrietta Maria's arrival in England by a contemporary and eye-witness.)

The last night at 5 o'clock, there being a very great shower, the King and Queen in the Royal barge with many other barges of honour and thousands of boats, passed through London Bridge to Whitehall; infinite numbers, besides these, in wherries, standing in houses, lighters, western barges, and on each side of the shore. Fifty good ships discharging their ordnance as their Majesties passed along by; as, last of all, the Tower did such a peal as I believe she never before heard the like. The King and Queen were both in green suits. The barge windows, notwithstanding the vehement shower, were open; and all the people shouting amain. She put out her hand and shook it unto them. She hath already given some good signs of hope that she may ere long, by God's blessing, become ours in religion.

She arrived at Dover on Sunday about eight in the evening, lay there in the Castle that night; whither the King rode on Monday morning from Canterbury, came thither after 10 o'clock and she then being at meat, he stayed in the presence till she had done; which she, advertised of, made short work, rose, went unto him, kneeled down at his

--- John Chamberlain to Mrs. Alice Carleton

feet, took, and kissed his hand. The King took her up in his arms, kissed her, and talking with her, cast down his eyes towards her feet (she seeming higher than report was, reaching to his shoulders). Which she soon perceiving discovered (uncovered) and showed him her shoes, saying to this effect "Sir, I stand upon mine own feet. I have no helps by art. Thus I am, and am neither higher nor lower." She is nimble and quiet, black-eyed, brown-haired, and in a word a brave Lady, though perhaps a little touched with a green sickness.

...The bells rang till midnight and all the streets were full of bonfires, and in this one street were above thirty.

-- Joseph Mead to Sir Martin Stuteville,
June 17, 1625.

Favorites at Court

Touching the news of the time. Sir George Villiers, the new favorite, tapers up apace, and grows strong at Court. His predecessor, the Earl of Somerset, hath got a lease of ninety years for his life, and so hath his articulate lady, called so for articling against the frigidity and impotence of her former Lord. She was afraid that Coke the Lord Chief Justice (who had used extraordinary art and

industry in discovering all the circumstances of the poison-
ing of Overbury) would have made white broth of them, but
that the prerogative kept them from the pot; yet the sub-
servient instruments the lesser flies, could not break
through, but lay entangled in the cobweb. Amongst others,
Mistress Turner, the first inventress, of yellow starch,
was executed in a cobweb lawn ruff of that color at Ty-
burn, and with her I believe that yellow starch, which so
disfigured our nation and rendered them so ridiculous and
fantastic, will receive its funeral.

-- James Howell to his Father, 1618.

III. THE AFFAIRS OF A NATION.

A Monument to a Queen

It may please your Lordship,

Some late act of his Majesty, referred to some former
speech which I have heard from your Lordship, bred in me a
great desire, and by strength of desire a boldness to make
an humble proposition to your Lordship, such as in me can
be no better than a wish: but if your Lordship should ap-
prehend it, may take some good and worthy effect. The
act I speak of, is the order given by his Majesty, as I
understand, for the rection of a tomb or monument for our
late sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth: wherein I may note

1. The Works of Francis Bacon, edit. James Spedding, op-
much, but this at this time: That as her Majesty did
always right to his Highness' hopes, so his Majesty doth in
all things right to her memory; a very just and princely
retribution. But from this occasion, by a very easy ascent,
I passed further, being put in mind, by this Representative
of her person, of the more true and more firm Representa-
tive, which is of her life and government. For as Statues
and Pictures are dumb histories, so histories are speaking
Pictures.

--- Frances Bacon to the Lord Chancellor, April, 1605

Essex to the Queen

But as if I were thrown into a corner like a dead
carcass, I am gnawed on and torn by the vilest and basest
creatures upon earth. The prating tavern hunter speaks of
me what he lists; the frantic libeller writes of me what
he lists; already they print me and make me speak to the
world, and shortly they will play me in what forms they
list upon the stage. The least of these is a thousand
times worse than death.

--- Earl of Essex to Queen Elizabeth, 1600.

A Rebel in Favor

(Sir John Harington suffered Queen Eliza-

   Egbert McClure, pp. 107-8.
tooth's disfavor after his return from Essex' expedition. Years later, he saw the cause of his malcontent accepted at court.)

I have lived to see that damnable rebel Tir-Owen brought to Englande, courteouslie favourede, honourede, and well likede. Oh! my Lorde, what is there which doeth not prove the inconstansie of worldlie matters! How did I labour after that knave's destruction! I was callede from my home by her Majesties command, adventureda perils by sea and land, endurede toil, was near starvinge, eat horsefleshe at Munster; and all to quell that man, who nowe smilethe in peace at those that did hazarde their lives to destroy him. Essex tooke me to Irelende; I had seante tyme to putte on my bootes; I followede withe good wyll, and did retourne wyth the Lorde Leitentante to meet ill wyll; I did beare the frownes of hir that sents me; and were it not for hir good lyking, rather than my good deservynges, I had been sore discountenancede indeede. I obeyede in going wyth the Earle to Irelende, and I obeyede in esmynge wythe him to Englande. But what did I encounter thereon? Not his wrathes, but my gracious Sovereigns ill humour.

What did I advantage? Why, trulie, a knighthood; whych had been better bestowede by hir that sents me, and better sparede by him that gave it. I shall never put oute of remembraunce hir Majestie's displeasure: I enterd her chamber, but she frownode and saide, "What, did the foole brynge you too? Go backe to your businesse." In soothe,
those wordes did sore hurte hym who never hearde soche be-
fore; but heaven gave me more comforte in a daie or twoe
after; hir Majestie did please to make me concernynge our
northerne jorneyes, and I did so well quite me of the ac-
counte, that she favourede me wyth such discourse that the
Earl hymself had been well glad of. And now dothe Tyr-
Owen dare us old commanders wyth hys presence and protec-
tion.

-- Sir John Harington to Dr. John Still.

A King in Debt¹

Generally upon this subject of the repair of your
Majesty's means, I beseech your Majesty to give me lave
to make this judgment; that your Majesty's recovery must
be by the medicines of the Galenists and Arabians, and not
of the Chemists or Paracelsions. For it will not be
wrought by any one fine extract or strong water, but by a
skilful compound of a number of ingredients, and those by
just weight and proportion, and that of some simples which
perhaps of theirselves or in over-great quantity were little
better than poisons, but mixed and broken and in just
quantity are full of virtues.

-- Frances Bacon to the King, 18th of September,
1612.

¹ The Works of Frances Bacon, edit. James Spedding, op.
sit., Vol. IV, p. 312.
A Queen Pleads for a Life

My kind Dog,

If I have any power or credit with you, I prya you let me have a trial of it at this time, in dealing sincerely and earnestly with the king, that sir Walter Raleigh's life may not be called in question. If you do it so that the success answer my expectation, assure yourself that I will take it extraordinary kindly at your hands, and rest one that wisheth you well, and desires you to continue still (as you have been) a true servant to your master,

Anna X.

— Queen Anne to the Marquis of Buckingham, 1618.

A King writes a son in quest of a wife

(Prince Charles of England, accompanied by the Duke of Buckingham, undertook a romantic journey to Spain in 1623, to seek the hand of the Infanta in marriage.)

My Sweet Boys,— If the Dutch post had not been robbed and sore beaten in Kent, three days ago, ye had sooner received the duplicate of the power I put in my sweet babies' hands, which I send you for the more security, seeing the expedition of your return depends upon it; but it rejoiceth my heart that your opinion anent the three conditions annexed to the dispensation agreeeth fully with mine, as ye

will find by one of my letters, dated Theobalds, which
Gresley will deliver unto you. Carlisle came yesterday
morning to Dos Castellanos, and a devoted servant to the
Conde d'Olivares; but my sweet Steenie Gossip, I heartily
thank thee for thy kind, droll letter. I do herewith send
thee a kind letter of thanks to that King for the elephant,
as thou desired, wherein I likewise thank for him, for a
letter of his which Carlisle delivered unto me, which is
indeed the kindest and courteousest letter ever I received
from any King. I have likewise received from Carlisle the
list of the jewels which ye have already received, and which
of them my baby means to present to his mistress; I pray
you, sweet baby, if ye think not fit to present her the
collar of great ballest rubies and knots of pearls, bring
it home again, and the like I say of the head-dressings which
Frank Stewart is to deliver unto you, for they are not
presents fit for subjects; but if ye please, ye may present
one of them to the Queen of Spain. Carlisle thinks my
baby will bestow a rich jewel upon the Conde d'Olivares;
but, in my opinion, horses, dogs, hawks, and such like
stuff to be sent him out of England, by you both, will be a
far more noble, acceptable present to him. And now, my
sweet Steenie gossip, that the poor fool, Kate, hath also
sent thee her pearl chain, which, by accident, I saw in
a box in Frank Stewart's; I hope I need not conjure thee
not to give any of her jewels away there, for thou knowest
what necessary use she will have of them at your return here, besides that it is not lucky to give away that I have given her. Now, as for mails, the more strong mails for carriage that ye can provide me with, I will be the better secured in my journeys, and the better cheap. If ye can get the deer handsomely here, they shall be welcome. I hope the elephant, camels, and asses, are already by the way.

And so God bless you both, and after a happy success there, send you speedy and comfortable home in the arms of your dear dad.

-- James I. to Prince Charles and the Duke of Buckingham, May 9, 1625.

The Assassination of Buckingham

(Sir Dudley Carleton, diplomatist, was with the Duke when Felton assassinated him, and it was his duty to inform Queen Henrietta Maria of the crime.)

Madam, I am to trouble your Grace with a most lamentable relation. This day betwixt nine and ten of the clock in the morning, the Duke of Buckingham then coming out of a parlour into a hall, to go to his coach and so to the King (who was four miles off), having about him divers lords, colonels, and captains, and many of his own servants, was

by one Felton (once a Lieutenant of this our Army) slain at one blow, with a dagger-knife. In his staggering he turned about, uttering only this word, "Villain" and never spake word more, but plucking out the knife from himself, before he fell to the ground, he made towards the traitor, two or three paces, and then fell against a table, although he was upheld by divers that were near him, that (through the villain's close carriage in the act) could not perceive him hurt at all, but guessed him to be suddenly overswayed with some apoplexy, till they saw the blood come gushing from his mouth and the wound, so fast that life and breath at once left his begored body.

Madam, you may easily guess what outcries were then made by us that were Commanders and Officers there present, when we saw him thus dead in a moment, and slain by an unknown hand. For it seems that the Duke himself only, knew who it was that had murdered him, and by means of the confused press at the instant about his person, we neither did nor could. The soldiers fear his loss will be their utter ruin, wherefore at that instant the house and the court about it were full, every man present with the Duke's body, endeavouring a care of it. In the meantime Felton passed the throng, which was confusedly great, not so much as marked or followed; in so much that not knowing where nor who he was that had done that act, some came to keep guard at the gates, and others went to the ramparts of the
town. In all of which time the villain was standing in the kitchen of the same house, and after the inquiry made by a multitude of captains and gentlemen then pressing into the house and court, and crying out amain "Where is the villain? Where is the butcher?" he, most audaciously and resolutely drawing forth his sword, came out and went amongst them, saying boldly, "I am the Man, here I am." Upon which divers drew upon him, with an intent to have then dispatched him; but Sir Thomas Morton, myself and some others, used such means (though with much trouble and difficulty) that we drew him out of their hands, and by order of my Lord High Chamberlain, we had the charge of keeping any from coming to him until a guard of musketeers were brought, to convey him to the Governor's house, where we were discharged.

My Lord High Chamberlain and Mr. Secretary Cooke, who were then at the Governor's house, did there take his examinations, of which as yet there is nothing known, only whilst he was in our custody I asked him several questions, to which he answered; vis. he said, he was a Protestant in religion; he also expressed himself that he was partly discontented for want of eighty pounds pay which was due to him; and for that he, being Lieutenant of a company of foot, the company was given over his head unto another; and yet, he said that that did not move him to this resolution, but that he reading the Remonstration of the house of
Parliament it came into his mind that in committing the act of killing the Duke, he should do his country great good service. And he said that to-morrow he was to be prayed for in London. I then asked him at what church, and to what purpose; he told me at a church by Fleet-Street-Conduit, and, as for a man much discontented in mind. Now we seeing things to fall from him in this manner, suffered him not to be further questioned by any, thinking it much fitter for the lords to examine him, and to find out and know from him whether he was encouraged and set on by any to perform this wicked deed.

But to return to the screeches made at the fatal blow given. The Dukes of Buckingham and the Countess of Anglesey came forth into a gallery which looked into the hall where they might behold the blood of their dearest lord gushing from him. Ah poor ladies, such was their screechings, tears, and distractions, that I never in my life heard the like before, and hope never to hear the like again. His Majesty's grief for the loss of him was expressed to be more than great, by the many tears he hath shed for him, with which I will conclude this sad and untimely news.

Felton had sewed a writing in the crown of his hat, half within the lining, to shew the cause why he put this cruel act in execution; thinking he should have been slain in the place. And it was thus:
"If I be slain, let no man condemn me, but rather condemn himself; it is for our sins that our hearts are hardened, and become senseless, or else he had not gone so long unpunished.

John Felton"

"He is unworthy of the name of a gentleman, or soldier, in my opinion, that is afraid to sacrifice his life for the honour of God, his King, and Country.

John Felton"

Madam, this is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, yet all too much too, if it had so pleased God. I thought it my bounden duty howsoever to let your Majesty have the first intelligence of it, by the hand of

Madam,

Your sorrowful servant,

Dudley Carleton.

-- Sir Dudley Carleton to the Queen .

Assassination of Buckingham

(It is interesting to compare this account by James Howell to that of Sir Dudley Carleton, eye witness to the crime.)

Madam,— I lay yesternight at the post-house at Stilton, and this morning betimes the post-master came to my bed's-head, and told me the Duke of Buckingham was slain;

My faith was not then strong enough to believe it, till an hour ago I met in the way with my Lord of Rutland (your brother) riding post towards London; it pleased him to alight, and shew me a letter, wherein there was an exact relation of all the circumstances of this sad tragedy.

Upon Saturday last, which was but next before yester-day, being Bartholomew eve, the Duke did rise up in a well-disposed humour out of his bed, and cut a caper or two, and being ready, and having been under the barber's hand (where the murderer had thought to have done the deed, for he was leaning upon the window all the while) he went to breakfast, attended by a great company of commanders, where Monsieur Subize came to him, and whispered him in the ear that Rochelle was relieved; the Duke seemed to slight the news, which made some think that Subize went away discontented.

After breakfast the Duke going out, Colonel Fryer stepped before him, and stopped him upon some business, and Lieutenant Felton, being behind, made a thrust with a common tenpenny knife over Fryer's arm at the Duke, which lighted so fatally that he slit his heart in two, leaving the knife sticking in the body. The Duke took out the knife and threw it away: and laying his hand on his sword, and drawing it half out, said "The villain hath killed me," (meaning, as some think, Colonel Fryer) for there had been some difference betwixt them; so reeling against a
chimney, he fell down dead. The Dutchess being with child, hearing the noise below, came in her night-geers from her bedchamber, which was in an upper room, to a kind of rail, and thence beheld him weltering in his own blood. Felton had lost his hat in the crowd, wherein there was a paper sewed, wherein he declared, that the reason which moved him to this act, was no grudge of his own, though he had been far behind for his pay, and had been put by his Captain's place twice, but in regard he thought the Duke an enemy to the state, because he was branded in parliament; therefore what he did was for the public good of his country. Yet he got clearly down, and so might have gone to his horse, which was tied to a hedge hard by; but he was so amazed that he missed his way, and so struck into the pastry, where, although the cry went that some Frenchman had done it, he, thinking the word was Felton, boldly confessed it was he that had done the deed, and so he was in their hands.

-- James Howel to the Countess of Sunderland, Aug. 5, 1628.

A King in Custody

(During the Second Civil War, John Evelyn, under the name, "Aplanos" corresponded with his father-in-law, Sir Richard Browne, whom he ad-

dressed as "Mr. Peters". The correspondence is a detailed record of the news of the time.

It is said that his Majesty is in straiter custody in the Isle of Wight than ever he was at Hampton Court, but this is not generally believed. The propositions are certainly to be sent him some time this present week, and many there are who are confident he will sign them. For my part, I think the personal treaty a mere juggle, and that his Majesty shall never be nearer to London, if they have power to adjourn, where and when they please. The King's case is just like the disarmed man, who, whether he agree that his antagonist shall keep his weapon or not, is forced to let him have it. The Parliament have gotten the power, and now they ask his Majesty by these propositions whether he assent they should keep it, when, as in truth, they are agreed upon it already, in despite of his teeth.

— John Evelyn to Sir Richard Browne, December 6, 1647.

Plans for a Coronation Day1

There are great preparations against to-morrow the Coronation day, the County hors come hither to joyn the Regiment of foot of this cityt, a feast at the new hall, general contributions for a feast for the poor, which they

1. Works, p. 393.
say will be in the market place, long and solemn service at Christ Church beginning at 8 a Clock and with a sermon ending at twelve. Masts of ships and long stageing poles already set up for beacon bonfires, speeches and a little play by the strollers in the market-place and other by young Cityzens at Timber Hill on a stage. Cromwell hangd and burnt ever where, whose head is now upon Westminster hall, together with Ireton and Bradshaws.

