

attempted to learn the Low Dutch language.* It is to be observed, that he here admits an opinion of the human mind being influenced by seasons, which he ridicules in his writings. His progress, he says, "was interrupted by a fever, which, by the imprudent use of a small print, left an inflammation in his useful eye." We cannot but admire his spirit when we know, that amidst a complication of bodily and mental distress, he was still animated with the desire of intellectual improvement. Various notes of his studies appear on different days, in his manuscript diary of this year; such as, "*Inckoavi lectionem Pentateuchi—Finivi lectionem Con/. Fab. Burdonum.—Legi primum actum Troadum.—Legi Dissertationem Clerici postremam de Pent.—2 of Clark's Sermons.—L. Appolonii pugnam Betriciam.—L. centum versus Homeri.*" Let this serve as a specimen of what accessions of literature he was perpetually infusing into his mind, while he charged himself with idleness.

This year died Mrs. Salusbury, (mother of Mrs. Thrale,) a lady whom he appears to have esteemed much,¹ and whose memory he honoured with an Epitaph.⁵

In a letter from Edinburgh, dated the 29th of May, I pressed him to persevere in his resolution to make this year the projected visit to the Hebrides, of which he and I had talked for many years, and which I was confident would afford us much entertainment.

To JAMES BOSWELL, Esq.

"DEAR SIR,—When your letter came to me, I was so darkened by an inflammation in my eye, that I could not for some time read it. I can now write without trouble, and can read large prints. My eye is gradually growing stronger; and I hope will be able to take some delight in the survey of a Caledonian loch.

"Chambers is going a Judge, with six thousand a year, to Bengal. He and I shall come down together as far as Newcastle, and thence I shall easily get to Edinburgh. Let me know the exact time when your Courts intermit. I must conform a little to Chambers's occasions, and he must conform a little to mine. The time which you shall fix, must be the common point to which we will come as near as we can. Except this eye, I am very well.

"Beattie is so caressed, and invited, and treated, and liked, and flattered, by the great, that I can see nothing of him. I am in

* Prayers and Meditations, p. 129.

^b Mrs. Piozzi's Anecdotes of Johnson, p. 131.

¹ "For whom neither he nor anybody else cared much."—*Barctti Marginalia*.

great hope that he will be well provided for, and then we will live upon him at the Marischal College, without pity or modesty.

«—————left the town without taking leave of me, and is gone in deep dudgeon to—————. ¹ Is not this very childish? Where is now my legacy?

"I hope your dear lady and her dear baby are both well. I shall see them too when I come; and I have that opinion of your choice, as to suspect that when I have seen Mrs. Boswell, I shall be less willing to go away. I am, dear Sir,

"Your affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, July 5, 1773.

"Write to me as soon as you can. Chambers is now at Oxford."

I again wrote to him, informing him that the Court of Session rose on the twelfth of August, hoping to see him before that time, and expressing, perhaps in too extravagant terms, my admiration of him, and my expectation of pleasure from our intended tour.

To JAMES BOSWELL, Esq.

"DEAR SIR,—I shall set out from London on Friday the sixth of this month, and purpose not to loiter much by the way. Which day I shall be at Edinburgh, I cannot exactly tell. I suppose I must drive to an inn, and send a porter to find you.

"I am afraid Beattie will not be at his College soon enough for us, and I shall be sorry to miss him; but there is no staying for the concurrence of all conveniences. We will do as well as we can. I am, Sir,

"Your most humble servant,

"August 3, 1773."

"SAM. JOHNSON.

To the same.

"DEAR SIR,—Not being at Mr. Thrale's when your letter came, I had written the enclosed paper and sealed it; bringing it hither for a frank, I found yours. If any thing could repress my ardour, it would be such a letter as yours. To disappoint a friend is displeasing: and he that forms expectations like yours, must be disappointed. Think only when you see me, that you see a man who loves you, and is proud and glad that you love him. I am, Sir,

"Your most affectionate

"August 3, 1773."

"SAM. JOHNSON.

These blanks stand for "Langton" and his county, "Lincolnshire."

To the same.

* Newcastle, Aug. 11, 1771.

" DEAR SIR,—I came hither last night, and hope, but do not absolutely promise, to be in Edinburgh on Saturday. Beattie will not come so soon. I am, Sir,

" Your most humble servant,

" SAM. JOHNSON.

" My compliments to your lady."

To the same,

" MR. JOHNSON sends his compliments to Mr. Boswell, being just arrived at Boyd's,"

" Saturday night."

His stay in Scotland was from the 18th of August,¹ on which day he arrived, till the 22nd of November, when he set out on his return to London, and I believe ninety-four days were never passed by any man in a more vigorous exertion.

He came by the way of Berwick upon Tweed to Edinburgh,* where he remained a few days, and then went by St. Andrew's, Aberdeen, Inverness, and Fort Augustus, to the Hebrides, to visit which was the principal object he had in view. He visited the isles of Sky, Rasay, Col, Mull, Inchkenneth, and Icolmkill. He travelled through Argyleshire by Inveraray, and from thence by Lochlomond and Dunbarton to Glasgow, then by Loudon to Auchinleck in Ayrshire, the seat of my family, and then by Hamilton, back to Edinburgh, where he again spent some time. He thus saw the four Universities of Scotland, its three principal cities, and as much of the Highland and insular life as was sufficient for his philosophical contemplation. I had the pleasure of accompanying him during the whole of this journey. He was respectfully entertained by the great, the learned, and the elegant, wherever he went; nor was he less delighted with the hospitality which he experienced in humbler life.

His various adventures, and the force and vivacity of his mind, as exercised during this peregrination, upon innumerable topics, have been faithfully and to the best of my abilities displayed in my

¹ This date should be the 14th, or more properly the 13th, the day on which he crossed the Border.

* He left London on August 6th, stayed the night at Stilton, reached Doncaster on Saturday, York on Sunday night, Northallerton on Monday, Durham and

Newcastle on Tuesday, where he rested until Friday. On that day he got to Alnwick, where he was received with all honour by the Duke of Northumberland, slept the night at Belford, and on Saturday reached Edinburgh.

"Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides,"* to which, as the publick has been pleased to honour it by a very extensive circulation, I beg to refer, as to a separate and remarkable portion of his life, which may be there seen in detail, and which exhibits as striking a view of his powers in conversation, as his works do of his excellence in writing. Nor can I deny to myself the very flattering gratification of inserting here the character which my friend Mr. Courtenay has been pleased to give of that work:

" With Reynolds' pencil, vivid, bold, and true,
 So fervent Boswell gives him to our view:
 In every trait we see his mind expand ;
 The master rises by the pupil's hand ;
 We love the writer, praise his happy vein,
 Grac'd with the naivete* of the sage Montaigne.
 Hence not alone are brighter parts display'd,
 But ev'n the specks of character pourtray'd:
 We see the Rambler with fastidious smile
 Mark the lone tree, and note the heath-clad isle ;
 But when the heroick tale of Flora* charms,
 Deck'd in a kilt, he wields a chieftain's arms :
 The tuneful piper sounds a martial strain,
 And Samuel sings, ' The King shall have his ain.'"

During his stay at Edinburgh, after his return from the Hebrides, he was at great pains to obtain information concerning Scotland; and it will appear from his subsequent letters, that he was not less solicitous for intelligence on this subject after his return to London.

To JAMES BOSWELL, Esq.

" DEAR SIR,—I came home last night, without any incommody, danger, or weariness, and am ready to begin a new journey. I shall go to Oxford on Monday. I know Mrs. Boswell wished me well to go ;^b her wishes have not been disappointed. Mrs. Williams has received Sir A's^o letter.

* The celebrated Flora Macdonald. See Boswell's *Tour*"

^b In this he shewed a very acute penetration. My wife paid him the most assiduous and respectful attention, while he was our guest; so that I wonder how he discovered her wishing for his departure. The truth is, that his irregular hours and uncouth habits, such as turning the candles with their heads downwards, when they did not burn bright enough, and letting the wax drop upon the carpet, could not but be disagreeable to a lady. Besides, she had not that high admiration of him which was felt by most of those who knew him; and what was very natural to a female mind, she thought he had too much influence over her husband. She once in a little warmth, made, with more point than justice, this remark upon that subject: "I have seen many a bear led by a man; but I never before saw a man led by a bear." *

^c Sir Alexander Gordon, one of the Professors at Aberdeen.

^l Boswell began a little collection of what he called "Uxoriana." "My wife

" Make my compliments to all those to whom my compliments may be welcome.

" Let the box^a be sent as soon as it can, and let me know when to expect it.

" Enquire, if you can, the order of the Clans : Macdonald is first, Maclean second; further I cannot go. Quicken Dr. Webster." I am, Sir,

" Yours affectionately,

" SAM. JOHNSON.

" Nov. 27, 1773."

Mr. BOSWELL to Dr. JOHNSON.

" Edinburgh, Dec. 2, 1773.

* * * * *

" You shall have what information I can procure as to the order of the Clans. A gentleman of the name of Grant tells me, that there is no settled order among them; and he says, that the Macdonalds were not placed upon the right of the army at Culloden; the Stuarts were. I shall, however, examine witnesses of every name that I can find here. Dr. Webster shall be quickened too. I like your little memorandums ; they are symptoms of your being in earnest with your book of northern travels.

" Your box shall be sent next week by sea. You will find in it some pieces of the broom bush, which you saw growing on the old castle of Auchinleck. The wood has a curious appearance when sawn across. You may either have a little writing-standish made of it, or get it formed into boards for a treatise on witchcraft, by way of a suitable binding."

* * * * *

* This was a box containing a number of curious things which he had picked up in Scotland, particularly some horn spoons.

*> The Reverend Dr. Alexander Webster, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, a man of distinguished abilities, who had promised him information concerning the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

said it would be much better to give salaries to members of parliament, than to let them try what they can get off this country by places and pensions. Said she, 'They are like ostlers and postilions, who have no wages, and must support themselves by vails.' When her husband said that a gentleman had, properly speaking, only one daughter, the other being so ugly, Mrs. Boswell replied, 'That she was more his daughter on that account, as being more likely to continue with him.'

"The 'Arabian Nights' is useful reading in low spirits, like the sentry, whom we do not admit into the chamber of the sick person, but place at the door, to prevent noisy intruders." In his little "Memoir" (*Europ. Mag.*) he records another of her sayings : " Once when he was mounted on a horse which he had brought low by riding, he boasted that he was a blood horse; 'I hope so,' she said, 'for I am sure he has no flesh.' He (Mr. Boswell) has a collection of her good things."

Mr. BOSWELL to Dr. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, Dec. 18, 1773.

* * * * *

" You promised me an inscription for a print to be taken from an historical picture of Mary Queen of Scots being forced to resign her crown, which Mr. Hamilton at Rome has painted for me. The two following have been sent to me:

' *Maria Scotorum Regina meliori seculo digna, jus regium civibus seditiosis invita resignat.*'

' *Gives seditiosi Mariam Scotorum Reginam sese muneri abdicare invitam cogunt.*'

" Be so good as to read the passage in Robertson, and see if you cannot give me a better inscription. I must have it both in Latin and English; so if you should not give me another Latin one, you will at least choose the best of these two, and send a translation of it."

* * * * *

His humane forgiving disposition was put to a pretty strong test on his return to London, by a liberty which Mr. Thomas Davies had taken with him in his absence, which was, to publish two volumes, entitled "Miscellaneous and fugitive Pieces," which he advertised in the newspapers, "By the Authour of the Rambler." In this collection, several of Dr. Johnson's acknowledged writings, and several of his anonymous performances, and some which he had written for others, were inserted; but there were also some in which he had no concern whatever. He was at first very angry, as he had good reason to be. But, upon consideration of his poor friend's narrow circumstances, and that he had only a little profit in view, and meant no harm, he soon relented, and continued his kindness to him as formerly.

In the course of his self-examination with retrospect to this year, he seems to have been much dejected; for he says, January 1, 1774, "This year has past with so little improvement, that I doubt whether I have not rather impaired than increased my learning: "^a and yet we have seen how he *read*, and we know how he *talked* during that period.

He was now seriously engaged in writing an account of our travels

• Prayers and Meditations, p. 129.¹

¹ The reference should be p. 135.

in the Hebrides, in consequence of which I had the pleasure of a more frequent correspondence with him.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Esq.*

" DEAR SIR,—My operations have been hindered by a cough; at least I flatter myself, that if the cough had not come, I should have been further advanced. But I have had no intelligence from Dr. W——, [Webster,] nor from the excise-office, nor from you. No account of the little borough.* Nothing of the Erse language. I have yet heard nothing of my box.

⁴⁴ You must make haste and gather me all you can, and do it quickly, or I will and shall do without it.

" Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, and tell her that I do not love her the less for wishing me away. I gave her trouble enough, and shall be glad, in recompense, to give her any pleasure.

" I would send some porter into the Hebrides, if I knew which way it could be got to my kind friends there. Enquire, and let me know.

" Make my compliments to all the Doctors of Edinburgh, and to all my friends from one end of Scotland to the other.

" Write to me, and send me what intelligence you can: and if any thing is too bulky for the post, let me have it by the carrier. I do not like trusting winds and waves. I am, dear Sir,

" Your most, &c.

" SAM. JOHNSON.

"Jan. 29, 1774,"

To the same.

" DEAR SIR,—In a day or two after I had written the last discontented letter, I received my box, which was very welcome. But still I must entreat you to hasten Dr. Webster, and continue to pick up what you can that may be useful.

" Mr. Oglethorpe was with me this morning. You know his errand. He was not unwelcome.

" Tell Mrs. Boswell that my good intentions towards her still continue. I should be glad to do any thing that would either benefit or please her.

" Chambers is not yet gone, but so hurried, or so negligent, or so proud, that I rarely see him. I have, indeed, for some weeks past, been very ill of a cold and cough, and have been at Mrs. Thrale's, that I might be taken care of. I am much better, *novce redeunt in*

* The ancient Burgh of Prestick, in Ayresshire.

THE LIFE OF DR. JOHNSON.

prælia vires; but I am yet tender, and easily disordered. How happy it was that neither of us were ill in the Hebrides,

"The question of Literary Property is this day before the Lords. Murphy drew up the appellants' case, that is, the plea against the perpetual right. I have not seen it, nor heard the decision. I would not have the right perpetual.

"I will write to you as any thing occurs, and do you send me something about my Scottish friends. I have very great kindness for them. Let me know likewise how fees come in, and when we are to see you. I am, Sir,

" Yours affectionately,

"London, Feb. 7, 1774."

"SAM. JOHNSON.

He wrote the following letters to Mr. Steevens, his able associate in editing Shakspeare:

To GEORGE STEEVENS, Esq. in Hampstead.

"SIR,—If I am asked when I have seen Mr. Steevens, you know what answer I must give; if I am asked when I shall see him, I wish you would tell me what to say.

"If you have 'Lesley's History of Scotland,' or any other book about Scotland, except Boetius and Buchanan, it will be a kindness if you send them to, Sir,

" Your humble servant,

"Feb. 7, 1774."

"SAM. JOHNSON.

To the same.

"SIR,—We are thinking to augment our club, and I am desirous of nominating you, if you care to stand the ballot, and can attend on Friday nights at least twice in five weeks; less than that is too little, and rather more will be expected. Be pleased to let me know before Friday. I am, Sir,

"* Your most, &c.

"Feb. 21, 1874."

"SAM. JOHNSON.

To the same.

"SIR,—Last night you became a member of the club; if you call on me on Friday, I will introduce you. A gentleman, proposed after you, was rejected.

"I thank you for Neander, but wish he were not so fine.¹ I will take care of him. I am, Sir,

" Your humble servant,

"March 5, 1774."

"SAM. JOHNSON.

The volume was bound in morocco with gilt edges.

To JAMES BOSWELL, Esq.

" DEAR SIR,—Dr. Webster's informations were much less exact and much less determinate than I expected: they are, indeed, much less positive than, if he can trust his own book* which he laid before me, he is able to give. But I believe it will always be found, that he who calls much for information will advance his work but slowly.

" I am, however, obliged to you, dear Sir, for your endeavours to help me, and hope, that between us something will some time be done, if not on this, on some occasion.

" Chambers is either married, or almost married, to Miss Wilton, a girl of sixteen, exquisitely beautiful,¹ whom he has with his lawyer's tongue, persuaded to take her chance with him in the East.

" We have added to the club, Charles Fox, Sir Charles Bunbury, Dr. Fordyce, and Mr. Steevens.⁹

" Return my thanks to Dr. Webster. Tell Dr. Robertson that I have not much to reply to his censure of my negligence; and tell Dr. Blair that since he has written hither what I said to him, we must now consider ourselves as even, forgive one another, and begin again, I care not how soon, for he is a very pleasing man. Pay my compliments to all my friends, and remind Lord Elibank of his promise to give me all his works.

" I hope Mrs. Boswell and little Miss are well.⁸—When shall I see them again? She is a sweet lady, only she was so glad to see me go, that I have almost a mind to come again, that she may again have the same pleasure.

" Enquire if it be practicable to send a small present of a cask of porter to Dunvegan, Rasay, and Col. I would not wish to be thought forgetful of civilities. I am, Sir,

** Your humble servant,

" SAM. JOHNSON,

"March 5, 1774.*

a A manuscript account drawn up by Dr. Webster of all the parishes in Scotland, ascertaining their length, breadth, number of inhabitants, and distinguishing Protestants and Roman Catholics. This book had been transmitted to Government, and Dr. Johnson saw a copy of it in Dr. Webster's possession.

¹ She had stood for Hebe at the Academy. For more about Wilton and his daughter, see "Life of Nollekens."

² "Many thanks," wrote Steevens to Garrick on March 6, 1774, "both for your suffrage and your congratulations, for they are equally honourable to me. I shall not fail to join the club on Friday evening. Dr. Johnson desires I will call

on him, and he will introduce me. Mr. Fox . . . appears like the late Mr. Secretary Morris, to enter the club when he has *nothing else to do*,**—*Oar. Cor.* i. 613.

* "1773" at Edinburgh, Mar. 15, the lady of James Boswell, Esq., of a daughter." A second daughter was born in June, 1774.

On the 5th of March I wrote to him, requesting his counsel whether I should this spring come to London. I stated to him on the one hand some pecuniary embarrassments, which, together with my wife's situation at that time, made me hesitate; and, on the other, the pleasure and improvement which my annual visit to the metropolis always afforded me; and particularly mentioned a peculiar satisfaction which I experienced in celebrating the festival of Easter in St. Paul's cathedral; that to my fancy it appeared like going up to Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover; and that the strong devotion which I felt on that occasion diffused its influence on my mind through the rest of the year.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Esq.*

[*Not dated, but written about the 15th of March.*"]

• DEAR SIR,—I am ashamed to think that since I received your letter I have passed so many days without answering it.