-- Dr. Browne to his son Thomas.

Parliamentary Differences

(In May, 1675, Sir John Churchill, Master of the Rolls, was appointed by the House of Lords senior counsel for Sir Nicholas Crisp. This being considered a breach of privilege led to the scene described in this letter.)

. . . . Yesterday morning, as Mr. Speaker was coming through Westminster Hall to the House, he met Mr. Sergeant Pemberton, whom he commanded his officers then attending to apprehend and secure in the Speaker's Chamber, of which he gave the House an account as soon as they sat, and received the thanks of the House for his zeal and care in thus asserting their privileges; and the House being then also informed that Sir John Churchill, Mr. Sergeant Peck, and Mr. Charles Porter were below in the Hall, they commanded instantly their Sergeant to carry his men with him

down into the Hall and to apprehend the said persons, though they were pleading at the Bars of any of the Courts; and to go well attended, that he might not receive an affront from the Black Rod who, they understood, was in the Court of Requests armed with an order from the House of Lords to rescue the prisoners. This order of the House of Commons was very briskly executed, the said persons being taken from the several Bars of the Chancery, King's Bench and Common Pleas, and brought safe into the Speaker's Chamber, without opposition. But the House of Lords being informed of these proceedings, they immediately order their Black Rod to fetch out the said prisoners, wherever they should find them committed. They likewise order their Black Rod to apprehend the Sergeant of the House of Commons, and address to his Majesty, by word of the white-staves, that another Sergeant might be appointed to attend the House of Commons.

The House of Commons, after a long debate, vote the said persons to be sent to the Tower, and Sir John Robinson, Sergeant of the Tower, being then in the House, had directions not to set them at liberty without an order from the House.

By this time it was two of the clock and the House of Lords had adjourned for an hour or two, whose example in that particular the House of Commons thought fit to follow. And while the Speaker was at dinner the Sergeant
hired three coaches at Westminster Hall Gate, pretending to carry his prisoners through the City to the Tower, being then informed that the Black Rod lay in wait for him in a house near the Palace Yard gate. But he went more discreetly to work, for he carried his prisoners through Sir John Cotton's house and took boat at his garden stairs, and by water delivered them safe into Sir John Robinson's hands; to whom in three minutes the Black Rod came to demand the prisoners, but the Lieutenant positively refused to deliver them.


A Pewter Pot Plot

My Lady Essex Griffin is sent to the Tower for a pewter pot plot, much more ridiculous than Mrs. Sellier's meal tub. My Lord Griffin's cook bespoke of a pewterer an oblong square pewter pot, to put brandy in; but it was to have a false bottom, in which was to be put some contraband goods to be sent into France. When the pot was made, yesterday morning, betwixt one and two of the clock in the morning, the cook and a foot boy went to call up the pewterer, to come to my Lord Griffin's house to solder in the false bottom. The pewterer told them he could not there

do it so conveniently as at his own house, and bid them fetch the pot, and he would get ready his tools and solder in the bottom. They went, fetched the pot, and, as soon as the pewterer had received it, he told them he must know what was put into the false bottom. They pretended that there was jewels. But the pewterer, pulling what was in the false bottom, found letters to the King (James II) and several papers, apprehended the cook and footman, and, sending for a constable, carried them to the Secretaries' office; but, nobody being there, he secured them in the porter's lodge, went to Mr. Hampden, acquainted him, and early that morning they were examined.

— Charles Hatton to Sir Charles Lyttelton, 1689.

Rejecting a Post

(John Locke was offered a post as Envoy at one of the great Gorman Courts in 1689, and rejects the offer with the following explanation.)

If I have reason to apprehend the cold air of the country, there is yet another thing in it as inconsistent with my constitution, and that is, their warm drinking. I confess obstinate refusal may break pretty well through it, but that at best will be to take more care of my own health than the King's business. It is no small matter in such stations to be acceptable to the people one has to do with,

in being able to accommodate one's self to their fashions; and I imagine whatever I may do there myself, the knowing what others are doing is at least one-half of my business, and I know no such rack in the world to draw out men's thoughts as a well managed bottle.

— John Locke to Lord Mordaunt, 1689,

An Impersonation

(Humphrey Wanley, the antiquarian, gives this account of an impersonation of the Duke of Monmouth who had already been dead some fourteen years.)

We have an account from the Assizes of Horsham in Sussex that on Monday se'mnigh last a fellow was indicted and tried there for personating and pretending himself to be the late Duke of Monmouth, and by that means drawing considerable sums of money out of the zealots of that country. It appeared that he lodged at the house of one Widow Wickard (tho' with seeming privacy), where his true friends visited him and were admitted to kiss his hand upon their knees. He said he was the true legitimate son of King Charles II, and that his Uncle King James had such honour for him as to execute a common criminal in his stead to satisfy the Priests and to send him out of the way. And that the Prince of Orange was a very honest Gentleman and his deputy, and would surrender the crown to him when

things were ripe, etc. Happy was he that could by any interest be introduced to his Highness to have the honour of his hand. It happened that one of his trusty friends one morning coming to pay him a visit with a stranger with him found him in bed. At the sight of the stranger he seemed much surprised and offended, and turning himself quick to the wall, sighing, said "Oh! my friends will undo me." At which the Gentleman assured his Highness that the person he had brought with him was life and fortune in his interest. Upon which he returned about and gave him his hand to kiss. Presently after, came into his lodgings a wench with a basket of chickens as a present from her mistress, and another with a letter to him, at the reading of which he seemed a little discontented. Upon which they desired to know if his Highness had received any bad news. He answered, No, 'twas indifferent, 'twas from Lord Russell to acquaint him that he was come with his fleet to Torbay and wanted some further direction. But that which troubled him was that he wanted a horse and money to carry him thither. At which they bid him not trouble for that he should be supplied immediately with both, which accordingly he was, and was away a fortnight, till he had spent both money and horse, and then returned. 'Tis said he has received above 500 pounds thus, and him with at least 50 of their wives. Upon his trial he declared himself to be the son of him that keeps the Swan Inn at Leicester, adding
that he could not help it if the people would call him the Duke of Monmouth, he never bid them do so but told two Justices of the Peace, who had sent for him, his true name. He made so cunning a defence, and none of his zealots coming in against him (being prosecuted only by Mayor Brewer), that he was cleared of the indictment. Only the Lord Chief Justice afterwards bound him to good behavior, for which he soon found bail amongst his party, who maintained him like a prince in prison, and three or four of the chief of them attended him to the Bar at his Trial and believe him still to be the true Duke of Monmouth. The Gaoler got, the first day he was committed, 40s. of people that came to see this imposter at 2d. a piece.

-- Humphrey Wanley to ______________, Aug. 25, 1698.

IV. FAMILY AND HOME.

A Loan of a Pair of Stockings

Sir Michael,

I do use as you know to pay my debts with time. But indeed if you will have a good and parfite colour in a carnation stocking it must be long in the dyeing. I have some scruple of conscience whether it was my Lady's stock-

ings or her daughter's, and I would have the restitution to be to the right person, else I shall not have absolution. Therefore I have sent to them both, desiring them to wear them for my sake, as I did wear theirs for mine own sake. So wishing you all a good new year, I rest

Yours assured,

Fr. Bacon

Grays Inn this 8th of Jan. 1611

-- Frances Bacon to Sir Michael Hickes.

A Kid Pie and Strawberry butter

I have made a pie to send you: it is a kid pie. I believe you have not that meat ordinarily at Oxford; one half of the pie is seasoned with one kind of seasoning, and the other with another. I think to send it by this carrier. Your father has divers times since you went asked for strawberry butter, and in memory of you this day I made Hacklet make some. I wish you a dish of it.

-- From the letters of Lady Brilliana Harley

A Gift of Fruit

In passing by the Canaries I stayed at Gomorrah, where I took water in peace, because the country durst not deny

1. Wragge, The Age Revealed, p. 95.
it me. I received there from the countess (of an English race) a present of oranges, lemons, quinces, and pomegranates, without which I could not have lived; these I preserved in fresh and, and I have of them yet to my great refreshing.

--- Sir Walter Raleigh to his wife, from Guiana.

Advice to a Mother

Teach your son also to love and to fear God whilst he is yet young, that the fear of God may grow up with him; and the same God will be a husband to you, and a father to him, husband and father which cannot be taken from you.

--- Sir Walter Raleigh to his wife, 1603.

A Gentleman's Country House

My dear Dan,— Though, considering my former condition of life, I may now be called a countryman, yet you cannot call me a rustic (as you would imply in your letter) as long as I live in so virtuous and regular a house as any I believe in the land, both for economical government and the choice company; for I never saw yet such a dainty race of children in all my life together; I never saw yet such an orderly and punctual attendance of servants, nor a great house so neatly kept; here one shall see no dog, nor

1. Birkenhead, op. cit., p. 49.
2. Wragge, Sybil, op. cit., p. 87.
a cat, nor cage to cause any nastiness within the body of
the house. The kitchen and gutters and other offices of
noise and drudgery are at the far-end; there's a back gate
for the beggars and the meaner sort of swains to come in at;
the stables butt upon the park, which, for a cheerful ris-
ing ground, for groves and browsings for the deer, for rivu-
lets of water, may compare with any for its highness in
the whole land. It is opposite to the front of the great
house, whence from the gallery one may see much of the game
when they are hunting. Now for the gardening and costly
choice flowers, for ponds, for stately large walks, green
and gravelly, for orchards, and choice fruits of all sorts,
there are few the like in England: here you have your Bon
Christian Pear and Bergamot in perfection, your Mescadell
grapes in such plenty that there are some bottles of wine
sent every year to the King; and one Mr. Daniel, a worthy
gentleman hard by, who hath been long abroad, makes good
store in his vintage. Truly the house of Long Melford,
though it be not so great, yet it is so well compacted
and contrived with such dainty conveniences every way,
that if you saw the landskip of it, you would be mightily
taken with it, and it would serve for a choice pattern to
build and contrive a house by.

Cromwell's Advice to his Son

Take heed of an inactive vain spirit! Recreate yourself with Sir Walter Raleigh's History: it's a Body of History; and will add much more to your understanding than fragments of Story.— Intend to understand the Estate I have settled: it's your concernment to know it all, and how it stands. I have heretofore suffered much by too much trusting others. I know my Brother Mayor will be helpful to you in all this.

You will think, perhaps, that I need not advise you to love your Wife! The Lord teach you how to do it;— or else it will be done ill-favoredly. Though Marriage be no instituted Sacrament, yet where the undefiled bed is, and love, this union aptly resembles (that of) Christ and His Church. If you can truly love your Wife, that (love) doth Christ bear to His church and every poor soul therein,— who "gave himself" for it and to it!— Command me to your Wife; tell her I entirely love her, and rejoice in the goodness of the Lord to her. I wish her every way fruitful. I thank her for her loving letter.

— Oliver Cromwell to his son Richard Cromwell,

April 2d, 1650.

A Puritan Woman Writes to her Husband

Dear Sir,— Your two letters, one from Hereford and the

2. Wragge, Sybil, The Age Revealed, p. 73.
other from Gloucester, were very welcome to me: if you knew how gladly I receive your letters I believe you would never let any opportunity pass. I hope your cloak did you service between Gloucester and my Brother Bray's, for with us it was a very rainy day, but this day it has been very dry and warm, and so I hope it was with you; and tomorrow I hope you will be well at your journey's end, where I wish myself to bid you welcome home. You see how my thoughts go with you: and as you have many of mine, so let me have some of yours. Believe me, I think I never missed you more than now I do, or else I have forgot what is past. I thank God, Ned and Robin are well, and Ned asks every day where you are, and he says you will come tomorrow. My father is well, but goes not abroad, because of his physic. I have sent you up a little hamper, in which is the box with the writings and books you bid me send up, with the other things, sewed up in a cloth, in the bottom of the hamper. I have sent you a partridge pie, which has the two peacocks in it, and a little runlet of meath, that which I told you I made for my father. I think within this month it will be very good drink. I send it up now, because I think carriage, when it is ready to drink, does it hurt; therefore, and please you to let it rest and then taste it; if it be good, I pray you let my father have it, because he spake to me for such meath. I will now bid you good-night, for it is past eleven o'clock. I pray God preserve
you and give you good success in all your business, and a speedy and happy meeting.

Your most faithfull, affectionate wife,

Brilliana Harley

I must beg your blessing for Ned and Rob, and present you with Ned's humble duty.

-- Lady Brilliana Harley to Sir Robert Harley.

A Gallant Compliment

(To his cousin, Honor Dryden, the famous author addressed a complimentary letter of thanks for a gift of writing materials, of which letter Scott remarked: "It is a woeful sample of the gallantry of the time, alternately coarse and pedantic.")

You are such a deity that commands worship by providing the sacrifice. You are pleas'd, Madame, to force me to write, by sending me materials, and compel me to my greatest happiness. Yet, though I highly value your magnificent present, pardon mee, if I must tell the world, they are imperfect emblems of your beauty; for the white and red of waxe and paper are but shaddowes of that vermillion and snow in your lips and forehead; and the silver of the inkehorn, if it presume to vye whiteness with your purer skinne, must confesse it selfe blacker than the liquor it contains. What then do I more than retrieve your own gifts, and present you with that paper adulterated with

blotts, which you gave me spotlesse?

— John Dryden to Madame Honor Dryden.

A Daughter to her Father

(After marriage and retirement at Sheen, little is known of Dorothy Osborne's thoughts and doings. In 1684 their only daughter died of small-pox. A letter from the child to her father is extant, and reflects her mother's teaching.)

Sir,— I defer'd writing to you till I could tell you that I had receaved all my fine things, which I have just now done; but I thought never to have done giving you thanks for them—they have made me see very happy in my new closet, and everybody that comes doe admire them above all things, but yet not soe much as I think they deserve; and now, if Papa was heare I should think myself a perfect pope, though I hope I should not be burnt as there was one at Nell guin's doore the 5th of November, who was sat in a great sheare, with a red nose half a yard long, with some hundreds of boys throwing squibs at it. monsieur Gore and I agree mighty well, and he makes me believe I shall come to some-thing at last: that is if he stays, which I don't doubt but he will, because all the faire ladys will petition for him. we are got rid of the workmen now, and our house is redy to entertain you come when you please, and you will meet with no body more glad to see you then

1. The Letters of Dorothy Osborne, p. 278.
Sr.,

Your most obedient
and dutiful daughter,

D. Temple.

-- Dorothy Temple to her Father, Sir William Temple.

A Quaker Mother to her Son

I desire thee to tell S. Barker I would have him to buy me a silk dust-coat to ride in; for I find camlet is so thick for this hot weather, I cannot well endure it. I would have it a grave colour. It is a slight kind of silk, and will not cost much. I would have as much as to make me a riding-coat and petticoat; if it be a yard broad, 3 breadths will be enough for the petticoat.

I desire thee to get a handsome stuff suit and a good waistcoat. Thou knowest I did not like the last stuff suit, therefore remember and let it not be like that, but something more refined and finer. I wish that riding-coat of mine, the price I mean, had been bestowed on clothes for thee. As for me, its little matter what I wear.

-- Lady Rodes to Sir John Rodes.

William Penn’s advice to his Children

Take my counsel to thy bosom:—
Firstly. Let the fear of the Lord dwell in you richly.
Secondly. Be diligent in meetings and worship and business, and let meetings be kept once a day in the family, and, my dearest, divide thy time and be regular. In the morning, view the business of the house. Grieve not thyself with careless servants, they will disorder thee, rather pay them and let them go. It is best to avoid many words, which I know wound the soul.

Thirdly. Cast up thy income and see what it daily amounts to, and I beseech thee live low and sparingly until my debts are paid. I write not as doubtful of thee, but to quicken thee.

Fourthly. My dearest, let me recommend to thy care the dear children abundantly beloved of me. Breed them up in the love of virtue. I had rather they were homely than finely bred. Religion in the heart leads into true civility, teaching men and women to be mild and courteous.

Fifthly. Breed them up in a love one of another. Tell them it is the charge I left behind me. Tell them it was my counsel, they should be tender and affectionate one to another. For their learning be liberal, spare no cost. Rather keep an ingenuous person in the house to teach

1. Birkenhead, op. cit., p. 204.
them, than send them to schools, too many evil impressions being commonly received there. And now, dear children, be obedient to your dear mother, whose virtue and good name is an honour to you, for she hath been exceeded by none in integrity, industry, and virtue, and good understanding, qualities not usual among women of her worldly condition and quality. Be temperate in all things, watch against anger, and avoid flatterers, who are thieves in disguise. Be plain in your apparel, let virtue be your ornament. Be not busybodies, meddle not with other folks' manners, and for you who are likely to be concerned in the Government of Pennsylvania, especially my first born, be lowly, diligent and tender. Keep upon the square, for God sees you.

-- William Penn to his Family, 1682.