"I think there is no great difficulty in resolving your doubts. The reasons for which you are inclined to visit London, are, I think, not of sufficient strength to answer the objections. That you should delight to come once a year to the fountain of intelligence and pleasure, is very natural; but both information and pleasure must be regulated by propriety. Pleasure, which cannot be obtained but by unseasonable or unsuitable expence, must always end in pain; and pleasure, which must be enjoyed at the expence of another's pain, can never be such as a worthy mind can fully delight in.

"What improvement you might gain by coming to London, you may easily supply, or easily compensate, by enjoining yourself some particular study at home, or opening some new avenue to information. Edinburgh is not yet exhausted; and I am sure you will find no pleasure here which can deserve either that you should anticipate any part of your future fortune, or that you should condemn yourself and your lady to penurious frugality for the rest of the year.

"I need not tell you what regard you owe to Mrs. Boswell's entreaties; or how much you ought to study the happiness of her who studies yours with so much diligence, and of whose kindness you enjoy such good effects. Life cannot subsist in society but by reciprocal concessions. She permitted you to ramble last year, you must permit her now to keep you at home.

"Your last reason is so serious, that I am unwilling to oppose it. Yet you must remember, that your image of worshipping once a year in a certain place, in imitation of the Jews, is but a comparison, and *simile non est idem*; if the annual resort to Jerusalem was a duty to

the Jews, it was a duty because it was commanded; and you have no such command, therefore no such duty. It may be dangerous to receive too readily, and indulge too fondly, opinions, from which, perhaps, no pious mind is wholly disengaged, of local sanctity and local devotion. You know what strange effects they have produced over a great part of the Christian world. I am now writing, and you, when you read this, are reading under the Eye of Omnipresence.

"To what degree fancy is to be admitted into religious offices, it would require much deliberation to determine. I am far from intending totally to exclude it. Fancy is a faculty bestowed by our Creator, and it is reasonable that all his gifts should be used to his glory, that all our faculties should co-operate in his worship; but they are to co-operate according to the will of him that gave them, according to the order which his wisdom has established. As ceremonies prudential or convenient are less obligatory than positive ordinances, as bodily worship is only the token to others or ourselves of mental adoration, so Fancy is always to act in subordination to Reason. We may take Fancy for a companion, but must follow Reason as our guide. We may allow Fancy to suggest certain ideas in certain places, but Reason must always be heard, when she tells us, that those ideas and those places have no natural or necessary relation. When we enter a church we habitually recal to mind the duty of adoration, but we must not omit adoration for want of a temple; because we know, and ought to remember, that the Universal Lord is every where present; and that, therefore, to come to Jona, or to Jerusalem, though it may be useful, cannot be necessary.

"Thus I have answered your letter, and have not answered it negligently. I love you too well to be careless when you are serious.

"I think I shall be very diligent next week about our travels, which I have too long neglected. I am, dear Sir,

"Your most, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"Compliments to Madam and Miss."

To the same.

"DEAR SIR,—The lady who delivers this has a law-suit, in which she desires to make use of your skill and eloquence, and she seems to think that she shall have something more of both for a recommendation from me; which, though I know how little you want any external incitement to your duty, I could not refuse her, because

I know that at least it will not hurt her, to tell you that I wish her well. I am, Sir,

" Your most humble servant,

" SAM. JOHNSON.

" May 10, 1774."

Mr. BOSWELL to Dr. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, May 12, 1774.

" LORD HAILES has begged of me to offer you his best respects, and to transmit to you specimens of ' Annals of Scotland, from the Accession of Malcolm Kenmore to the Death of James V.' in drawing up which, his Lordship has been engaged for some time. His Lordship writes to me thus: ' If I could procure Dr. Johnson's criticisms, they would be of great use to me in the prosecution of my work, as they would be judicious and true. I have no right to ask that favour of him. If you could, it would highly oblige me.*

" Dr. Blair requests you may be assured that he did not write to London what you said to him, and that neither by word nor letter has he made the least complaint of you ; but, on the contrary, has a high respect for you, and loves you much more since he saw you in Scotland. It would both divert and please you to see his eagerness about this matter.*'

To JAMES BOSWELL, Esq.

"Streatham, June 21, 1774.

" DEAR SIR,—Yesterday I put the first sheets of the ' Journey to the Hebrides' to the press. I have endeavoured to do you some justice in the first paragraph.¹ It will be one volume in octavo, not thick.

" It will be proper to make some presents in Scotland. You shall tell me to whom I shall give ; and I have stipulated twenty five for you to give in your own name. Some will take the present better from me, others better from you. In this, you who are to live in the place ought to direct. Consider it. Whatever you can get for my purpose, send me; and make my compliments to your lady and both the young ones.

" I am, Sir, your, &c.

" SAM. JOHNSON."

Mr. BOSWELL to Dr. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, June 25, 1774.

" You do not acknowledge the receipt of the various packets

¹ In the shape of a very handsome compliment: ". . . induced to take the journey, by finding in Mr. Boswell a companion, whose acuteness would help

my inquiry, and whose gaiety of conversation and civility of manners are sufficient to counteract the inconvenience of travel."

which I have sent to you. Neither can I prevail with you to *answer* my letters, though you honour me with *returns*. You have said nothing to me about poor Goldsmith,* nothing about Langton.

" I have received for you, from the Society for propagating Christian Knowledge in Scotland, the following Erse books :—' The New Testament;'—* Baxter's Call;'—' The Confession of Faith of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster;'—' The Mother's Catechism;'—' A Gaelick and English Vocabulary."^b

To JAMES BOSWELL, Esq.

" DEAR SIR,—I wish you could have looked over my book before the printer, but it could not easily be. I suspect some mistakes; but as I deal, perhaps, more in notions than facts, the matter is not great, and the second edition will be mended, if any such there be. The press will go on slowly for a time, because I am going into Wales to-morrow.

" I should be very sorry if I appeared to treat such a character as that of Lord Hailes otherwise than with high respect. I return the sheets,' to which I have done what mischief I could; and finding it so little, thought not much of sending them. The narrative is clear, lively, and short.

" I have done worse to Lord Hailes than by neglecting his sheets: I have run him in debt. Dr. Home, the President of Magdalen College in Oxford, wrote to me about three months ago, that he purposed to reprint Walton's Lives, and desired me to contribute to the work: my answer was, that Lord Hailes intended the same publication; and Dr. Home has resigned it to him. His Lordship now must think seriously about it.