V. UNIVERSITY AND SCHOOL.

George Herbert Writes for Books

This laos is aggravated, in that I apprehend what my friends would have been forward to say if I had taken ill course. Follow your book, and you shall want nothing. You know, Sir, it is their ordinary speech, and now let them make it good; for since I hope I have not deceived their

expectations, let them not deceive mine. But perhaps they will say, You are sickly, you must not study too hard. It is true (God knows) I am weak, yet not so but that every day I may step one step towards my journeys' end; and I love my friends so well as that if all things proved not well, I had rather the fault should lie on me than on them. But they will object again, What becomes of your Annuity? Sir, if there be any truth in me, I find it little enough to keep me in health. You know I was sick last vacation, neither am I yet recovered, so that I am fain ever and anon to buy somewhat tending towards my health; for informities are both painful and costly. Now this Lent I am forbid utterly to eat any fish, so that I am fain to dyet in my chamber at mine own cost; for in our publick halls, you know, is nothing but fish and white-meats, out of Lent also twice a week, on Fridayes and Saturdays, I must do so, which yet sometimes I fast. Sometimes also I rode to Newmarket, and there lie a day or two for fresh air, all of which tend to avoiding of costlier matters, if I should fall absolutely sick.

-- George Herbert to Sir John Danvers from Trinity College, 1617.

The Orator's Place

The Orator's place (that you may understand what it is)

is the finest place in the University, though not the
fainfulest, yet that will be about 30 l. per an. But
the commodeiousness is beyond the revenue; for the Orator
writes all the University letters, makes all the orations,
be it to King, Prince, or whatever comes to the University;
to requite these pains, he takes place next the doctors,
is at all their assemblies and meetings, and sits above
the proctors, is regent, or non-regent at his pleasure,
and such like gaynesses, which will please a young man well.

-- George Herbert to Sir John Danvers, 1619.

Cambridge Students Write Home

I was chosen by the proctors to be senior brother in
the Commencement house this year, which is a place of great
credit, but withall very chargeable; for I should have
given the proctors each of them a satin doublet and should
have invited all the doctors and chief men in the town to
supper. My tutor took some time to consider of it, hoping
you would have come this way, but you coming not I was
constrained to refuse it. I desire you (if you buy a new
hat before Easter) to bring down mine ready trimmed with
you, for my old one begins to grow unfitting for a gentle-
man to wear, and I am loth to buy me a new one, because
it will not be long ere I shall have that. I pray let it

be now shagged though it be somewhat the thinner and (if it be possible) let it be made less in the head, and let the brims be cut somewhat narrower, as the fashion is.

— William Gawdy to his Father, 1621.

Dear Mother, in the last letter which I received from you by the carrier you promised me that you would send me the cakes and cheeses... I would entreat you to make me some boathose tops and send me against Easter.

— William Gawdy to his Mother.

Sir, you wrote me to forbear silver buttons, but both my Tutor and Mr. Anderson did persuade me to it: it did cost but 20s., the more: if you think it too much I will abate it in my allowance.

— Bassingbourne Gawdy to his Father.

A College Student Writes to His Mother\(^1\).

(John Strype, later priest and curate and a contributor to ecclesiastical history, was, during the reign of Charles the Second, a poor student at Jesus College, Cambridge. The letters to his mother, from which have been selected the following excerpts, contain an interesting record of the conditions of the times.)

Lodgings and Diet

Do not wonder so much at our Commons: they are more than many Colleges have. Trinity itself (where Herring and Davies are) which is the famousest College in the

\(^1\) Original Letters of Eminent Literary Men, ed. Sir Henry Ellis, pp. 169-81.
University, have but three half-pence. We have roast meat,
dinner and supper, throughout the weeks; and such meats
as you know I not use to care for; and that is Veal: but
now I have learnt to eat it. Sometimes, nevertheless,
we have boiled meat, with pottage; and beef and mutton,
which I am glad of; except Fridays and Saturdays, and some-
times Wednesdays; which days we have Fish at dinner, and
tansy or pudding for supper. Our parts then are slender
enough. But there is this remedy; We may retire unto the
Butteries, and there take a half-penny loafe and butter or
cheese; or else to the Kitchen, and take there what the
Cook hat. But, for my part, I am sure, I never visited
the Kitchen yet, since I have been here, and the Butteries
but seldom after meals; unless for a Cisa; that is for a
Farthing-worth of Small-Beer; so that lesse than a Penny
in Beer doth serve me a whole Day. Nevertheless sometimes
we have Exceedings: then we have two or three Dishes (but
that is very rare): otherwise never but one: so that a
Cake and a Cheese would be very welcome to me; and a
Neat's tongue, or some such thing, if it would not require
too much money. If you do intend to send me any thing, do
not send it yet, until you hear further of me: for I have
many things to send for, which may all I hope be put into
that Box you have at home: but what they are, I shall give
you an account of hereafter, when I would have them sent:
and that is, when I have got me a Chamber: for as yet, I
am in a Chamber that doth not at all please me. I have thoughts of one, which is a very handsome one, and one pair of stairs high, and that looketh into the Master's garden. The price is but 20 s. per annum, ten whereof a Knight's son, and lately admitted into this College, doth pay: though he did not come till about Midsummer, so that I shall have but 10s. to pay a year: besides my income, which may be about 40s. or thereabouts. Mother, I kindly thank you for your Orange pills you sent me. If you are not too straight of money, send me some such thing by the woman, and a pound or two of Almonds and Raisons.

To Take a Degree

But secondly, and chiefly, concerning my Degree. The next Monday or Tuesday come seven-night, I expect to be Bachelour of Arts, so that you will but supply me with some money. I have enquired, and understand that it will stand me in 8 pounds the cheapest way; and therefore, I beseech you, sayle not to procure it for me.

VI. CHURCH AND PULPIT.

A Puritan Mother to her Son

(Extracts from the letters of Lady Brilliana Harley to Mr. Edward Harley.)

And, my dearest, believe this from me, that there is no sweetness in any thing in this life compared to the sweetness in the service of our God; and this I thank God, I can say, not only to agree with those that say so, but experimentally.

— Lady B. Harley to her Son Edward, March 22, 1638.

My dear Ned,— Keep always a watch over your precious soul, tie yourself to a daily examination; think over the company you have been in, and what your discourse was, and how you found yourself affected, how in the discourses of religion; observe what knowledge you were able to express, and with what affection to it, and where you find yourself to come short, labour to repair that want; if it be in knowledge of any point, read something that may inform you in what you find you know not; if the fault be in affections, that you find affections to love those things which by nature we cannot love.

— Lady Brilliana Harley to her Son, Nov. the first, 1639.

Marshall's Sermon 1

(Stephen Marshall, famous London preacher, was probably visited in Bedfordshire when Dorothy Osborne heard his sermon. The account she gives of it is typical of her own reactions and

1. The Letters of Dorothy Osborne, p. 143.
personality.)

God forgive me, I was as near laughing yesterday where I should not. Would you believe that I had the grace to go hear a sermon upon a week day? In earnest, 'tis true, and Mr. Marshall was the man that preached, but never anybody was so defeated. He is so famed that I expected rare things of him, and seriously I listened to him at first with as much reverence and attention as if he had been St. Paul; and what do you think he told us? Why, that if there were no kings, no queens, no lords, no ladies, nor gentlemen, nor gentlewomen, in this world, 'twould be no loss at all to God Almighty. This we had over some forty times, which made me remember it whether I would or not. The rest was much at this rate, interlarded with the prettiest odd phrases, that I had the most ado to look soberly enough for the place I was in that ever I had in my life. He does not preach so always, sure? If he does, I cannot believe his sermons will do much towards the bringing anybody to heaven more than by exercising their patience. Yet, I'll say that for him, he stood stoutly for tithes, though, in my opinion, few deserved them less than he; and it may be he would be better without them.

— Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple.
"A Most Severe Proclamation"¹

The proclamation which Dryden anticipated in the following letter was issued on May 6, 1698-9 by the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Thomas Tennison, and was directed against Popish recusants and Papists. Dryden himself was a Catholic.)

We poor Catholics daily expect a most severe proclamation to come out against us; and at the same time are satisfied that the king is very unwilling to persecute us, considering us to be but an handful, and those disarmed; but the archbishop of Canterbury is our heavy enemy, and heavy indeed he is in all respects.

-- John Dryden to Mrs. Steward, March the 4th, 1698-9.

VII. TRAVEL.

Advice on Shipbuilding²

In a well conditioned ship these things are chiefly required

1. That she is strong built.
2. Swift in sail.
4. That her parts be so laid as that she may carry her guns all weathers.

5. That she hull and try well.
6. That she stay well when boarding or turning on a wind is required.

--- Sir Walter Raleigh to Prince Henry.

A Sovereign of the Sea

I have other news also to tell you; we have a brave new ship, a royal galleon, the like they say did never spread sail upon salt water, take her true and well-packed symmetry, with all dimensions together. For her burden, she hath as many tons as there were years since the Incarnation when she was built, which are 1636; she is in length 127 feet, her greatest breadth within the planks is 46 feet and six inches; her depth from the breadth is 19 foot and 4 inches: she carrieth 100 pieces of ordnance wanting four, whereof she bath three tyre; half a score men may stand in her lantern; the charges His Majesty hath been in the building of her are computed to be 80,000 pounds, one whole year's ship-money: Sir Robert Mansel launched her, and by His Majesty's command called her The Sovereign of the Sea.

--- James Howell.

A Voyage

(Lancaster’s expedition set out in 1600 and

returned in 1602. During a storm, they were lost, and Lancaster writes to the East India Company describing the storm.

Right Worshipful, what hath passed in this voyage, and what trades I have settled for the company, and what other events have befallen us, you shall understand by the bearers hereof, to whom (as occasion hath fallen) I must refer you. I will strive with all diligence to save my ship, and her goods, as you may perceive, by the course I take in venturing my own life, and those that are with me. I cannot tell where you should look for me, if you send any pinnace to seek me, because I live at the devotion of the wind and the seas. And thus fare you well, desiring God to send us a merry meeting in this world, if it be his good will and pleasure.

Bishop Hall's Advice on Travelling

Think it not enough that you see, or can say you have seen, strange things of nature or event: it is a vain and dead travel that rests in the eye or the tongue. All is but lost, unless your busy mind shall, from the body that it sees, draw forth some quintessence of observation, wherewith to inform and enrich itself. There is nothing that can quit the cost and labour of travel but the gain of wisdom. How many have we seen and pitied, which have brought nothing from foreign countries but mishapen clothes;

or exotical gestures, or new games, or affected lispings; or the diseases of the place, or, which is worst, the vices! These men have at once wandered from their country and from themselves: and some of them too easy, to instance, have left God behind them; or, perhaps, instead of him, have, after a loose and filthy life, brought home some idle puppet in a box, whereon to spend their devotion. Let their wreck warn you, and let their follies be entertained by you with more detestation than pity.

I know your honour too well to fear you: your young years have been so graciously prevented with sovereign antidotes of truth and holy instruction, that this infection despairs of prevailing: your very blood gives you argument of safety: yet, good counsel is not unseasonable, even when danger is not suspected.

For God's sake, my lord, whatsoever you gain, lose nothing of the truth: remit nothing of your love and piety to God, of your favour and seal to religion... Religion is the greatest care: advices for carriage, and improvement of travel, challenge the next place. I need not counsel you to keep your state with affability; and so to manage yourself, as that your courtesy may be more visible than your greatness. Nature hath taught you this, and hath secretly propagated it from your father, who, by his sweetness of disposition won as many hearts as by his valour and munificence. I rather tell you, that a good
nature hath betrayed many; who, looking for that in others which they have found in themselves, have at last complained of their own credulity and others' deceit.

Trust not strangers too much with your counsel, with your person; and in your greatest familiarities have an eye to their common disposition and infirmities. Those natures wherewith you converse are subject to displeasure, and violent in pursuit of small indignities. Yesterday heard I named, from no unfaithful report, a French courtier, that in single combat hath sent eighteen souls from the field to their place; yet he, ever as the patient in the quarrel; and, for this mentioned with more than excuse; I censure not how justly. This is other's care: only hence I argue the riveness of unkindness taken and pursued. You shall see that the soil is not so diverse as the inclination of persons; who, in all climates, though they differ in particulars, yet still agree too well in common faults. The Italian, deep, close, and crafty; the French, rash; the German, dull. One, not forward to offer wrongs, but apprehensive of a small wrong offered; another, prone either to take or give them, but not uneasy to remit; another, long in conceiving, long in retaining.

What do I exemplify? There are long catalogues of peculiar vices that haunt special places, which, if they were not notoriously infamous, my charity would serve me to particularize. It were pity there should be fewer
Think much, and say little; especially in occasions of dispraise: wherein both a little is enough, and oftentimes any thing is too much.

You cannot inquire too much: that which in us inferiors would be censured for dangerous curiosity, in your greatness shall be construed as a commendable desire of knowledge.

Ask still after men of greatest parts and reputation; and, where you find fame no liar, note and respect them. Make choice of these for conversation, which, either in present or in hope, are eminent; and when you meet with excellence is in any faculty, leave not without some gain of knowledge. What are others' graces to you, if you only admire them, not imitate, not appropriate them?

— Joseph Hall to the Earl of Essex.

Highway Robbery

Mr. alderman Briggs, my neighbour, who is our burges, went to London last Thursday, and in another coach Mr. Alderman Man and others; between Baron Mills and Thetford, both the coaches were robbed by 3 highwaymen; but not much money was lost, passengers usually travelling with little
money about them, but the coachman lost fifteen pounds which he carryed to buy a horse. Captaine Briggs, my neighbour, would have made some resistance but they presently took away his sword, which he used to weare in the parliament: his man also was gone out of sight, and none of the travellers would joyne with him to make resistance.

— Sir Thomas Browne to his son Edward, 1680.

On Youth and Travel

It is not enough that persons of my Lord Percy's quality be taught to dance, and to ride, to speak languages and wear his clothes with a good grace (which are the very shells of travel), but, besides all these, that he know men, customs, courts, and disciplines, and whatsoever superior excellencies the places afford, befitting a person of birth and noble impressions. This is, Sir, the fruit of travel; thus our incomparable Sidney was bred; and this, tanquam Minerva Phidiae, sets the crown upon his perfections when a gallant man shall return with religion and courage, knowledge and modesty, without pedantry, without affectation, material and serious, to the contentment of his relations, the glory of his family, the star and ornament of his age. This is truly to give a citizen to his country. Youth is the seed time in which the foundation.

of all noble things is to be laid; but it is made the field of repentence. . . . And unless thus we cultivate our youth, and noblemen make wiser provisions for their educations abroad, above the vanity of talk, feather, and ribbon, the ordinary commerce and import of their wild pererrations, I despair of ever living to see a man noble indeed; they may be called "My Lord;" titles and sounds are inferior trifles; but when virtue and blood are coincident, they both add lustre and mutual excellencies.

-- John Evelyn to Edward Thurland, 1658.

A Trip to Vienna

Sir,— I wrote to you from Passau. Since when it hath pleased God to continue his blessing in my health and a prosperous passage to Vienna. The farther I go the more my desires are enlarged, and I desire now to see Presbourg, Leopoldin, the strong fortification which the emperour hath built in lieu of Newheusal, as also Rab, Comorra, Breda, and Chremnitz, where the gold mines are, and other places: but I have trespassed too farre alreadie upon your goodnesse, and intend to looke no farther. Here is at present a Tartarian emperour, his name Cha Gagi Aga, Cha signifieth master, Gagi somewhat like proselyte, and Aga signifieth king. They have brought divers horses with

them of high esteem here, but not the least beautifull.

Some of the Tartars have sylver rings, with the same signa-
ture as the Turkish seals. They take much tobacco in very
long pipes; their tobacco is not in rowles butt in leaves
and drye. Here is a fayre in the citty, where yesterday
I met the Tartars, who were strangely delighted with it
and very much with the babies and figures in gingerbread.
The emperour presented the Cham of Tartarie with a silver
bason and ewer, and a fine wach of curious work; sent also
presents to the 4 brothers of the great Cham, to the
chamarine his wife, and to his sisters; yet after all this
kindnesse they are jealous here, as having newes out of
Hungarie, that Siebenbergen is to bee putt into the hands
of the Tartars. The varieties of habits in this place is
very remarkable, as of Hungarians, Transylvanians, Gre-
cians, Croatians, Austrians, &c. In the river there is
kept a tame pelicon, which here they call a lettelgantz,
or spoon goose. I saw a comedie in the Jesuit's collodge,
the emperour and empressse present. In the emperour's
chappell is very good musick, vocall and instrumentall,
performed by Italians, whereof some are eunuchs. I saw
the emperour at chappell on Wednesday, hee hath a very
remarkable aspect, and the Austrian lipp extraordinarily.
Count Cacowitz is Maistre del Hostell. Montecuelui, the
generall, is a leane tall man. On St. Nicholas Day I
saw the emperours mother and his 2 sisters, as they lighted
out of their coach to enter into the monasterie of St. Nicholas, his sisters are very beautifull, sweet ladies. The empress hath a very good looks but somewhat sad at present, perhaps too sollicitous about her deliverie. I would willingly leave this place in order to my returne the first week in February, or sooner if I had the happinesse to heare from you.

-- Dr. Edward Browne to Sir Thomas Browne,
From Wein, Austrich, Nov. 1, 1668.

Coach and Carriage

Dear Sonne,— I thinck you are in the right, when you say that physicians coaches in London are far more for state than for businesse, there being so many wayes whereby they may bee assisted, and at lesser charge and care in London. The Thames and hackney coaches, being no small help, beside the great number of coaches kept by private gentlemen, in and about London. When I read Gages travells in America, many yeare ago, I was much surprised to find that there were twentie thousand coaches in Mexico, perhaps there may be now in London half that number. When Queen Elizabeth came to Norwich, 1578, she came on horseback from Ipswich, by the high road to Norwich, in the summer time; but she had a coach or two in her train. She rid through

Norwich, unto the bishop's palace, where she stayed a weeke, and went sometimes a hunting on horseback, and up to Mashold hill often, to see wrestling and shooting, &c. When I was a youth, many great persons travelled with 3 horses, but now there is a new face of things. I doubt there will bee scarce cortex enough to bee to suffice the nation. God bless you all. -- Your loving father,

Thomas Browne.

-- Sir Thomas Browne to his son Edward, 1680.

VIII. SCIENCE.

Galileo's Discovery

(Sir Henry Wotton, ambassador to Venice, writes this most interesting contemporary account of Galileo's work. The telescope was first invented in Holland as early as 1608. Perfecting one for himself Galileo discovered the satellites of Jupiter.)

... Now touching the occurrents of the present, I send herewith unto his Majesty the strangest piece of news (as I may justly call it) that he hath ever yet received from any part of the world; which is the annexed book (come abroad this very day) of the Mathematical Professor at Padua, who by the help of an optical instrument (which both enlargeth and approximateth the object)

invented first in Flanders, and bettered by himself, hath discovered four new planets rolling about the sphere of Jupiter, besides many other unknown fixed stars; likewise, the true cause of the Visa Lactea, so long searched; and lastly, that the moon is not spherical, but endued with many prominences, and, which is of all the strangest, illuminated with the solar light by reflection from the body of the earth, as he seemeth to say. So as upon the whole subject he hath first overthrown all former astronomy -- for we must have a new sphere to save the appearances -- and next all astrology.

Sir Henry Wotton to the Earl of Salisbury,
13th of March, 1610.

A Doctor's Prescription

(Medical science was still in its infancy at the time Dryden describes this remedy for his illness.)

By advice of my doctour, takeing twice the bitter draught, with sena in it, and looseing at least twelve ounces of blood, by cupping on my neck, I am just well enough to go abroad in the afternoon.

-- John Dryden to Mrs. Steward, 1698.

A Rare Gift

(Sir Henry Wotton writes to the Earl of Holderness from Venice, sending an unusual gift.)

I had before order by Mr. Secretary Calvert to send his Majesty some of the very best melon seeds of all kinds; which I have done some weeks since, by other occasion of an express messenger, and sent withal a very particular instruction in the culture of that plant. By the present bearer I do direct unto your Lordship, through the hands of either my nephew or Mr. Nicholas Pay (as either of them shall be readiest in London), for some beginning in this kind of service, the stem of a double yellow rose of no ordinary nature; for it flowereth every month (unless change of the olime do change the property) from May till almost Christmas.

-- Sir Henry Wotton to the Earl of Holderness, January, 1625.

A New Star

I received yours yesterday; and therein how the societie had received a letter from that great astronomer, Hevelius, in Dantsick; with an account of an eclipse, and a new starre in Cyngmus; but what new starre, or when appearing, I knowe not; for there was a new starre in that

constellation long agoe, and writ of by many. If it bee now to be seen it is worth the looking after. I have not had the Transactions for divers moneths; but some that have had them tell me there is account of some kind of spectacles without glasses, and made by a kind of little trunk or case to admitt the species with advantage. I have read of the same in the Transactions about a year ago; but now I hear such instruments are made and sold in London; and some tell me they have had them heare. Enquire after them, and where they are made, and send a payre, as I remember there is no great art in the making thereof.

—Sir Thomas Browne to his son Edward.

Evelyn on Trees

When many years ago I came from rambling abroad, observed a little there, and a great deal more since I came home than gave me much satisfaction, and (as events have proved) scarce worth one's pursuit, I cast about how I should employ the time which hangs on most young men's hands, to the best advantage; and when books and severer studies grew tedious and other importinence would be pressing, by what innocent diversions I might sometimes relieve myself without compliance to recreations I took no felicity in, because they did not contribute to any improvement of

the mind. This set me upon planting of Trees, and brought forth my Sylva, which book, infinitely beyond my expectations, is now also calling for a fourth impression, and has been the occasion of propagating many millions of useful timber trees throughout this Nation, as I may justify (without immodesty) from the many letters of acknowledgement received from gentlemen of the first quality, and others altogether strangers to me. His late Majesty Charles II was sometimes graciously pleased to take notice of it to me, and that I had by that book alone incited a world of planters to repair their broken estates and woods, which the greedy Rebels had wasted and made such havoc of. Upon this encouragement I was once speaking to a mighty man, then in despotic power, to mention the great inclination I had to serve his Majesty in a little office then newly vacant (the salary I think hardly 300 pounds) whose province was to inspect the Timber Trees in His Majesty's forests, etc., and take care of their culture and improvement; but this was conferred upon another, who, I believe had seldom been out of the smoke of London, where there was a great deal of timber there were not many trees. I confess I had an inclination to the employment upon a public account as well as its being suitable to my rural genius, born as I was at Wotton among the woods.

—— John Evelyn to Lady Sunderland, 1690.
Isaac Newton to S. Pepys, Cambridge, Nov 26th, 1691

Sr— I was very glad to hear of your health by Mr. Smith and to have any opportunity given me of showing how ready I should be to serve you or your friends upon any occasion, and wish that something of greater moment would give me a new opportunity of doing it, so as to become more useful to you than in solving only a mathematical question. In reading the question, it seemed to me at first to be ill stated; and in examining Mr. Smith about the meaning of some phrases in it, he put the case of the question the same as if A played with six dice till he threw a six; and then B threw as often with twelve, and C with eighteen, the one for twice as many, the other for thrice as many, sixes. To examine who had the advantage, I took the case of A throwing with one dice, and B with two—the former till he threw a six, the latter as often for two sixes; and found that A had the advantage. But whether A will have the advantage when he throws with six, and B with twelve dice, I cannot tell; for the number of dice may alter the proportion of the chances considerably, and I did not compute it in this case, the problem being a hard one. And, indeed, upon reading the question anew, I found that these cases do not come within the question; for here an advantage is given to A by his throwing first till he throws a six; whereas, the question requires, that they throw upon equal luck, and by consequence that no advantage be given to any one

by throwing first. The question is this: A has six dice in a box, with which he is to fling a six; B has in another box twelve dice, with which he is to fling two sixes; C has in another box eighteen dice, with which he is to fling three sixes. Q., whether B and C have not as easy a task as A at even luck? If this last question must be understood according to the plainest sense of the words, I think that sense must be this:

1st. Because A, B, and C, are to throw upon even luck, there must be no advantage of luck given to any of them by throwing first or last, by making any thing depend upon the throw of any one, which does not equally depend on the throws of the other two: and, therefore, to bar all inequality of luck on these accounts, I would understand the question as if A, B, and C, were to throw all at the same time.

2ndly. I take the most proper and obvious meaning of the words of the question to be, that when A flings more sixes than one, he flings a six as well as when he flings but a single six, and so gains his expectation: and so, when B flings more sixes than two, and C more than three, they gain their expectations. But if B throw under two sixes, and C under three, they miss their expectations; because, in the question, 'tis expressed that B is to throw two, and C three sixes.

3dly. Because each man has his dice in a box, ready
to throw, and the question is put upon the chances of that
throw, without naming any more throws than that, I take
the question to be the same as if it had been put thus upon
single throws.

What is the expectation or hope of A to throw every
time one six, at least, with six dice?

What is the expectation or hope of B to throw every
time two sixes, at least, with twelve dice?

What is the expectation or hope of C to throw every
time three sixes, or more than three, with eighteen dice?

And whether has not B and C as great an expectation
or hope to hit every time what they throw for, as A hath
to hit what he throws for?

If the question be thus stated, it appears by an
easy computation, that the expectation of A is greater than
that of B or C; that is, the task of A is the easiest;
and the reason is, because A has all the chances on sixes
on his dice for his expectation, but B and C have not all
the chances upon theirs; for, when B throws a single six,
or C but one of two sixes, they miss of their expectations.
This Mr. Smith understands, and therefore allows that, if
the question be understood as I have stated it, then B
and C have not so easy a task as A; but he seems of
opinion, that the question should be so stated, that B
and C, as well as A, may have all the chances of sixes on
their dice within their expectations. I do not see that
the words of the question, as 'tis set down in your letter, will admit it; but this being no mathematical question, but a question what is the true mathematical question, it belongs not to me to determine it. I have contented myself, therefore, to set down how, in my opinion, the question, according to the most obvious and proper meaning of the words, is to be understood; and that, if this be the true state of the question, then B and C have not so easy a task as A: but, whether I have hit the true meaning of the question, I must submit to the better judgment of yourself and others. If you desire the computation, I will send it you. I am, Sir,

Yr most humble and most obedient Servant, Is. Newton.

The Mystery of an Earthquake

Sir,

Though I have had here a great deal of good company, yet I must own that I still wanted your conversation, especially upon the happening of the earthquake. None in Buckden (that I can hear of) were sensible of it, but it was discerned in divers neighbouring towns, and many have complained to me of a giddiness in their heads which it caused for a while. In the fens, nigh Ely, some turf-diggers were much surprised by it, whilst they perceived the

ground to tremble in an unusual manner, and the water to come of a sudden a foot deep into dry pits, and by and by to sink down again.

Since this earthquake, I mused a little upon the nature of earthquakes in general, whilst I was upon the road to Cambridge, and I here send you my conjectures, to no other end than that I may draw from you some better thoughts upon the subject. My conceit is this. I imagine that the cause of thunder in the clouds is much the same with that of quaking in the earth, the discharge of a nitro-sulphurous matter. I know nothing in nature which goes off with such force, and moving with such speed, as that does; and in this earthquake it must have been something of mighty force to make it so general, and of wonderful celerity to cause it in so many very distant places about the same hour.

-- Bishop of Lincoln (Dr. Tenison) to John Evelyn, October 3rd, 1692.

A Holly Hedge¹

Your fine Holly-hedges tempted me to an essay for the like in a length of above 300 feet, but the last winter and summer gave me a severe rebuke, killing, as I fear, half the roots; the rest are alive, and many of them with leaves; I will persist to cultivate with care and patience

till all be restored and in a way of growth.

My next desire is to abound in hedges of Yew; I would plant it again at the walls of two large courts, and in other places, so as now and hereafter to extend it five or six hundred yards and more. My seat is somewhat bleak, and therefore I choose this green as that which no cold will hurt, and I am told it will grow as much in three years as Holly in five. Now seeing I need so much, it would have been good husbandry to have begun with seeds, and to have raised my roots, but this I omitted, and you note in your book that they peep not till the second year, wherefore, calling on a gardener who has a nursery of them, he demands at the rate of twelvepence for every root of a foot high. . . . This I chiefly propose in the two courts, where I would have the walls lined with this future tapestry of Yew: but here I meet in opposition the opinion of the country of its noxious quality to cattle, who will be browsing the greens they can come at; and if this be experimentally true, then I must be at the charge of railing in where it is possible the cattle may come at it. I have a nursery of Firs from seed of two and three years' growth; I am thinking in April to transplant them, and desire to know if the distance of ten feet be not sufficient for this naked tree. In the next place, I desire to know if these trees will, by their dropping, endanger the Holly hedge, which I have set, and which is to grow up close
to them.

-- Sir Robert Southwell to John Evelyn, 1684.

A Burning Fountain

(John Ray, botanist, zoologist and geologist, gives this vivid account of the Burning Fountain of Grenoble.)

. . . .

Reading in the "Philosophical Transactions" of March last your observations on subterraneaus streams, I find you mistaken in one of your conjectures concerning matter of fact, that is concerning that they call the burning fountain (La Fontaine que brule) near Grenoble, in Dauphine, which our curiosity led us to make an excursive journey from Grenoble on purpose to see. This place is about three leagues distant from the city up the river. When we came there, we were much deceived in our expectation; for, instead of a burning fountain, which we dreamt of, from the name and relations of others, we found nothing of water, but only an actual flame of fire issuing out of a rent, or hole, in the side of a bank; plainly visible to the eye, to which if you applied dry straw, or any other combustible matter, it took fire presently. I took it to be nothing else but a little spiraculum of a mine of coals, or some such like substance, fired; and my reason was,

because the bank, out of which the flame issued, looked much like slate and cinder of coals. One thing I cannot but admire, that is the long continuance of this burning....

— John Ray to Tankred Robinson, May 22, 1685.

IX. SUPERSTITION.

Queen Mary’s Death¹

(During Sir John Harington’s visit to the King, the latter accounted the following story, which gives an insight into the superstitions shared to a great extent by the monarch).

His Highness told me her death was visible in Scotland before it did really happen, being, as he said "spoken of in secrete by those whose power of sights presented to them a bloodie heade dancinge in the aire." He then did remarke muche on this gifts, and saide he had soughte out of certaine booke a sure waie to attaine knowledge of future chances.

— Sir John Harington to Sir Amias Paulet, 1603.

Lord Reay to S. Pepys, Durness, 24th October, 1699²

There is a people in these countries surnamed "Mansome," who see this sight naturally, both men and women, though they commonly deny it, but are so affirmed to do

by all their neighbours. A Seer, with whom I was reason-
ing on this subject, finding me very incredulous in what he asserted, offered to let me see as well as himself. I asked whether he could free me from seeing them there-
after; whereto he answering me he could not, put a stop to my curiosity. The manner of showing them to another is this: the Seer puts both his hands and feet above your's, and mutters some words to himself: which done, you both see them alike.

Dr. Hickes to S. Pepys, London, June 19, 1700

I told you, when I was in Scotland, I never met with any learned man, either among the Divines or Lawyers, who doubted of the thing. I had the honour to hear Lord Tarbut tell the story of the Second Sight, of my Lord Middleton's march with his army down a hill, which you read in the letter written by his Lordship to Mr. Boyle. It was before the Duke of Lauderdale he told it, when his Grace was High Commissioner of Scotland, about twenty-
two years ago. At the same time, as I remember, he enter-
tained the Duke with a story of Elf Arrows, which was very surprising to me; they are of a triangular form; somewhat like the beard or pile of our old English arrows of war, almost as thin as one of our old groats, made of flints or pebbles, or such like stones; and these the country

1. Pepys' Diary and Correspondence, Vol. IV, p. 275.
people in Scotland believe that Evil Spirits, which they call Elves, from the old Danish word Alfar, which signifies Daemon, Genius, Satyrus, do shoot into the hearts of cattle; and, as I remember, my Lord Tarbut, or some other Lord, did produce one of these Elf arrows, which one of his tenants or neighbours took out of the heart of one of his cattle that died of an usual death.

I have another strange story, but very well attested, of an Elf arrow, that was shot at a venerable Irish Bishop by an Evil Spirit in a terrible noise, louder than thunder, which shaked the house where the Bishop was; but this I reserve for his son to tell you, who is one of the deprived Irish Clergymen, and very well known, as by other excellent pieces, so by his late book, entitled, "The Snake in the Grass."

The Evil Ones

I will not say that this gentlemen is so perverse, but to deny there are any witnesses, to deny that there are not ill spirits which seduce, tamper, and converse in divers shapes with human creatures and impel them to actions of malice— I say that he who denies there are such busy spirits and such poor passive creatures upon whom they work, which commonly are called witches,— I say again,
that he who denies there are such spirits shows that he himself hath a spirit of contradiction in him, opposing the current and consentient opinion of all antiquity. . . .

What a multitude of examples are there in good authentic authors of divers kinds of fascinations, incantations, prestigiations, of philtres, spells, charms, sorceries, characters, and such-like, as also of magic, necromancy and divinations! Surely the Witch of Endor is no fable, the burning of Joan of Arc, the Maid of Orléans, in Rouen, and of the Marchioness d'Anore, of late years in Paris, are no fables. . . .

But we need not cross the sea for examples of this kind. We have too many (God wot) at home. King James a great while was loth to believe there were witches, but that which happened to my Lord Francis of Rutland's children convinced him, who were bewitched by an old woman who was servant at Belvair Castle; but being displeased she contracted with the devil (who conversed with her in the form of a cat, whom she called Rutterkin) to make away those children out of mere malignity and thirst of revenge.

-- James Howell to Sir Edward Spencer, 1647.

Of Reading

To know how to live by the book is a pedantry and to

do it is a bondage. For both hearers and players are more delighted with voluntary than with set music. And he that will live by precept shall be long without the habit of honesty: as he that would every day gather one or two feathers might become brawn with hard lying before he make a feather bed of his gettings. That Earl of Arundel that last died (that tennis ball whom fortune after tossing and banding brick-walled into the hazard) in his imprisonment used more than much reading, and to him that asked him why he did so he answered he read so much lest he remember something. I am as far from following his counsel as he was from Petruccio's: but I find it true that after long reading I can only tell you how many leaves I have read. I do therefore more willingly blow and keep awake that small coal which God hath pleased to kindle in me than far off to gather a faggot of green sticks which consume without flame or heat in a black smother. Yet I read something. But indeed not so much to avoid as to enjoy idleness.

— John Donne to Sir Henry Wotton (c. 1600).

On Dante

Even when I begun so much to write these I flung away Dante the Italian, a man pert enough to be beloved and too

much to be believed.