" Of poor dear Dr. Goldsmith there is little to be told, more than the papers have made publick. He died of a fever, made, I am afraid, more violent by uneasiness of mind. His debts began to be heavy, and all his resources were exhausted. Sir Joshua is of opinion that he owed not less than two thousand pounds. Was ever poet so trusted before?

" You may, if you please, put the inscription thus :

* *Maria Scotorum Regina nata 15—, a suis in exilium acta 15—, ab hospitd neci data 15—.* You must find the years.

" Of your second daughter you certainly gave the account your-

* Dr. Goldsmith died April 4, this year.

^b These books Dr. Johnson presented to the Bodleian Library.

* On the cover enclosing them, Dr. Johnson wrote, " If my delay has given any reason for supposing that I have not a very deep sense of the honour done me by asking my judgement, I am very sorry."

self, though you have forgotten it. While Mrs. Boswell is well, never doubt of a boy. Mrs. Thrale brought, I think, five girls running, but while I was with you she had a boy.

"I am obliged to you for all your pamphlets, and of the last I hope to make some use. I made some of the former. I am, dear Sir,

"Your most affectionate servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"July 4, 1774.

"My compliments to all the three ladies."

Cor. et Ad.—After Dr. Johnson's letter to Mr. Boswell, *read*,—

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ. AT LANGTON, NEAR SPILSBY, LINCOLNSHIRE.

"DEAR SIR,—You have reason to reproach me that I have left your last letter so long unanswered, but I had nothing particular to say. Chambers, you find, is gone far, and poor Goldsmith is gone much further. He died of a fever, exasperated, as I believe, by the fear of distress. He had raised money and squandered it, by every artifice of acquisition and folly of expence. But let not his frailties be remembered; he was a very great man.

"I have just begun to print my Journey to the Hebrides, and am leaving the press to take another journey into Wales, whither Mr. Thrale is going, to take possession of, at least, five hundred a year, fallen to his lady. All at Streatham, that are alive, are well.

"I have never recovered from the last dreadful illness, but flatter myself that I grow gradually better; much, however, yet remains to mend. **Κύριε ἰλέησον.**

"If you have the Latin version of *Busy, curious, thirsty fly*, be so kind as to transcribe and send it; but you need not be in haste, for I shall be I know not where, for at least five weeks. I wrote the following tetrastick on poor Goldsmith:

“Τὸν τάφον ἱσσοῦσας τὸν Ὀλιβαροῖο, κινήθῃ
 Ἄφροσι μὴ τέμνην, Ξεῖνε, πόθοσσι πάτη.
 Οἷσι μέμηλε φύσις, μῶτρων χάρις, ἔργα παλαιῶν
 Κλαίετε ποιητῆν, ἱστορικόν, φύσικόν.”

"Please to make my most respectful compliments to all the ladies, and remember me to young George and his sisters. I reckon George begins to shew a pair of heels.

"Do not be sullen now, but let me find a letter when I come back. I am, dear Sir,

"Your affectionate, humble servant,

"July 5, 1774."

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"TO MR. ROBERT LE VET.

"Llewenny, in Denbighshire, August 16, 1774.

"DEAR SIR,—Mr. Thrale's affairs have kept him here a great while, nor do I know exactly when we shall come hence. I have sent you a bU upon Mr. Strahan.

"I have made nothing of the Ipecacuanha, but have taken abundance of pills, and hope that they have done me good.

"Wales, so far as I have yet seen of it, is a very beautiful and rich country, all enclosed, and planted. Denbigh is not a mean town. Make my compliments to all my friends, and tell Frank I hope he remembers my advice. When his money is out, let him have more. I am, Sir,

«Your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Mr. BOSWELL to Dr. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, Aug. 30, 1773.

" You have given me an inscription for a portrait of Mary Queen of Scots, in which you, in a short and striking manner, point out her hard fate. But you will be pleased to keep in mind, that my picture is a representation of a particular scene in her history ;— her being forced to resign her crown, while she was imprisoned in the castle of Lochlevin. I must, therefore, beg that you will be kind enough to give me an inscription suited to that particular scene, or determine which of the two formerly transmitted to you is the best; and, at any rate, favour me with an English translation. It will be doubly kind if you comply with my request speedily.

" Your critical notes on the specimen of Lord Hailes's * Annals of Scotland,' are excellent. I agreed with you in every one of them. He himself objected only to the alteration of *free* to *brave*, in the passage where he says that Edward ' departed with the glory due to the conquerour of a free people.' He says, ' to call the Scots brave would only add to the glory of their conquerour.' You will make allowance for the national zeal of our annalist. I now send a few more leaves of the Annals, which I hope you will peruse, and return with observations, as you did upon the former occasion. Lord Hailes writes to me thus : * Mr. Boswell will be pleased to express the grateful sense which Sir David Dalrymple has of Dr. Johnson's attention to his little specimen. The further specimen will shew, that

' Even in an *Edward* he can see desert.'

" It gives me much pleasure to hear that a re-publication of Isaac Walton's Lives is intended. You have been in a mistake in thinking that Lord Hailes had it in view. I remember one forenoon, while he sat with you in my house, he said, that there should be a new edition of Walton's Lives ; and you said, that they should be benoted a little. This was all that passed on that subject. You must, therefore, inform Dr. Home, that he may resume his plan. I enclose a note concerning it; and if Dr. Home will write to me, all the attention that I can give shall be cheerfully bestowed, upon what I think a pious work, the preservation and elucidation of Walton, by whose writings I have been most pleasingly edified.

* * * * *

Mr. BOSWELL to Dr. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, Sept. 16, 1774.

" WALES has probably detained you longer than I supposed. You will have become quite a mountaineer, by visiting Scotland

one year and Wales another. You must next go to Switzerland. Cambria will complain, if you do not honour her also with some remarks. And I find *concessere columncz*, the booksellers expect another book. I am impatient to see your tour to Scotland and the Hebrides. Might you not send me a copy by the post as soon as it is printed off? "

* * * * *

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Esq.*

" DEAR SIR,—Yesterday I returned from my Welch journey. I was sorry to leave my book suspended so long; but having an opportunity of seeing, with so much convenience, a new part of the island, I could not reject it. I have been in five of the six counties of North Wales; and have seen St. Asaph and Bangor, the two seats of their bishops; have been upon Penmanmaur and Snowden, and passed over into Anglesea. But Wales is so little different from England, that it offers nothing to the speculation of the traveller.