-- John Donne to Sir Henry Wotton.

On Authors

So say I of authors, that they think and I think both reasonably yet possibly both erroneously; that is manly.

-- John Donne to Sir Henry Wotton.

"Grains of Salt"

(This passage from a letter to Prince Henry, which was originally intended as a dedicatory letter to Bacon's Essays contains an interesting short comment on them.)

For Seneca's epistles to Lucilius, if one mark them well, are but Essays, that is, dispersed meditations, though conveyed in the form of epistles. . . . But my hope is, they may be as grains of salt, that will rather give you an appetite than offend you with satiety.

-- Francis Bacon to Prince Henry.

The Power of the Pen

Sir,

Epistles, or (according to the word in use) Familiar Letters, may be called the larum bells of love; I hope

this will prove so to you, and have power to awaken you out of that silence wherein you have slept so long; yet I would not have this larum make any harsh obstreperous sound, but gently summon you to our former correspondence; your returns to me shall be like silver trumpets to rouse up my spirits, and make me take pen in hand to meet you more than half way in the old field of friendship.

It is recorded of Galen, one of nature's cabinet clerks, that when he slept his siesta (as the Spaniard calls it), or afternoon sleep, to avoid excess that way, he used to sit in such a posture that having a gold ball in his hand, and a copper vessel underneath, as soon as his senses were shut, and the phantasy began to work, the ball would fall down, the noise whereof would awake him, and draw the spring-lock back again to set the outward sense at liberty. I have seen in Italy a finger-ring which in the boss thereof had a watch, and there was such a trick of art in it that it might be so wound up that it would make a small pin to prick him who wore it at such an hour he pleased in the night. Let the pen between us have the virtue of that pin: but the pen hath a thousand virtues more. You know that answer, apis, vitulus, the goose, the bee, and the calf, do rule the world, the one affording parchment, the other two sealing-wax and the quills to write withal. You know also how the gaggling of geese did once preserve the Capitol from being surprised by my countrymen Brennus, which was the first foreign
force that Rome felt. But the goose quill doth daily
greater things; it conserves empires (and the feathers of
it get kingdoms; witness what exploits the English per-
formed by it in France), the quill being the chiefest
instrument of intelligence, and the ambassador's prime
tool. Nay, the quill is the usefulest thing which pre-
serves that noble virtue, friendship, who else would perish
among men for want of practice.

-- James Howell to Sir James Crofts.

A Literary Compliment

(John Hampton returns the following compliment
to Sir John Eliot on "the papers I had of
you").

That I did see is an exquisite nosegay composed of
curious flowers, bound together with as fine a thread.
But I must in the end expect honey from my friend. Some-
what out of these flowers digested, made his owne, and
givinge a true tast of his owne sweetness.

-- John Hampton to Sir John Eliot, 1631.

A Dedicatory Letter

(This document is curiously interesting for
the military metaphors which it contains. It
first appeared as a dedicatory letter in 1643.)

To my noble Friend and Gossip,
Captaine Richard Lovelace,

Sir,

I have so long bee in your debt, that I was almost desperate in myselfe of making you payment, till this fancy by ravishing from you a new Curtesie in its patronage, promised me it would satisfie part of my former engagements to you. Wonder not to see it invade you on the sudden: Gratitude is aeriall; and like that Element, nimble in its motion and performance; though I would not have this of mine of a French disposition, to charge hotly and retreat unfortunately: there may appeare something in this, that may maintaine the field courageously against Envy, may come off with honour; if you, Sir, please to rest satisfied, that it marches under your Ensignes, which are the desires of

Your true honourer

Hen. Glapthorne.

-- Henry Glapthorne to Richard Lovelace, 1643.

The Publishing Business after the Fire¹

Since the late deplorable conflagration, in which the stationers have been exceedingly ruined, there is like to be an extraordinary penury and scarcity of classic authors, &c., used in grammar schools; so, as of necessity, they must suddenly be reprinted. My Lord may please

to understand that our booksellers follow their own judgment in printing the ancient authors, according to such text as they found extant, when first they entered their copy; whereas, out of the MSS. collated by the industry of later critics, those authors are exceedingly improved. 

The cause of this is principally the stationer driving as hard and cruel a bargain with the printer as he can, and the printer taking up any smatterer in the tongues, to be the less loser; an exactness in this no ways importing the stipulation; by which means errors repeat and multiply in every edition, and that most notoriously in some most necessary school-books of value, which they obtrude upon the buyer, unless men will be at unreasonable rates for foreign editions.

And now towards the removing these causes of the decay of typography, not only as to this particular, but in general, it is humbly proposed to consider whether it might not be expedient: first, that inspection be had what text of the Greek and Latin authors should be followed in future impressions; secondly, that a censor be established to take care and caution of all presses in London, that they be provided with able correctors, principally for the school-books, which are of large and iterated impressions; thirdly, that the charge thereof be advanced by the company, which is but just, and will be easily reimbursed, upon an allowance arising from better
and more valuable copies; since it is but reason that who-
ever builds a house be at the charges of surveying; and if
it stand in relation to the public (as this does), that
he be obliged to it.

-- John Evelyn to Lord Chancellor Clarendon, 1666

A Request for Work

(This letter, probably written in the fall
of 1685, was successful in attaining its object.
The Appeals of Excise were worth only 200 pounds
a year, but Dryden, in his extremity, welcomed
the income.)

My Lord,

I knew not whether my Lord Sunderland has interceded
with your Lordship for half a yeare of my salary; but I
have two other advocates, my extreme wants, even almost
to arresting, and my ill health, which cannot be re-
paired without immediate retirering into the country. A
quarter's allowance is but the Jesuit's powder to my
disease; the fit will return a fortnight hence. If I
durst, I would plead a little merit, and some hazards of
my life from the common enemies; my refusing advantages
offered by them, and neglecting my beneficail studies
for the King's service: but I only think I merit not to
sterve. I never apply'd myselfe to any interest con-
trary to your Lordship's; and on some occasions, perhaps
not known to you, have not been unserviceable to the
memory and reputation of my Lord, your father. After

1. The Works of John Dryden, ed. Sir Walter Scott,
this, my Lord, my conscience assures me, I may write boldly, though I cannot speak to you. I have three sons growing to man's estate; I breed them all up to learning, beyond my fortune; but they are too hopeful to be neglected, though I want. Be pleased to look on me with an eye of compassion. Some small employment would render my condition easy. The King is not unsatisfied of me; the Duke has often promised me his assistance; and your Lordship is the conduit through which they pass, either in the Customs, or the Appeals of the Excise, or some other way, means cannot be wanting, if you please to have the will. 'Tis enough for one age to have neglected Mr. Cowley, and starv'd Mr. Butler; but neither of them had the happiness to live till your Lordship's ministry. In the meantime, be pleased to give me a gracious and speedy answer to my present request of half a year's pension for my necessities. I am going to write somewhat by his Majesty's command, and cannot stir into the country for my health and studies, till I secure my family from want. You have many pensions of this nature, and cannot satisfy all; but I hope, from your goodness, to be made an exception to your general rules, because I am, with all sincerity,

Your Lordship's,
Most obedient humble servant,
John Dryden.

-- John Dryden to Lawrence Hyde, Earl of Rochester.
On Salons

It is in these assemblies, where a select number of learned men, persons of the first quality, not only come to hear, but esteem it an honour to have their ingenious exercises pass the test and censure of so many civil and polished wits. And all the apparatus for this is only the use of one competent room in the gentleman's house, where there are chairs and a table, where the person who declaims, being seated with a little more eminency, like the Roman rostrum, and choosing his subject in prose or verse, recites or reads his composures before the company. ... I need not enlarge to Mr. Pepys the benefit and nobleness of such assemblies, who has himself seen what illustrious persons used to honour Mr. Justell; how many great dukes and blue ribbons, ambassadors, as well as bishops, abbots, presidents, and other learned men and travellers, this brought together into conversation the most humane and obliging in the world; and how exceedingly to be wished some noble and worthy gentleman would give a diversion so becoming and usefully entertaining as it would be. We should not then have so many crude and fulsome rhapsodies imposed upon the English world for genuine wit, language, and the stage, as well as the auditors and spectators, would be purged from things intolerable. It would

inflame, inspire, and kindle another genius and tone of writing, with nervous, natural strength, and beauty, genuine and of our own growth, without always borrowing and filching from our neighbours.

— John Evelyn to Sammel Pepys, 1689.

On Literature

These are from him who lately made you the late visit, and was troublesomely curious concerning Milton, the greatest man that ever rose in civil poetry, nor know I any greater in prose: let Shakespeare live, and let Mr. Cowley not die, wherein he is chaste, but not compared. But still may we not say that poetry has been for the most part divorced from its proper use and end, and obliged to contract strange marriages with vanity and vice, and spend itself in flattery and lying, in confounding the good and the bad, in emptiness and debauch, in saying all that it can say, without any regard to truth or virtue or honour, and that her fall is equal to that of the son of the morning.

— James Quine to John Evelyn, 1694.

"Not of Mortal Race"²

(This amusing and vivid description of

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2. Mrs. Evelyn to Mr. Bobun, 1667.
Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, is contained in Mrs. Evelyn's correspondence. It is typical of the eccentric writer.)

Sir,

I am concerned you should be absent when you might confirm the suffrages of your fellow collegiots, and see the mistress both Universities court; a person who has not her equal possibly in the world, so extraordinary a woman she is in all things. I acknowledge, though I remember her some years since and have not been a stranger to her fame, I was surprised to find so much extravagancy and vanity in any person not confined within four walls. Her habit particular, fantastical, not unbecoming a good shape, which she may truly boast of. Her face discovers the facility of the sex, in being yet persuaded it deserves the esteem years forbid, by the infinite care she takes to place her curls and patches. Her mien surpasses the imagination of poets, or the descriptions of a romance heroine's greatness; her gracious bows, seasonable nods, courteous stretching out of her hands, twinkling of her eyes, and various gestures of approbation, show what may be expected from her discourse, which is as airy, empty, whimsical, and rambling as her books, aiming at science, difficulties, high notions, terminating commonly in nonsense, oaths and obscenity. Her way of address to people, more than necessarily submissive; a certain general form to all, obliging, by repeated affected, generous, kind expressions;
endeavouring to show humility by calling back things past, still to improve her present greatness and favour to her friends. I found Doctor Charlton with her, complimenting her wit and learning in a high manner; which she took to be so much her due that she swore if the schools did not banish Aristotle and ready Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle, they did her wrong, and deserved to be utterly abolished. My part was not yet to speak, but admire; especially hearing her go on magnifying her own generous actions, stately buildings, noble fortune, her lord's prodigious losses in the war, his power, valour, wit, learning, and industry,—what did she not mention to his or her own advantage? Some-times, to give her breath, came in a fresh admirer; then she took occasion to justify her faith, to give an account of her religion, as new and unintelligible as her philosophy, to cite her own pieces line and page in such a book, and to tell the adventures of some of her nymphs. At last I grew weary, and concluded that the creature called a chimera which I had heard speak of, was now to be seen, and that it was time to retire for fear of infection; yet I hope, as she is an original, she may never have a copy. Never did I see a woman so full of herself, so amazingly vain and ambitious. What contrary miracles does this age produce. This lady and Mrs. Phillips! The one transported with the shadow of reason, the other possessed of the substance and insensible of her
treasure; and yet men who are esteemed wise and learned, not only put them in equal balance, but suffer the greatness of the one to weigh down the certain real worth of the other. This is all I can requite your rare verses with; which as much surpass the merit of the person you endeavour to represent, as I can assure you this description falls short of the lady I would make you acquainted with: but she is not of mortal race, and therefore cannot be defined.

M.E.

A Woman's Place

... Women were not born to read authors and censure the learned, to compare lives and judge of virtues, to give rules of morality, and sacrifice to the Muses. We are willing to acknowledge all time borrowed from family duties is misspent; the care of children's education, observing a husband's commands, assisting the sick, relieving the poor, and being serviceable to our friends, are of sufficient weight to employ the most improved capacities amongst us; and if sometimes it happens by accident that one of a thousand aspires a little higher, her fate commonly exposes her to wonder, but adds little of esteem. The distaff will defend our quarrels, as well as the sword, and the needle is as instructive as the pen. A heroine is a kind of prodigy; the influence of a blazing star is not

1. Mrs. Evelyn's correspondence, pp. 31-32.
more dangerous or more avoided.

— Mrs. Evelyn to Mr. Bohun, 1672.

XI. RECREATION AND HOBBIES.

A London Theatre Raid

... On Sunday last at night, and no longer, some
sixteen apprentices (of what sort you shall guess by the
rest of the story) having secretly learnt a new play with­
out book, intituled the Hog hath lost his Pearl, took up
the White-Fryers for their theatre: and having invited
thither (as it would seem) rather their mistresses than
their masters: who were all to enter per bullettni for
a note of distinction from ordinary comedians. Towards
the end of the play the sheriffs (who by chance had heard
of it) came in (as they say) and carried some six or seven
of them to perform the last act at Bridewell; the rest
are fled.

— Sir Henry Wotton to Sir Edmund Bacon,
February 25, 1615, London.

The Burning of the Globe Theatre

Now, to let matters of state sleep, I will entertain

1. Smith, Logan Pearsall, The Life and Letters of Sir
2. Ibid., p. 32.
you at the present with what hath happened this week at the Bank's side. The King's players had a new play, called *All is True*, representing some principal pieces of the reign of Henry VIII, which was set forth with many extraordinary circumstances of pomp and majesty, even to the matting of the stage; the Knights of the Order with their Georges and garters, the Guards with their embroidered coats, and the like: sufficient in truth within a while to make greatness very familiar, if not ridiculous. Now, King Henry making a masque at the Cardinal Wolsey's house, and certain chambers being shot off at his entry, some of the paper, or other stuff, wherewith one of them was stopped, did light on the thatch, where being thought at first but an idle smoke, and their eyes more attentive to the show, it kindled inwardly, and ran round like a train, consuming within less than an hour the whole house to the very grounds.

This was the fatal period of that virtuous fabric, wherein yet nothing did perish but wood and straw, and a few forsaken cloaks; only one man had his breeches set on fire, that would perhaps have boiled him, if he had not by the benefit of a provident wit put it out with a bottle of ale. The rest when we meet; till then, I protest every minute is the siege of Troy.

--- Sir Henry Wotton to Sir Edmund Bacon, July 2, 1615.
Dryden on Drama

After I have confessed thus much of our modern heroic poetry, I cannot but conclude with Mr. Rymer, that our English comedy is far beyond any thing of the ancients: and notwithstanding our irregularities, so is our tragedy. Shakespeare had a genius for it; and we know, in spite of Mr. Rymer, that genius alone is a greater virtue (if I may so call it) than all other qualifications put together.

-- John Dryden to John Dennis.

A New Theatre Custom

This day was played a revived comedy of Mr. Congreve's, called "The Double Dealer," which was never very taking. In the play-bill was printed—"Written by Mr. Congreve; with severall expressions omitted." What kind of expressions these were, you may easily guess, if you have seen the Monday's Gazette, wherein is the king's order for the reformation of the stage: but the printing an author's name in a play-bill is a new manner of proceeding, at least in England.

-- John Dryden to Mrs. Steward.

The Dog Bungay

(One of the most enlightening letters is

2. Ibid., Letter 33.
Although I mean not to disparage the deeds of Alexander's horse, I will match my dogge against him for good carriage, for, if he did not bear a great Prince on his back, I am bolde to saie he did often bear the sweet wordes of a greater Princesse on his neck.

I did once relate to your Highnesse after what sorte his tacklinge was wherewith he did sojourn from my house at the Bathe to Greenwiche Palace, and deliver up to the courtte there such matters as were entrusted to his care. This he hath often done, and came safe to the Bathe, or my house here at Kelstone, with goodlie returnes from such nobilitie as were pleased to emploie him; nor was it ever tolde our Ladie Queene, that this messenger did ever blab aught concerninge his highe truste, as others have done in more special matters. Neither must it be forgotten, as how he once was sente with two charges of sack wine from the Bathe to my howse, by my man Combe; and on his way the cordage did slackene; but my trustie bearer did now bearse himself so wisely as to covertly hide one flasket in the rushes, and take the other in his teethe to the howse; after whiche he wente forthe, and returnede with the other parte of his burden to dinner. Hereat your Highness may perchance marvole and doubte; but we have livinge testimonie of those who wroughte in the fieldes, and espiede his worke, and now live to tell they did much
longe to plaie the dogge, and give stowage to the wine themselves; but they did refrain, and watchede the passage of this whole businesse.

I neede not saie how muche I did once grieve at missinge this dogge; for, on my journeie towards Londonne, some idle pastimers did diverte themselves with huntinge mallards in a ponde, and conveyd him to the Spanish ambassadors, where (in a happy houre) after six weeks I did heare of him; but such was the owrte he did pay to the Don, that he was no lesse in good likinge there then at home. Nor did the householde listen to my claim, or challenge till I rested my suite on the dogges own proofes, and made him performe such feats before the nobles assembled, as put it past doubt that I was his master. I did send him to the hall in the time of dinner, and made him bring thence a pheasant out of the dish, which created much mirth; but much more, when he returnede at my commandment to the table, and put it again in the same cover. Herewith the companie was well content to allow me my claim, and we bothe were well content to accepte it, and came homewards. I coude dwell more on the matter, but jubes renovare dolorem: I will now saie in what manner he died. As we traveld towards the Bathe, he leapede on my horses necke, and more earnestly in fawninge and courtinge my notice, than what I had observed for time backe; and, after my chidinge his disturbinge my passinge
forwardes, he gave me some glances of such affection as moved me to cajole him; but, alas! he crept suddenly into a thorny brake, and died in a short time.