" When I came home, I found several of your papers, with some pages of Lord Hailes's Annals, which I will consider. I am in haste to give you some account of myself, lest you should suspect me of negligence in the pressing business which I find recommended to my care,^a and which I knew nothing of till now, when all care is vain.

" In the distribution of my books I purpose to follow your advice, adding such as shall occur to me. I am not pleased with your notes of remembrance added to your names, for I hope I shall not easily forget them.

" I have received four Erse books, without any direction, and suspect that they are intended for the Oxford library. If that is the intention, I think it will be proper to add the metrical psalms, and whatever else is printed in Erse, that the present may be complete. The donor's name should be told.

" I wish you could have read the book before it was printed, but our distance does not easily permit it.

" I am sorry Lord Hailes does not intend to publish Walton; I am afraid it will not be done so well, if it be done at all.

" I purpose now to drive the book forward. Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, and let me hear often from you. I am, dear Sir,

•* Your affectionate humble servant,

"London, Octob. 1, 1774."

" SAM. JOHNSON.

* I had written to him, to request his interposition in behalf of a convict, who I thought was very unjustly condemned.

This tour to Wales, which was made in company with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, though it no doubt contributed to his health and amusement, did not give occasion to such a discursive exercise of his mind as our tour to the Hebrides. I do not find that he kept any journal or notes of what he saw there.¹ All that I heard him say of it was, that instead of bleak and barren mountains, there were green and fertile ones; and that one of the castles in Wales would contain all the castles that he had seen in Scotland.

Parliament having been dissolved, and his friend Mr. Thrale, who was a steady supporter of government, having again to encounter the storm of a contested election, he wrote a short political pamphlet, entitled "The Patriot,"* addressed to the electors of Great-Britain; a title which, to factious men, who consider a patriot only as an opposer of the measures of government, will appear strangely /nisapplied. It was, however, written with energetick vivacity; and, except those passages in which it endeavours to vindicate the glaring outrage of the House of Commons in the case of the Middlesex election, and to justify the attempt to reduce our fellow-subjects in America to unconditional submission, it contained an admirable display of the properties of a real patriot, in the original and genuine sense,—a sincere, steady, rational, and unbiassed friend to the interests and prosperity of his King and country. It must be acknowledged, however, that both in this and his two former pamphlets, there was, amidst many powerful arguments, not only a considerable portion of sophistry, but a contemptuous ridicule of his opponents, which was very provoking.

Cor. et Ad.—Line 26 : After "provoking," read,—

"TO MR. PERKINS.*

"SIR,—You may do me a great favour. Mrs. Williams, a gentlewoman whom you may have seen at Mr. Thrale's, is a petitioner for Mr. Hetherington's charity: petitions are this day issued at Christ's Hospital.

^a Mr. Perkins was for a number of years the worthy superintendent of Mr. Thrale's great brewery, and after his death became one of the Proprietors of it; and now resides in Mr. Thrale's house in Southwark, which was the scene of so many literary meetings, and in which he continues the liberal hospitality for which it was eminent.² Dr. Johnson esteemed him much. He hung up in the counting-house a fine proof of the admirable mezzotinto of Dr. Johnson, by Doughty; and when Mrs. Thrale asked him somewhat flippantly, "Why do you put him up in the counting-house?" He answered, "Because, Madam, I wish to have one wise man there." "Sir, (said Johnson,) I thank you. It is a very handsome compliment, and I believe you speak sincerely."

¹ Johnson made some rather meagre notes of this tour, which were published in 1810 by Mr. Duppa. Mr. Hayward has besides collected various curious incidents connected with the tour—among others, that some leading instances of Johnson's absence of mind were worked

into "Camilla" in the character of Dr. Orkborne.

^a "Barclay and Perkins live very genteelly. I dined with them at our brew-house one day last week."—*Mrs. Piozzi in 1790, Hayward's Mem.*, i. 304.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Esq.*

" DEAR SIR,—There has appeared lately in the papers an account of a boat upset between Mull and Ulva, in which many passengers were lost, and among them Maclean of Col. We, you know, were once drowned ;* I hope, therefore, that the story is either wantonly or erroneously told. Pray satisfy me by the next post.

" I have printed two hundred and forty pages.—I am able to do nothing much worth doing to dear Lord Hailes's book. I will, however, send back the sheets ; and hope, by degrees, to answer **all** your reasonable expectations.

" Mr. Thrale has happily surmounted a very violent and acrimonious opposition; but all joys have their abatements: Mrs. Thrale has fallen from her horse, and hurt herself very much. **The** rest of our friends, I believe, are well. My compliments to Mrs. Boswell. I am, Sir,

" Your most affectionate servant,

" SAM. JOHNSON.

"London, Octob. 27, 1774."

This letter, which shews his tender concern for an amiable young gentleman to whom we had been very much obliged in the Hebrides, I have inserted according to its date, though before receiving it I had informed him of the melancholy event that the young Laird of Col was unfortunately drowned.

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Esq.*

¹¹ DEAR SIR,—Last night I corrected the last page of our 'Journey to the Hebrides.' The printer has detained it all this time, for I had, before I went into Wales, written all except two sheets. 'The Patriot' was called for by my political friends on Friday, was written on Saturday, and I have heard little of it. So vague are conjectures

" I am a bad manager of business in a crowd ; and if I should send a mean man, he may be put away without his errand. I must therefore entreat that you will go, and ask for a petition for Anna Williams, whose paper of enquiries was delivered with answers at the counting-house of the hospital on Thursday the 20th. My servant will attend you thither, and bring the petition home when you have it.

¹¹ The petition, which they are to give us is a form which they deliver to every petitioner, and which the petitioner is afterwards to fill up, and return to them again. This we must have, or we cannot proceed according to their directions. You need, I believe, only ask for a petition; if they enquire for whom you ask, you can tell them.

" I beg pardon for giving you this trouble; but it is a matter of great importance, I am, Sir,

"October 25,

1774."

" Your most humble servant,

"SAM.

JOHNSON.

• In the newspapers.

at a distance.' As soon as I can, I will take care that copies be sent to you, for I would wish that they might be given before they are bought; but I am afraid that Mr. Strahan will send to you and to the booksellers at the same time. Trade is as diligent as courtesy. I have mentioned all that you recommended. Pray make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell and the younglings. The club has, I think, not yet met.

"Tell me, and tell me honestly, what you think and others say of our travels. Shall we touch the continent?"^b I am, dear Sir,

"Your most humble servant,

"Nov. 26, 1774."

SAM. JOHNSON.

In his manuscript diary of this year, there is the following entry:

"Nov. 27. Advent Sunday. I considered that this day, being the beginning of the ecclesiastical year, was a proper time for a new course of life. I began to read the Greek Testament regularly at 160 verses every Sunday. This day I began the Acts.

"In this week I read Virgil's Pastorals. I learned to repeat the *Pollio* and *Gallus*. I read carelessly the first *Georgick*."

Such evidences of his unceasing ardour, both for "divine and human lore," when advanced into his sixty-fourth year, and notwithstanding his many disturbances from disease, must make us at once honour his spirit, and lament that it should be so grievously clogged by its material tegument. It is remarkable, that he was very fond of the precision which calculation produces. Thus we find in one of his manuscript diaries, "12 pages in 4to Gr. Test, and 30 pages in Beza's folio, comprize the whole in 40 days."

Dr. JOHNSON to JOHN HOOLE, *Esq.*

"DEAR SIR,—I have returned your play,^c which you will find underscored with red, where there was a word which I did not like. The red will be washed off with a little water.

"The plot is so well framed, the intricacy so artful, and the disentanglement so easy, the suspense so affecting, and the passionate parts so properly interposed, that I have no doubt of its success. I am, Sir,

"Your most humble servant,

"December 19, 1774."

"S A M . JOHNSON.

* Alluding to a passage in a letter of mine, where speaking of his "Journey to the Hebrides," I say, "But has not *The Patriot' been an interruption, by trie time taken to write it, and the time luxuriously spent in listening to its applauses?"

^b We had projected a voyage together up the Baltick, and talked of visiting some of the more northern regions.

• "Cleonice."

The first effort of his pen in 1775, was, "Proposals for publishing the Works of Mrs. Charlotte Lennox,"! in three volumes quarto. In his diary, January 2, I find this entry: "Wrote Charlotte's Proposals." But, indeed, the internal evidence would have been quite sufficient. Her claim to the favour of the publick was thus enforced:

"Most of the pieces, as they appeared singly, have been read with approbation, perhaps above their merit, but of no great advantage to the writer. She hopes, therefore, that she shall not be considered as too indulgent to vanity, or too studious of interest, if, from that labour which has hitherto been chiefly gainful to others, she endeavours to obtain at last some profit for herself and her children. She cannot decently enforce her claim by the praise of her own performances; nor can she suppose, that, by the most artful and laboured address, any additional notice could be procured to a publication, of which Her MAJESTY has condescended to be the PATRONESS."

To JAMES BOSWELL, *Esq.*

"DEAR SIR,—You never did ask for a book by the post till now, and I did not think on it. You see now it is done. I sent one to the King, and I hear he likes it.

"I shall send a parcel into Scotland for presents, and intend to give to many of my friends. In your catalogue you left out Lord Auchinleck.

"Let me know, as fast as you read it, how you like it; and let me know if any mistake is committed, or any thing important left out. I wish you could have seen the sheets. My compliments to Mrs. Boswell, and to Veronica, and to all my friends. I am, Sir,

"Your most humble servant,

"January 14, 1775."

"SAM. JOHNSON.

Mr. BOSWELL to Dr. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, Jan. 19, 1775.

"B E pleased to accept of my best thanks for your 'Journey to the Hebrides,' which came to me by last night's post. I did really ask the favour twice; but you have been even with me, by granting it so speedily. *Bis dat qui cito dat.* Though ill of a bad cold, you kept me up the greatest part of the last night; for I did not stop till I had read every word of your book. I looked back to our first talking of a visit to the Hebrides, which was many years ago, when

Second Edition.—*Une 17*: He this year also wrote the Preface to Baret's "Easy Lessons in Italian and English."

sitting by ourselves in the Mitre tavern, in London, I think about *witching time o'night*; and then exulted in contemplating our scheme fulfilled, and a *monumentum perenne* of it erected by your superiour abilities. I shall only say, that your book has afforded me a high gratification. I shall afterwards give you my thoughts on particular passages.¹ In the mean time, I hasten to tell you of your having mistaken two names, which you will correct in London, as I shall do here, that the gentlemen who deserve the valuable compliments which you have paid them, may enjoy their honours. In page 106, for *Gordon* read *Murchison*; and in page 357, for *Maclean* read *Macleod*.

* * * * *

" But I am now to apply to you for immediate aid in my profession, which you have never refused to grant when I requested it. I enclose you a petition for Dr, Memis, a physician at Aberdeen, in which Sir John Dalrymple has exerted his talents, and which I am to answer as Counsel for the managers of the Royal Infirmary in that city. Mr. Jopp, the Provost, who delivered to you your freedom, is one of my clients, and, *as a citizen of Aberdeen*, you will support him.

" The fact is shortly this. In a translation of the charter of the Infirmary from Latin into English, made under the authority of the managers, the same phrase in the original is in one place rendered *Physician*, but when applied to Dr. Memis is rendered *Doctor of Medicine*. Dr. Memis complained of this before the translation was printed, but was not indulged with having it altered, and he has brought an action for damages, on account of a supposed injury, as if the designation given to him were an inferiour one, tending to make it be supposed he is *not* a *Physician*, and, consequently to hurt his practice. My father has dismissed the action as groundless, and now he has appealed to the whole Court."*

To JAMES BOSWELL, Esq.

" DEAR SIR,—I long to hear how you like the book; it is, I think, much liked here. But Macpherson is very furious; can you give me any more intelligence about him, or his Fingal? Do what you can, and do it quickly. Is Lord Hailes on our side?

• In the Court of Session of Scotland an action is first tried by one of the Judges, who is called the Lord Ordinary; and if either party is dissatisfied, he may appeal to the whole Court, consisting of fifteen, the Lord President and fourteen other Judges, who have both in and out of Court the title of Lords, from the name of their estates; as, Lord Auchinleck, Lord Monboddò, &c.

¹ Boswell supplied a long list of corrections, given by Mr. Croker in his appendix, but of which Johnson made not the slightest use.

¹¹ Pray let me know what I owed you when I left you, that I may send it to you.

"I am going to write about the Americans. If you have picked up any hints among your lawyers, who are great masters of the law of nations, or if your own mind suggests any thing, let me know. But mum,—it is a secret.

"I will send your parcel of books as soon as I can ; but I cannot do as I wish. However, you find every thing mentioned in **the** book which you recommended.

"Langton is here ; we are all that ever we were. He is a worthy fellow, without malice, though not without resentment.