Thus I have strove to rehearse such of his deedes as male suggest much more to your Highnesse thought of this dogge. But, having saide so much of him in prose, I will say somewhat too in verse, as you may finde hereafter at the close of this historie. Now let Ulysses praise his dogge Argus, or Tobite be led by that dogge whose name doth not appear; yet cou'd I say such things of my Bungey, (for so was he styled,) as might shame them both, either for good faith, clean wit, or wonderful deedes; to say no more than I have said, of his bearing letters to London and Greenwiche, more than an hundred miles.

-- Sir John Harington to Prince Henry, Kelston, June 14, 1608.

The Kennels of a King

(This letter to the Duke of Buckingham reveals the monarch's passion for horses and dogs, as well as gives an interesting picture of the customs of sports of the day).

Sweete hairte blessing blessing blessing blessing on my sweet tome badgers hairte rootes and all his, for breiding me so fyne a kennell of yong howndes, some of thaim so faire and well shaped, and some of thaim so fine prettie little

ones as theye are worthie to lye on Steenie and Kates bedde: and all of thaim ranne together in a lumpe, both at sente and use, and God thanke the maister of the horse, for provyding me such a numbre of faire usefull horsis, fitt for my hande; in a worde I proteste I was never maister of suche horses and hawndes; the bearare will tell you quwhat fyne running we hadde yesterdaye. Remember now, to take the aire discretliie and peace and peace, and for Gods sake and myne keeps thyselfe verrie warme, especialli thy heade and thy showlders, putte thy porke of Bewlie to an ende, and love me still and still, and so God blesse thee and my sweete daughter and god-daughter, to the comforthe of thy deare deade.

James R.

Thy olde purveyoure sent theee yesternight six partridges and two levrettis, I am now going to hawke the pheasant.

-- King James I. to the Duke of Buckingham.

Coin Collection

My coynes are encreased since you went I had 60 coynes of King Stephen found in a grave before Christmas, 60 Roman coynes I bought a month agoe, and Sir Robert Paston will send me his box of Saxon and Roman coynes next weke, which are about thirtie, so that I would not buy any there

1: Dr. Browne, Works, p. 391.
except some few choice ones which I have got already; but you doe very well to see all such things, some likely have collections which they will in courtesie show, as also urns and lachrimatories.

-- Dr. Browne to his Son Thomas.

Tiger-Fight in London

London: March 9, 1698-9

Sir,— This day a large tiger was baited by three bear-dogs, one after another. The first dog he killed; the second was a match for him, and sometimes he had the better, sometimes the dog; but the battle was at last drawn, and neither cared for engaging any farther. The third dog had likewise sometimes the better and sometimes the worse of it, and it came also to a drawn battle. But the wisest dog of all was a fourth, that neither by fair means nor foul could be brought to go within reach of the tiger, who was chained in the middle of a large cock-pit. The owner got about 300 for this show, the best seats being a guinea, and the worst five shillings. The tiger used his paws very much to cuff his adversaries with, and sometimes would exert his claws, but not often, using his jaws most, and aiming at under or upper sides of the neck, where wounds are dangerous. He had a fowl given

him alive, which, by means of his feet and mouth, he very artfully first plucked and then eat; the feathers, such as got into his mouth, being troublesome. The remainders of his drink in which he has lapped, is said by his keeper to kill dogs and other animals that drink after him, being by his foam made poisonous and ropy. I hope you will pardon this tedious narration, because I am apt to think it is very rare that such a battle happens, or such a fine tiger is seen here.

-- Sir Hans Sloane to John Ray.

XII. LOVE AND MARRIAGE.

A dissuasion from Love

(The following letter is typical of the debonair philosophy of Sir John Suckling, and was written to a friend attempting to turn his course to new paths.)

Jack,— Though your disease be in the number of those that are better cured with time than precept, yet since it is lawful for every man to practice upon them that are forsaken and given over, which I take to be your state, I will adventure to prescribe to you; and of the innocence of the physic you shall not need to doubt, since I can assure you I take it daily myself.

To begin methodically, I should enjoin you travel;

for absence doth in a kind remove the cause, removing the
object, and answers the physician's first recipes, vomit-
ing and purging; but this would be too harsh, and indeed
not agreeing to my way. I therefore advise you to see
her as often as you can, for, besides that the rarity of
visits endears them, this may bring you to surprise her
and to discover little defects which, though they cure
not absolutely, yet they qualify the fury of the fever.
As near as you can, let it be unseasonably, when she is
in sickness and disorder; for that will let you know she
is mortal, and a woman, and the last would be enough to
a wise man. If you could draw her to discourse of things
she understands not, it would not be amiss.

Contrive yourself often into the company of the cried-
up beauties; for if you read but one book, it will be no
wonder if you speak or write that style; variety will
breed distraction, and that will be a kind of diverting
the humor. . . .

I would have you leave that foolish humor, Jack, of
saying you are not in love with her and pretending you care
not for her; for smothered fires are dangerous, and malicious
humors are best and safest vented and breathed out. Con-
tinue your affection to your rival still; that will secure
you from one way of loving, which is in spite; and preserve
your friendship with her woman; for who knows but she may
help you to the remedy?
A jolly glass and right company would much conduce to the sure; for though in the Scripture (by the way, it is but Apocrypha) woman is resolved stronger than wine, yet whether it will be so or not when wit is joined to it, may prove a fresh question.

Marrying, as our friend the late ambassador hath wit-tily observed, would certainly cure it; but that is a kind of live pigeons laid to the soles of the feet, a last remedy, and, to say truth, worse than the disease.

-- Sir John Suckling.

In the Shadow of Death

(Lady Arabella stood next in line of succession to James I, her cousin, and a considerable party urged her claims in preference to his. Forbidden to marry William Seymour, son of the heiress of the Suffolk line, she solemnly promised not to marry without the king's consent. Several months later they did marry, with the resultant imprisonment which ended with her death.)

No separation but that deprives me of the comfort of you. For wheresoever you be, or in what state soever you are, it sufficeth me that you are mine! Rachel wept and would not be comforted, because her children were no more. And that, indeed, is the remediless sorrow, and none else!

-- Lady Arabella Stuart to William Seymour.

Platonic Love

The court affords little news at present, but that there is a love called Platonic love, which much aways there of late; it is a love abstracted from all corporeal gross impressions and sensual appetite, but consists in contemplations and ideas of the mind, not in any carnal fruition. This love sets the wits of the town on work; and they say there will be a Mask shortly of it, whereof Her Majesty and her Maids of Honour will be part.


A Love Letter on a Handkerchief

Madam,

The handkercher I receaved fro Mi Vane having so near resemblance to a dream, wch presents us with a mixture of things that have no affinitye one with another, I have (as the Assirian kings did wth their dreams) consulted with all the magicians & cunning woemen in our countrie, & though it be easie to see through it, I finde none that can enterpret it; I am sending it to Oxford to tho Astrologers to know eyf there be any constellations or yngures in the upper Globe to woh those in the 4 corners may allude, for on Earth the Herball tells us of nothing like them:

I did first apprehend it was as a potent charme, having

1. The Age Revealed, p. 146.
power like the wand of Oyroe, to transform me into some strange shape but the crosses in the middle persuading me it was a good Christian handkercher I ventured to wipe my face with it, when the golden fringe with a rough salute told me it was for some nobler use: Madam, I beseech your Lat use your interest in hir to unriddle the handkercher wch so perplexes us. I am sorry that a Ladie of so various a phansye hath not the power of framing living things too, that we might behold some new compositions and kindes of things woh dull nature never thought of: seriously (Madam) I humbly kiss hir hands for this favor, wch not being to be wasted by use, I shall eternally keepe for hir sake, and doe presume shee will pardon this rambling acknowledgement made in imitation of the style of hir handkercher: by Madam) Yr Lps most humble servant

Edm. Wallter

--- Edmund Wallter to Lady Dorothy Sidney.

Love Letter¹

(The affair of Dorothy Osborne and Sir William Temple is told in her letters and is as wholly a romance as can be found in the pages of fiction. The following letter is typical of Dorothy at her best.)

Sir, -- You say I abuse you; and Jane says you abuse me when you say you are not melancholy. Which is to be

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¹. The Letters of Dorothy Osborne, pp. 163-6.
believed? Neither, I think; for I could not have said so positively (as it seems she did) that I should not be in town till my brother came back; he was not gone when she writ, nor is not yet; and if my brother Peyton had come before his going, I had spoiled for prediction. But now it cannot be; for he goes on Monday or Tuesday at farthest. I hope you deal truly with me, too, in saying that you are not melancholy (though she does not believe it). I am thought so, many times, when I am not at all guilty on't. How often do I sit in company a whole day, and when they are gone am not able to give an account of six words that was said, and many times could be so much better pleased with the entertainment my own thoughts give me, that 'tis all I can do to be so civil as not to let them see they trouble me. This may be your disease. However, remember you have promised me to be careful of yourself, and that if I secure what you have entrusted me with, you will answer for the rest. Be this our bargain then and look that you give me as good an account of one as I shall give you of t'other. In earnest, I was strangely vexed to see myself forced to disappoint you so, and felt your trouble and my own too. How often have I wished myself with you, though but for a day, for an hour: I would have given all the time I am to spend here for it with all my heart.

You could not but have laughed if you had seen me
last night. My brother and Mr. Gibson were talking by
the fire; and I sat by, but as no part of the company.
Amongst other things (which I did not at all mind), they
fell into a discourse of flying; and both agreed that it
was very possible to find out a way that people might
fly like birds, and despatch their journeys so: I, that
had not said a word all night, started up at that, and
desired they would say a little more in it, for I had
not marked the beginning; but instead of that, they both
came into so violent a laughing, that I should appear so
much concerned in such an act; but they little knew of
what use it might have been to me. Yet I saw you last
night, but 'twas in a dream; and before I could say a
word to you, or you to me, the disorder my joy to see you
had put me into waked me. Just now I was interrupted, too,
and called away to entertain two dumb gentlemen;—you
may imagine whether I was pleased to leave my writing to
you for their company;—they have made such a tedious
visit, too; and I am so tired with making of signs and
tokens for everything I had to say. Good God! how do those
that live always with them? They are brothers; and the
eldest is a baronet, has a good estate, a wife and three
or four children. He was my servant heretofore, and comes
to see me still for old love's sake; but if he could have
made me mistress of the world I could not have had him;
and yet I'll swear he has nothing to be disliked in him
but his want of tongue, which in a woman might have been a virtue.

I sent you a part of Cyrus last week, where you will meet with one Doralice in the story of Abradate and Panthee. The whole story is very good; but her humour makes the best part of it. I am of her opinion in most things that she says in her character of "D8honest homme" that she is in search of, and her resolution of receiving no heart that had been offered to anybody else...

I have sent you my picture because you wished for it; but, pray, let it not presume to disturb my Lady Sunderland's. Put it in some corner where no eyes may find it out but yours, to whom it is only intended. 'Tis no very good one, but the best I shall ever have drawn of me; for, as my Lady says, my time for pictures is past, and therefore I have always refused to part with this, because I was sure the next would be a worse. There is a beauty in youth that everybody has once in their lives; and I remember my mother used to say there was never anybody (that was not deformed) but were handsome, to some reasonable degree, once between fourteen and twenty. It must hang with the light on the left hand of it; and you may keep it if you please till I bring you the original.

-- Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple.
(Thomas Otway, who, after the success of Venice Preserved became the first tragic poet, entertained a hopeless love for Mrs. (Miss) Barry, the famous actress, who kept him in suspense for seven years. This letter was doubtless written at the close of this period.)

Could I see you without passion, or be absent from you without pain, I need not beg your pardon for thus renewing my vows that I love you more than health, or any happiness here or hereafter. Everything you do is a new charm to me, and though I have languished for seven long tedious years of desire, jealously despairing, yet every minute I see you, I still discover something new and more bewitching. Consider how I love you; what would I not renounce or enterprise for you? I must have you mine, or I am miserable, and nothing but knowing which shall be the happy hour can make the rest of my years that are to come tolerable. Give me a word or two of comfort, or resolve never to look with common goodness on me more, for I cannot bear a kind look and after it a cruel denial. This minute my heart aches for you; and, if I cannot have a right in yours, I wish it would ache till I could complain to you no longer.

Remember poor Otway.

-- Thomas Otway to Madam Barry (1682).

XIII. ANECDOTE AND STORY.

The Story of the Pied Piper

Sir,

I saw such prodigious things daily done these few years, that I had resolved with my self to give over wondering at any thing; yet a passage happen'd this week, that forc'd me to wonder once more, because it is without parallel. It was, that som odd fellows went shuffling up and down London streets, and with figs and with reasons allure'd little children, and so pourloyn'd them away from their parents, and carried them a shipboard far beyond sea, where by cutting their hair, and other devices, they so disguis'd them, that their parents could not know them.

This made me think upon that miraculous passage in Hamelen a town in Germany, which I hop'd to have pass'd through when I was in Hamburgh, had we return'd by Holland; which was thus (nor would I relate it unto you, were not there som ground of truth for it). The said town of Hamelen was annoyed with rats and mice; and it chanc'd that a pied-coated piper came thither, who covenant'd with the chief burgers for such a reward, if he could free them quite from the said vermin, nor would he demand it, till a twelve-month and a day after: The agreement being made,

he began to play on his pipes, and all the rats, and the mice, followed him to a great laugh hard by, where they all perish'd; so the town was infested no more. At the end of the year, the pied piper return'd for his reward, the burgers put him off with slightings, and neglect, offering him some small matter, which he refusing, and staying some days in the town, one Sunday morning at high-masse, when most people were at church, he fell to play on his pipes, and all the children up and down, followed him out of the town, to a great hill not far off, which rent in two, and open'd, and let him and the children in, and so closed up again; this happen'd a matter of two hundred and fifty years since (A.D. 1643 - 250 equals 1393 A.D.); and in that town, they date their bills and bonds, and other instruments in law, to this day from the year of the going out of their children: besides, there is a great piller of stone at the foot of the said hill, whereon this story is engraven.

No more now, for this is enough in conscience for one time: So I am your most affectionate servitor,

J. H.

-- James Howell to Mr. E. P., 1643.

An Unusual Wedding

Madam,—

You are very good, and pray continue so, by as many

1. Mumby, op. cit., p. 103.
kind messages as you can, and notices of your health, such as the bearer brings you bask my thanks for, and a thousand services. Here's a sad town, and God knows when it will be a better, our losses at sea making a very melancholy exchange at both ends of it; the gentlewomen of this (to say nothing of the other) sitting with their arms across, without a yard of muslin in their shops to sell, while the ladies, they tell me, walk pensively by without a shilling, I mean a good one, in their pockets to buy. One thing there is, indeed, that comes in my ways as a Governor to hear of, which carries a little mirth with it, and indeed is very odd. Two wealthy citizens are lately dead, and left their estates, one to a Blue-Coat boy, and the other to a Blue-Coat girl, in Christs Hospital. The extraordinariness of which has led some of the magistrates to carry it on to a match, which is ended in a public wedding; he in his habit of blue satin, led by two of the girls, and she in blue, with an apron green, and petticoat yellow, all of sorsnet, led by two of the boys of the house through Cheapside to Guildhall Chapel, where they were married by the Dean of St. Paul's, she given by my Lord Mayor. The wedding-dinner, it seems was kept in the Hospital Hall; but the great day will be to-morrow, St. Matthew's, when, so much I am sure of, my Lord Mayor will be there, and myself also have had a ticket of invitation thither, and if I can will be there too; but for the
other particulars I must refer you to my next, and so,

Dear Madam, adieu,

S. P.

Bow bells are just now ringing, ding dong, but whether for this, I cannot presently tell; but it is likely enough, for I have known them ring upon much foulisher occasions, and lately too.

— Samuel Pepys to Mrs. Steward, 1695.

The Story of the White Bird

I can tell you of a strange thing I saw lately here, and I believe it is true. As I passed by St. Dunstan's in Fleet Street the other Saturday, I stepped into a lapidary or stone-cutter's shop to treat with the master for a stone to be put upon my father's tomb; and casting my eyes up and down, I might spy a huge marble with a large inscription upon it, which was thus to my best remembrance:

Here lies John Oxenham, a goodly young man, in whose chamber, as he was struggling with the pangs of death, a bird with a white breast was seen fluttering about his head, and so vanished.

Here lies also Mary Oxenham, the sister of the said John, who died the next day, and the same apparition was seen in the room.

Then another sister is spoke of. Then,

Here lies hard by James Oxenham, the son of the said John, who died a child in his cradle a little after, and such a bird was seen fluttering about his head a little before he expired, which vanished afterwards.

At the bottom of the stone there is.

Here lies Elizabeth Oxenham, the mother of the said John, who died sixteen years since, when such a bird with a white breast was seen about her head before her death.

To all these there be divers witnesses, both squires and ladies, whose names are engraven upon the stone. This stone is to be sent to a town hard by Exeter where this happened.

— James Howell to Mr. E. D., 1632.

Conspiracy on a Coach

My journey to London was yet more unpleasant than my abode at Tichmarsh; for the coach was crowded up with an old woman fatter than any of the hostesses on the rode. Her weight made the horses travel very heavily; but, to give them a breathing time, she would often stop us, and plead some necessity of nature, and tell us we were all

flesh and blood; but she did this so frequently, that at
last we conspir'd against her; and that she might not be
inconvenience'd by staying in the coach, turn'd her out in
a very dirty place, where she was to wade up to the ankles,
before she cou'd reach the next hedge.

-- John Dryden to Mrs. Steward.

Madmen and Fools

I remember poor Nat. Lee, who was then upon the verge
of madness, yet made a sober and a witty answer to a bad
poet, who told him, "It was an easie thing to write like
a madman:" "No," said he, "it is very difficult to write
like a madman, but it is a very easie matter to write like
a fool."

-- John Dryden to John Dennis

Henry IV and Marie de Medici

He (Henry IV) was so desirous and hasty to see his
Queen that he went disguised as a private gentleman, with
others (that he had appointed), to see her dine, and
caused a letter from himself to be delivered her in his
presence (unknown yet), which she received with such humbleness that it was praised of everybody and pleased him not

XVIII, Letter 11.
2. The Five Hundred Best English Letters, edit. First
Earl of Birkenhead, op. cit., p. 54.
a little. He could not tarry the solemnity, but went that night to her unknown, and one of his minions demanding what he meant, told him he went to do what he never did in his life, to lie that night with an honest woman.

-- John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, 1600.

XIV. CABBAGES AND KINGS.

The Waters at Epsom

However, I cannot but wish you had stayed longer at Epsom and drunk the waters with more order though in a less proportion. But did you drink them immediately from the well? I remember I was forbid it, and methought with a great deal of reason, for (especially at this time of year) the well is so low, and there is such a multitude to be served out on't, that you can hardly get any but what is thick and troubled; and I have marked that when it stood all night (for that was my direction) the bottom of the vessel it stood in would be covered an inch thick with a white clay, which, sure, has no great virtue in't, and is not very pleasant to drink.

-- Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple.

1. The Letters of Dorothy Osborne, p. 130.
Oyster-Fishing

Your sister tells me that they have plente of large oysters, like Burnham oysters, about Guernsey, and all those rocky seas to St. Mallowes, and have a peculiar way of disposing and selling of them, that they are not decayed or flatt before they bee eaten. They bring them into the haven in vessells that may containe vast quantities, and when they come at a competent distance from the peers head, they anker and cast all the oysters overboard into the sea; and when the tide goeth away, and the ground bare, the people come to buy them, and the owners stand on drye ground and sell them. When the tide comes in, the buyers retire, and come agayne at the next ebbe, and buy them agayne, and so every ebbe till they bee all souled. So the oysters are kept lively, and well tasted, being so often under the salt sea water, and if they had a vessell of a hundred tunne full they might sell them while they were good, being thus ordered although it should take sometime to sell them all. This seems a good contrivance, and such as I have not heard of in England.

-- Sir Thomas Browne to his son Edward, 1682.

A Windstorm in England

On Tuesday night we had a violent wind, which blew

down three of my chimneys, and dismantled all one side of
my house, by throwing down the tiles. My neighbors, and
indeed all the town, suffer'd more or less; and some were
killed. The great trees in St. James's Park are many of
them torn up from the roots; as they were before Oliver
Cromwell's death, and the late queen's; but your father
had no damage.

— John Dryden to Mrs. Steward

February 9th, 1698, Thursday.

The Mines of Gottenberg

Gottenberg, or Oottenborg, is eight Bohemian miles
from Prague. They have worked here seven hundred years;
there are about thirty mines. I went down into that which
was first digged, but was afterwards left for a long time;
but now they dig there again. It is called the Cotna,
auff der Gotten, upon the Cotten or Coate hill. A monke
walking over this hill found a silver tree sticking to
his coate, which was the occasion that they afterwards
built these mines, and the place retains this name of
Gottenberg.

— Dr. Edward Browne to his father.

A Lost Crown Found

And lastly, the Crown of Hungaris has been recovered,

which the Emperor Matthias did transport to the castle of Presburg, after the deposition of Rudolph, his brother, who always kept it in the castle of Pragues.

-- Sir Henry Wotton to ________, October 1620.

A Literary Curiosity

(This characteristic, somewhat vulgar composition was dictated by Nell Gwynne, who could not write herself. As a literary curiosity we include it in our group of interesting letters.)

Pray Deare Mr. Hide forgive me for not writeing to you before now for the reasons is I have bin sick thre months and since I recovered I have had nothing to intertaine you withall nor I have nothing now worth writing but that I can holde no longer to let you know I never have ben in any companie without drinking your health for I love you with all my soule. The Pel Mel is now to me a dismale place since I have utterly lost Sr Car. Soupe never to be recovrd agane. Mrs. Knights Lady mothers dead & she has put up a southen no beiger then my Lady Grins souchins. My lord Rochester is gon in the countrie. Mr. Savil has got a misfortune, but is upon recovery & is to marry an hairres, who I thinke wont have an ill time on't if he holds up his thumb. My lord of Dorsoit apiers

Worse in these months, for he drinkes aile with Shadwell and Mr. Harris at the Dukes house all day long. My Lord Burford remembers his servis to you. My Lord Banoeaire is going into france. we are a going to suppe with the king at Whithall & my lady Harvie. The king remembers his servis to you. now lets talke of state affairs, for we never caried things so cunningly as now for we dont know whether we shall have peace or war, but I am for war and for no other reason but that you may come home. I have a thousand merry conceits, but I cant make her write um & therefore you must take the will for the deed. good bye. your most loveing obedient faithfull humbel Ser vant

R.G.

— Nell Gwynne to Lawrence Hyde (Probably 1676).

Some New Inventions

I send you herewith two printed caps, a triangular salt-cellar, and the top of an amber ring. The caps is a pretty fresh invention of a very easy rate, for they will run shortly at some sixpence apiece, and they say the sale is monopolized by a woman at Amsterdam; which may come to some pretty perfection in the ornament of curtains and valences of veds, or in some fine historified table-cloth

for a banquet, or the like. In the invention of the salt-
cellar you have an interest yourself; for I remember, Sir,
you showed me a whole furniture of marble salt-cellers for
a table of your bespeaking. But there is one that hath
only gone beyond you in the chapness of the material; for
this which you now receive is but of seacoal, and it is
strange to see what a polishment so base a stuff doth take,
like the ennobling of a clown. To the broken ring there
belongs a little more discourse. I bought it for a trifle
in Lombard Street long since, because it had a fly en-
tombed in the sealing part; which, if it had been precisely
in the middle, would have showed like the sculpture
of the signet itself. Now a while since, by a fall from
a table to the ground it brake, though in a boarded room;
whereupon there fell a conceit into my mind that the ring
was artificial amber, and not natural; as indeed my servant
Giovanni and I have since plainly discovered.

Let me add to these a strange thing to be seen in
London for a couple of pence, which I know not whether I
should call a piece of art or nature; it is an Englishman,
like some swabbor of a ship come from the Indies, where
he hath learned to eat fire as familiarly as ever I saw
any eat cakes, even whole glowing brands, which he will
crash with his teeth and swallow. I believe he hath been
hard famished in the Terra de Fuego, on the south of the
Magellan strait.

-- Sir Henry Motton to Sir Edmund Bacon, June 3, 1633.

Tom Browne to a Lady who Smoked Tobacco

(Tom Browne, facetious scribbler, forfeited a position as schoolmaster at Kingston-on-Thames to become a 'merry fellow' in London.)

Madam,— Though the ill-natured world censures you for smoking, yet I would advise you, madam, not to part with so innocent a diversion. In the first place, it is healthful; and, as Galen rightly observes, it is a sovereign remedy for the toothache, the constant persecutor of old ladies. Secondly, tobacco, though it be a heathenish weed, it is a great help to Christian meditations; which is the reason, I suppose, that recommends it to your parsons, the generality of whom can no more write a sermon without a pipe in their mouths, than a concordance in their hands; besides, every pipe you break may serve to put you in mind of mortality, and show you upon what slender accidents man's life depends. I knew a dissenting minister who, on fast-days, used to mortify upon a rump of beef, because it put him, as he said, in mind that all flesh was grass; but, I am sure, much more is to be learnt from tobacco. It may instruct you that riches, beauty, and

all the glories of the world, vanish like a vapour.

Thirdly, it is a pretty plaything. Fourthly, and lastly, it is fashionable, at least 'tis in a fair way to become so. Cold tea, you know, has been a long while in reputation at court, and the gill as naturally ushers in the pipe, as the sword-bearer walks before the lord mayor.

The New Weed

(Sir John Earington, after visiting with King James I, accounts this opinion in a letter.)

I did forget to tell, that his Majestie muche askede concerning my opinion of the new weede tobacco, and said "it would, by its use, infuse ill qualities on the braine, and that no lernede man ought to taste it, and wishede it forbidden."

-- Sir John Harington to Sir Amias Paulet, 1603.

The Youth of the Times

'Tis strange to see the folly that possesses the young people of this age, and the liberties they take to themselves. I have the charity to believe they appear very much worse than they are, and that the want of a Court to govern themselves by is in great part the cause of their ruin; though that was no perfect school of virtue, yet Vice

2. The Letters of Dorothy Osborne, p. 207.
there wore her mask, and appeared so unlike herself that she gave no scandal. Such as were really as discreet as they seemed to be gave good example, and the eminency of their condition made others strive to imitate them, or at least they durst not own a contrary course. All who had good principles and inclinations were encouraged in them, and such as had neither were forced to put on a handsome disguise that they might not be out of countenance at themselves. 'Tis certain (what you say) that where divine or human laws are not positive we may be our own judges; nobody can hinder us, nor is it in itself to be blamed. But, sure, it is not safe to take all the liberty that is allowed us—there are not many that are sober enough to be trusted with the government of themselves; and because others judge us with more severity than our indulgence to ourselves will permit, it must necessarily follow that 'tis safer being ruled by their opinion than by our own. I am disputing again, though you told me my fault so plainly.

-- Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple.

St. Valentine's Day

And hark you, can you tell whether the gentleman that lost a crystal box the 15th of February in St. James' Park or Old Spring Garden has found it again or not, I

1. The Letters of Dorothy Osborne, pp. 214-5.
have a strange curiosity to know? Tell me, and I'll tell you something that you don't know, which is, that I am your Valentine and you are mine. I did not think of drawing any, but Mrs. Goldsmith and Jane would need make me write some for them and myself; so I wrote down our three names, and for men, Mr. Fish, James B., and you. I cut them all equal and made them up myself before they saw them, and because I would owe it wholly to my good fortune, if I were pleased, I made them choose first that had never seen what was in them, and they left me you. Then I made them choose again for theirs, and my name was left. You cannot imagine how I was delighted with this little accident, but by taking notice that I cannot forbear telling you it. I was not half so pleased with my encounter next morning. I was up early, but with no design of getting another Valentine, and going out to walk in my night-clothes and night-gown, I met Mr. Fish going a hunting. I think he was; but he stayed to tell me I was his Valentine; and I should not have been rid of him quickly, if he had not thought himself a little too negligent; his hair was not powdered, and his clothes were but ordinary; to say truth, he looked then methought like other mortal people. Yet he was as handsome as your Valentine. I'll swear you wanted one when you took her, and had very ill fortune that nobody met you before her. Oh, if I had not terrified my little gentleman when he brought me his own letter,
how sure I had had him for my Valentine!

-- Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple.

XV. RAMBLING MEDITATIONS.

How Bishop Hall spends his Days

Every day is a little life; and our whole life is but a day repeated; whence it is, that old Jacob numbers his life by days; and Moses desires to be taught this point of holy arithmetic—To number, not his years, but his days. Those, therefore, that dare lose a day are dangerously prodigal; those that dare mispend it, desperate.

We can best teach others by ourselves: let me tell your lordship how I would pass my days, whether common or sacred; that you, or whosoever others overhearing me, may either approve my thriftiness or correct my errors. To whom is the account of my hours either more due or more known?

All days are his who gave time a beginning and continuance: yet some he hath made ours; not to command, but to use. In none may we forget him: in some, we must forget all besides him.

First, therefore, I desire to awake at those hours, not when I will, but when I must: pleasure is not a fit
rule for rest, but health: neither do I consult so much with the sun as mine own necessity, whether of body, or, in that of the mind. If the vassal could well serve me waking, it should never sleep; but now, it must be pleased, that it may be serviceable.

Now, when sleep is rather driven away than leaves me, I would ever awake with God. My first thoughts are for him, who hath made the night for rest and the day for travel; and, as he gives, so blesses both. If my heart be early seasoned with his presence, it will savour of him all day after.

While my body is dressing, not with an effeminate curiosity, nor yet with rude neglect, my mind addresses itself to her ensuing task; bethinking what is to be done, and in what order: and marshalling, as it may, my hours with my work.

That done, after some while meditation, I walk up to the masters and companions, my books; and, sitting down amongst them, with the best contentment, I dare not reach forth my hand to salute any of them till I have first looked up to heaven, and craved favour of Him to whom all my studies are duly referred, without whom I can neither profit nor labour. After this, out of no over-great variety, I call forth those which may best fit my occasions; wherein I am not too scrupulous of age; sometimes, I put myself to school to one of the ancients whom the Church hath honoured
with the name of Fathers.

Ere I can have sat unto weariness, my family, having now overcome all household distractions, invites me to our common devotions, not without some short preparation.

Now therefore can I deceive the hours with change of pleasures, that is, of labours. One while, mine eyes are busied; another while, my hand; and sometimes my mind takes the burden from them both; wherein I would imitate the skilfullest cooks, which make the best dishes with manifold mixtures. One hour is spent in textual divinity; another, in controversy: histories relieve them both.

Before my meals, therefore, and after, I let myself loose from all thoughts: and now, would forget that I ever studied. A full mind takes away the body's appetite, no less than a full body makes a full and unwieldy mind. Company, discourse, recreations, are now seasonable and welcome.

And now the evening is come, no tradesman doth more carefully take in his wares, clear his shopboard, and shut his windows, than I would shut up my thoughts and clear my mind. That student shall live miserably, which, like a camel, lies down under his burden. All this done, calling together my family, we end the day with God. Thus do we rather drive away the time before us, than follow it.

-- Joseph Hall to Lord Denny.
Joseph Hall on Study

I can wonder at nothing more than how a man can be idle; but, of all other, a scholar, in so many improvements of reason, in such sweetness of knowledge, in such variety of studies, in such importunity of thoughts.

Other artisans do but practise; we, still learn; others run still in the same gyre, to weariness, to saiety; our choice is infinite; our labours require recreations; our very labour recreates our sports: we can never want, either somewhat to do, or somewhat that we would do...

And if once cloyed with our own company, the door of conference is open; here, interchange of discourse, besides pleasure, benefits us; and he is a weak companion from whom we return not wiser.

...

Besides, the way to all other contentments is troublesome; the only recompense is in the end. To delve in the mines, to scorch in the fire, for the getting, for the fining of gold, is a slavish toil; the comfort is in the wedge; to the owner, not the labourers; where our very search of knowledge is delightsome. Study itself is our life, from which we would not be barred for a world; how much sweeter than is the fruit of study, the conscience of knowledge! in comparison whereof, the soul that hath once

tasted it easily contemns all human comforts.

Go now, ye worldlings, and insult over our paleness, our neediness, our neglect. Ye could not be so jovial if you were not ignorant; if you did not want knowledge, you could not overlook him that hath it. For me, I am so far from emulating you, that I profess, I would as lief be a brute beast as an ignorant rich man.

How is it, then, that those gallants, which have privilege of blood and birth, and better education, do so scornfully turn off these most manly, reasonable, noble exercises of scholarship? An hawk becomes their fist better than a book; no dog, but is a better companion; any thing, or nothing, rather than what we ought.

-- Joseph Hall to Mr. Matthew Milward.

On Seasons

Because I am in a place and season where I see everything bud forth, I must do so too, and vent some of my meditations to you; the rather because all other buds being yet without taste or virtue, my letters may be like them. The pleasantness of the season displeases me. Everything refreshes, and I wither, and I grow older and not better, my strength diminishes, and my load grows, and being to pass more and more storms, I find that I have

not only cast out all my ballast which nature and time gives, reason and discretion, and so am as empty and light as vanity can make me.

... ...

Sir, I was willing to let you see how impotent a man you love, not to dishearten you from doing so still (for my vices are not infections, nor wandering, they came not yesterday, nor mean to go away today; they inn not, but dwell in me, and see themselves so welcome...).

-- John Donne to Sir Henry Goodyer.

Love and Friendship

Sir,... In my opinion you do not understand the laws of friendship right. 'Tis generally believed it owes its birth to an agreement and conformity of humours, and that it lives no longer than 'tis preserved by the mutual care of those that bred it. 'Tis wholly governed by equality, and can there be such a thing in it, as a distinction of power? No, sure, if we are friends we must both command and both obey alike, indeed a mistress and a servant, sounds otherwise, but that is ceremony and this is truth. Yet what reason had I to furnish you with a stick to beat myself withal, or desire that you should command, that do it so severely? I must eat fruit no longer than I could be content you should be in a fever,—is not that an

1. Letters of Dorothy Osborne, pp. 121-2.
absolute forbidding it me? It has frightened me just now from a basket of the most tempting cherries that e'er I saw, though I know you did not mean I should eat none, but if you had I think I should have obeyed you. . . . I know 'tis a fault in any one to be mastered by a passion, and of all passions love is perhaps the least pardonable in a woman, but when 'tis mingled with gratitude 'tis sure the less to be blamed.

-- Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple.

On Contentment

But I am chiefly of your opinion that contentment (which the Spanish proverb says is the best paint) gives the lustre to all one's enjoyment, puts a beauty upon things which without it would have none, increases it extremely where 'tis already in some degree, and without it, all that we call happiness besides loses its property. What is contentment, must be left to every particular person to judge for themselves, since they only know what is so to them which differs in all according to their several humours. Only you and I agree 'tis to be found by us in a true friend, a moderate fortune, and a retired life; the last I thank God I have in perfection. My cell is almost finished, and when you come back you'll find me in

I. The Letters of Dorothy Osborne, p. 212.
it, and bring me both the rest I hope.

—Dorothy Osborne to Sir William Temple.

Of Virtue

He is not virtuous, out of whose actions you can pick an excellent one. Vice and her fruits may be seen, because they are thick bodies, but not virtue, which is all light; and vices have swellings and fits, and noise, because being extreme, they dwell far asunder, and they maintain both a foreign war against virtue, and a civil against one another, and affect sovereignty, as virtue doth society. The later physicians say, that when our natural inborn preservative is corrupted or wasted, and must be restored by a like extracted from other bodies; the chief care is that the mummy have in it no excelling quality, but an equally digested temper.

And such is true virtue. But men have preferred money before all, think they deal honourably with virtue if they compare her with money; and think that as money is not called base till the allow exceed the pure; so they are virtuous enough if they have enough to make their actions current, which is, if either they get praise, or (in a lower abasing) if they incur not infamy or penalty....

.... For as plentiful springs are fittest, and

become large aqueducts, so doth much virtue such a steward and officer as a Christian.

-- John Donne to Sir Henry Goodyer.

"Rambling Meditations"¹

... So having got into a close field, I cast my face upwards, and fell to consider what a rare prerogative the optic virtue of the eye hath, much more the intuitive virtue in the thought, that the one in a moment can reach heaven, and the other go beyond it; therefore sure that a philosopher was but a kind of frantic fool, that would have plucked out both his eyes, because they were a hindrance to his speculations. Moreover, I began to contemplate, as I was in this posture, the vast magnitude of the universe, and what proportion this poor globe of earth might bear with it; for if those numberless bodies which stick in the vast roof of heaven, though they appear to us but as spangles, be some of them thousands of times bigger than the earth, take the sea with it to boot, for they both make but one sphere, surely the astronomers had reason to term this sphere an indivisible point, and a thing of no dimension at all, being compared to the whole world. I fell then to think, that at the second general destruction, it is no more for God Almighty to fire this

¹. Four Centuries of English Letters, ed. W. Baptiste Socones, op. cit., pp. 77-78.
earth, than for us to blow up a small squib, or rather one small grain of gunpowder. As I was musing thus, I spied a swarm of gnats waving up and down the air about me, which I knew to be part of the universe as well as I: and methought it was a strange opinion of our Aristotle to hold, that the least of those small insected ephemerais should be more noble than the sun, because it had a sensitive soul in it. I fell to think that in the same proportion which those animalillios bore with me in point of bigness, the same I hold with those glorious spirits which are near the throne of the Almighty. What then should we think of the magnitude of the Creator himself? Doubtless, it is beyond the reach of any human imagination to conceive it: in my private devotions I presume to compare him to a glorious mountain of light, and my soul seems to discern some glorious form therein; but suddenly as she would fix her eyes upon the object, her sight is presently dazzled and disaggregated with the refulgence and coruscations thereof.

Walking a little further I spied a young boisterous bull breaking over the hedge and ditch to a herd of kine in the next pasture; which made me think, that if that fierce, strong animal, with others of that kind, knew their own strength, they would never suffer man to be their master. Then looking upon them quietly grazing up and down, I fell to consider that the flesh which is daily dished upon
our tables is but concocted grass, which is recarnified in
our stomachs, and transmuted to another flesh. I fell
also to think, what advantages those innocent animals had
of man, who as soon as nature cast them into the world,
find their meat dressed, the cloth laid, and the table
covered; they find their drink brewed, and the buttery
open, their beds made, and their clothes ready; and though
man hath the faculty of reason to make him a compensation
for the want of those advantages, yet this reason brings
with it a thousand perturbations of mind and perplexities
of spirit, gripping cares and anguishes of thought, which
those harmless silly creatures are exempted from. Going
on I came to repose myself upon the trunk of a tree, and
I fell to consider further what advantage that dull
vegetable had of those feeding animals, as not to be
so troublesome and beholden to nature, nor to be subject
to starving, to diseases, to the inclemency of the weather,
and to be far longer-lived. Then I spied a great stone,
and sitting a-while upon it, I fell to weigh in my thoughts
that that stone was in a happier condition in some respects,
than either of those sensitive creatures or vegetables I
saw before; in regard that that stone which propagates
by assimilation, as the philosophers say, needed neither
hay, or any aliment for restoration of nature, nor water
to refresh its roots, or the heat of the sun to attract
the moisture upwards, to increase growth, as the other did.
As I directed my pace homeward, I spied a kite soaring high in the air, and gently gliding up and down the clear region so far above my head, that I fell to envy the bird extremely, and repine at his happiness, that he should have a privilege to make a nearer approach to heaven than I.

Excuse me that I trouble you thus with these rambling meditations, they are to correspond with you in some part for those accurate fancies of yours lately sent me.

-- James Howell to Sir S. C. --

Holborn: March 17, 1639.

Temptation

Far is it from me to be tempted with Satan; I am only tempted with Sorrow, whose sharp teeth devour my heart.

-- Raleigh, Letter to His Wife, July 1603.

Epigrammatic Wisdom Culled from the Letters

Books are the shrines where the Saint is, or is believed to be.

-- Francis Bacon

When our minds judge by reflection of ourselves, they are more subject to error.

-- Francis Bacon

1. Mumby, op. cit., p. 23.
3. Ibid., Vol. IV, p. 143.
A full heart is like a full pen; it can hardly make any distinguished work.

-- Frances Bacon

Fame hath swift wings, specially that which hath black feathers.

-- Frances Bacon

Fortune is of a woman's nature, that will sooner follow you by slighting than by too much wooing.

-- Frances Bacon

Good counsel helpeth a man to help himself.

-- Frances Bacon

The duties of life are more than life.

-- Frances Bacon

Methinks we are all overclouded with that sleep of Jacob, when he saw some ascending, and some descending, but that those were angels, and these are men; for in both, what is it but a dream?

-- Sir Henry Wotton

Thus Speaks Bishop Hall

Alas! how ill agrees a gay coat and a festered heart!

what avails an high title with an hell in the soul?

3. Ibid., Vol. VI, p. 6.
5. Ibid., Vol. VI, p. 208.
A false method is the bane of many hopeful endeavours. The goodness of a private man is his own; of a prince, the whole world's.

Even little streams empty themselves into great rivers; and they again into the sea.
Loquacity is the natural fault of travellers.
He is great that is good.
Necessity makes some things easy, as it usually makes easy things difficult.
Familiarity cannot stand with fear.
True love is like a strong stream, which, the farther it is from the head, runs with more violence.
Great places have seldom safe and easy entrances.
Every evil we see doth either vex or infect us.
Travel perfecteth wisdom.
Tyranny may part the soul from the body, cannot confine it to the body.
There is not more error in false mirth than in unjust heaviness.
It is the first and longest lesson to learn how to die.
Heat and cold have their uses: lukewarmness is good for nothing but to trouble the stomach.
Truth is in differences, as gold in dross, wheat in chaff.
Nothing can overturn him that hath power over himself.
To be happy, and not know it, is little above miserable.
Because death will overtake us, shall we run and meet him?
We see but our own times.
Public persons are not so much their own as others are theirs.
Still the devil begins with Eve.
Those tools which serve for the foundation, are not of use for the roof.
Children are like teeth, troublesome both in the breeding and losing.
Wise men seek remedies before their disease.
The best horse will tire soonest if the reins lie ever loose in his neck.
All times serve him that hath the rule of himself.
The running stream cleanseth itself, whereas standing ponds breed weeds and mud.
Learn to be a hermit at home.
Few men have died of greater pains than others have sustained and live.
Do not always your best.

-- Joseph Hall

For they, who bear the purse, will rule.

-- John Dryden

To show a forwardness in religious works is a good testimony of a good spirit.

-- George Herbert

1. The Works of John Dryden, Letter XLVIII.
And certainly despair is infinitely worse than presumption:
both because this is an excess of love, that of fear;
and because this is up, that down the hill; easier,
and more stumbling. Heaven is expressed by singing,
hell by weeping.

-- John Donne

All our moralities are but our outworks, our Christianity
is our citadel.

-- John Donne

He that thryvethe in a courte muste put halfe his honestie
under his bonnet; and manie do we knows that never
parte that commoditie at all, and sleepe with it
all in a bag.

-- John Harington

Good caution never cometh the better, than when a man is
climbinge; it is a pityfull thinge to sett a wronge
foot, and insteade of raisinge ones head, to falle
to the grounde and shewe ones baser partes.

-- Sir John Harington

The Wysest and Oldest have sparks of ambition, though it
be like a yourng Maid that bluses, and will say nay,
and is glad to seeme forst.

-- Sir John Harington

4. Ibid., p. 100.
5. Ibid., p. 129.
For when good things are undertaken in ill times, it
   turneth but to loss.
   -- Francis Bacon¹

Some wear away in calmes, some are carried away in storms;
   we come into the world one way, there are many gates
to goe out of it.
   -- Sir Thomas Browne²

For where great esteem is without affection, 'tis often
   attended with envy, if not with hate; which passions
detract even when they commend, and silence is their
   highest panegyrick.
   -- John Dennis³

Hope and Despair live not together.
   -- Sir Walter Raleigh⁴

The mercy of God is immeasureable; the cogitations of
   men comprehend it not.
   -- Sir Walter Raleigh⁵

But if you can live free from want, care for no more;
   the rest is but vanity.
   -- Sir Walter Raleigh⁶

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2. Works of Sir Thomas Browne, p. 476.
3. The Works of John Dryden, edit. Scott and Saintsbury,
   Vol. XVIII, p. 115.
5. Ibid., p. 23.
XVI. DEATH.

Death in Battle

(John Trelawney writes this tender announcement to Lady Grace Grenvil of her husband's death in battle in 1643.)

Bee pleased with gr wisdom to consider of the events of warr, which is seldom or never constant, but is full of mutability as hazard. And seeing it hath pleased God to take him from yr Lapp, yet this may something appease yr greats flux of tears, that hee died an Honorable Death, which all his enemies will envy, fighting with invincible valour and Loyalty ye Battle of his God, his King, and Country. A greater honour than this noe Man living can enjoy.

-- John Trelawney to Lady Grace Grenvil.

On the Death of a Son

(John Evelyn expresses his sympathy and philosophy on the death of Richard, the son of his eldest brother.)

I confess there is a cause of sadness: but all who are not Stoics know by experience, that in these lugubrious encounters our affections do sometimes outrun our reason.... Children are such blossoms as every trifling

wind deflowers; and to be disordered at their fall, were
to be fond of certain troubles, but the more uncertain
comforts; whilst the store of the more mature which God
has yet left you, invite both your resignation and your
gratitude. . . . We give hostages to Fortune when we bring
children into the world: and how unstable this is we
know, and must therefore hazard the adventure. God
has suffered this for your exercise: seek, then, as well
your consolation in his rod, as in his staff.

— John Evelyn to his brother, G. Evelyn, 1656.

Farewell Letters

(Mr. Pennuudock, a Royalist, was beheaded by
Cromwell's orders at Exeter in 1655. The fol­
lowing letters to and from his wife were written
the night before his execution.)

Mrs. Pennuudock's last letter to her Husband

May 3, 1655

My Dear Heart,— My sad parting was so far from mak­
ing me forget you, that I scarce thought upon myself since,
but wholly upon you. Those dear embraces which I yet
feel, and shall never lose, being the faithful testimonies
of an indulgent husband, have charmed my soul to such a
reverence of your remembrance, that were it possible, I
would, with my own blood, cement your dead limbs to live
again, and (with reverence) think it no sin to rob Heaven
a little longer of a martyr. Oh! my dear, you must now

1. Four Centuries of English Letters, ed. W. Baptiste
Scoones, op. cit., pp. 144-5.
pardon my passion, this being my last (oh, fatal word!) that ever you will receive from me; and know, that until the last minute that I can imagine you shall live, I shall sacrifice the prayers of a Christian, and the groans of an afflicted wife. And when you are not (which sure by sympathy I shall know), I shall wish my own dissolution with you, that so we may go hand in hand to Heaven. 'Tis too late to tell you what I have, or rather have not done for you; how being turned out of door because I came to beg mercy; the Lord lay not your blood to their charge.

I would fain discourse longer with you, but dare not; passion begins to drown my reason, and will rob me of my devoirs, which is all I have left to serve you. Adieu, therefore, ten thousand times, my dearest dear; and since I must never see you more, take this prayer,—May your faith be so strengthened that your constancy may continue; and then I know Heaven will receive you; whether grief and love will in a short time ('hope) translate.

My dear,

Your sad, but constant wife, even to love your ashes when dead,

Arundel Penruddock.

May the 3rd, 1666, eleven o'clock at night. Your children beg your blessing, and present their duties to you.
Mr. Penruddock's last letter to his Wife

May, 1655

Dearest Best of Creatures! I had taken leave of the world when I received yours; it did at once recall my fondness to life, and enable me to resign it. As I am sure I shall leave none behind me like you, which weakens my resolution to part from you, so when I reflect I am going to a place where there are none but such as you, I recover my courage. But fondness breaks in upon me; and as I would not have my tears flow to-morrow, when your husband, and the father of our dear babes, is a public spectacle, do not think meanly of me, that I give way to grief now in private, when I see my sand run so fast, and within a few hours I am to leave you helpless, and exposed to the merciless and insolent that have wrongfully put me to a shameless death, and will object the shame to my poor children. I thank you for all your goodness to me, and will endeavour so to die as to do nothing unworthy that virtue in which we have mutually supported each other, and for which I desire you not to repine that I am first to be rewarded, since you even preferred me to yourself in all other things. Afford me, with cheerfulness, the precedence of this. I desire your prayers in the article of death; for my own will then be offered for you and yours.

J. Penruddock.
A Letter of Condolence

(Jeremy Taylor writes a sympathetic letter to John Evelyn upon the loss of his children.)

Dear Sir,— If dividing and sharing griefs were like the cutting of rivers, I dare say to you, you would find your stream much abated; for I account myself to have a great cause of sorrow, not only in the diminution of the numbers of your joys and hopes, but in the loss of that pretty person, your strangely hopeful boy. I cannot tell all my own sorrows without adding to yours; and the causes of my real sadness in your loss are so just and so reasonable that I can no otherwise comfort you but by telling you, that you have very great cause to mourn; so certain it is that grief does propagate as fire does. You have enkindled my funeral torch and by joining mine to yours, I do but encrease the flame. 'Hoo me male writ,' is the best signification of my apprehension of your sad story. But sir, I cannot choose, but I must hold another and a brighter flame to you, it is already burning in your heart; and if I can but remove the dark side of the lantern, you have enough within you to warm yourself and to shine to others. Remember, sir, your two boys are two bright stars, and their innocence is secured, and you shall never hear evil of them again. Their state is safe, and heaven is given to them upon very easy terms; nothing but to be born and die. It will cost you more trouble to get where

they are; and amongst other things one of the (hardness) will be, that you must overcome even this just and reasonable grief; and, indeed though the grief hath but too reasonable a cause, yet it is much more reasonable that you master it.

-- Jeremy Taylor to John Evelyn, February 17, 1657.

An Account of a Death

Mr. Tho. Peck and his good wife are dead; shee died in childbed some 8 or 9 moneths past; he left this life about a moneth ago. Hee found obstacles that he could not come to Shickford, without compounding with the widdowe in possession for a thousand pound, though his father, Mr. James Peck, parted with his owne share upon tolerable termes unto Mr. Thomas. Hee lived in Norwich, was grewne very fatt, and drank much. They saye hee drank daily a quart bottle of claret before dinner, one at dinner, and one at night. If any company came to him, which was seldom, hee might exceed that quantitie; however, he made an end of that proportion by himself; he died suddenly, none being with him. His daughter finding him indisposed, asked whether shee should send unto mee; shee putt it of, and soon after was found dead. Hee had

little or no money in his house; his father James sent
ten pounds for his buryall, which served the turne. Surely
if he had lived a little longer, hee would have utterly
spoyle his brayne, and been lost unto all conversation.
Happy is the temperate man. God send all my friends that
virtue.

— Sir Thomas Browne to his son Edward.
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