"Poor Beauclerk is so ill, that his life is thought to be in danger. Lady Di. nurses him with very great assiduity.

"Reynolds has taken too much to strong liquor, and seems to delight in his new character.

"This is all the news that I have ; but as you love verses, I will send you a few which I made upon Inchkenneth,^b but remember the condition, that you shall not show them, except to Lord Hailes, whom I love better than any man whom I know so little. If he asks you to transcribe them for him, you may do it, but I think he must promise not to let them be copied again, nor to show them as mine.

"I have at last sent back Lord Hailes's sheets. I never think about returning them, because I alter nothing. You will see that I might as well have kept them. However, I am ashamed of my delay ; and if I have the honour of receiving any more, promise punctually to return them by the next post. Make my compliments to dear Mrs. Boswell, and to Miss Veronica. I am, dear Sir,

"Yours most faithfully,

"SAM. JOHNSON.^o

"January 21, 1775."

^a It should be recollected, that this fanciful description of his friend was **given** by Johnson after he had become a water-drinker.

^b See them in "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides," 3d edit. p. 337.

^c He now sent me a Latin inscription for my historical picture of Mary Queen of Scots, and afterwards favoured me with an English translation. Mr. Alderman Boydell has subjoined them to the engraving from my picture.

*" Maria Scotorum Regzna,
Hominum seditiosorum
Contumeliis lassata,
Minis territa, clamoribus
Libello, per quem
Regno cedit,
Lacrimans trepidansque
Nomen apponit.*

Mary Queen of Scots,
Harrassed, terrified, and overpowered
By the insults, menaces,
And clamours
Of her rebellious subjects,
Sets her hand
"With tears and confusion,
To a resignation of the kingdom."

Cor. et Ad.—Line 37: After "Mr. Alderman Boydell," read "that eminent patron of the arts."

Mr. BOSWELL to Dr. JOHNSON.

* * * * * "Edinburgh, Jan. 27, 1775.
* * * * *

" You rate our lawyers here too high, when you call them great masters of the law of nations.

* * * * *

" As for myself, I am ashamed to say that I have read little and thought little on the subject of America. I will be much obliged to you, if you will direct me where I shall find the best information of what is to be said on both sides. It is a subject vast in its present extent and future consequences. The imperfect hints which now float in my mind, tend rather to the formation of an opinion that our government has been precipitant and severe in the resolutions taken against the Bostonians. Well do you know that I have no kindness for that race. But nations, or bodies of men, should, as well as individuals, have a fair trial, and not be condemned on character alone. Have we not express contracts with our colonies, which afford a more certain foundation of judgement, than general political speculations on the mutual rights of states and their provinces or colonies? Pray let me know immediately what to read, and I shall diligently endeavour to gather for you any thing that I can find. Is Burke's speech on American Taxation published by himself? Is it authentick? I remember to have heard you say, that you had never considered East Indian affairs; though, surely, they are of much importance to Great-Britain. Under the recollection of this, I shelter myself from the reproach of ignorance about the Americans. If you write upon the subject, I shall certainly understand it. But, since you seem to expect that I should know something of it, without your instruction, and that my own mind should suggest something, I trust you will put me in the way.

* * * * *

" What does Becket mean by the *Originals* of Fingal and other poems of Ossian, which he advertises to have lain in his shop?"¹

* * * * *

To JAMES BOSWELL, Esq.

" DEAR SIR,—You sent me a case to consider, in which I have no facts but what are against us, nor any principles on which to reason. It is vain to try to write thus without materials. The fact seems to

¹ To Johnson's statement that " the editor or author never could show the original (MS. of Ossian), nor can it be shown by any other," Becket, the publisher, had replied by an advertisement

in the papers, that " the originals lay in his shop in 1762 for the inspection of the curious, and that proposals for publishing them were frequently advertised,"

be against you, at least I cannot know nor say any thing to the contrary. I am glad that you like the book so well. I hear no more of Macpherson. I shall long to know what Lord Hailes says of it. Lend it him privately. I shall send the parcel as soon as I can. Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell. I am, Sir, &c.

" SAM. JOHNSON.

"January 28, 1775."

Mr. BOSWELL to Dr. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, Feb. 2, 1775.

* * * * *

" As to Macpherson, I am anxious to have from yourself a full and pointed account of what has passed between you and him. It is confidently told here, that before your book came out he sent to you, to let you know that he understood you meant to deny the authenticity of Ossian's poems; that the originals were in his possession; that you might have inspection of them, and might take the evidence of people skilled in the Erse language; and that he hoped, after this fair offer, you would not be so uncandid as to assert that he had refused reasonable proof. That you paid no regard to his message, but published your strong attack upon him; that then he wrote a letter to you, in such terms as he thought suited to one who had not acted as a man of veracity. You may believe it gives me pain to hear your conduct represented as unfavourable, while I can only deny what is said, on the ground that your character refutes it, without having any information to oppose* Let me, I beg it of you, be furnished with a sufficient answer to any calumny upon this occasion.

" Lord Hailes writes to me, (for we correspond more than we talk together,) ' As to Fingal, I see a controversy arising, and purpose to keep out of its way. There is no doubt that I might mention some circumstances; but I do not choose to commit them to paper/ What his opinion is, I do not know. He says, * I am singularly obliged to Dr. Johnson for his accurate and useful criticisms. Had he given some strictures on the general plan of the work, it would have added much to his favours.' He is charmed with your verses on Inchkenneth, says they are very elegant, but bids me tell you he doubts whether

' *Legitimas faciunt pectora pura preces,*¹

be according to the rubric: but that is your concern; for, you know, he is a Presbyterian."

* * * * *

To Dr. LAWRENCE.*

"February 7, 1775.

" SIR,—One of the Scotch physicians is now prosecuting a corporation that in some publick instrument have stiled him *Doctor of Medicine* instead of *Physician*. Boswell desires, being advocate for the corporation, to know whether *Doctor of Medicine* is not a legitimate title, and whether it may be considered as a disadvantageous distinction. I am to write to-night, be pleased to tell me. I am, Sir, your most, &c.

" SAM. JOHNSON."

To JAMES BOSWELL, Esq.

" MY DEAR BOSWELL,—I am surprised that, knowing as you do the disposition of your countrymen to tell lies in favour of each other," you can be at all affected by any reports that circulate among them. Macpherson never in his life offered me the sight of any original or of any evidence of any kind, but thought only of intimidating me by noise and threats, till my last answer,—that I would not be deterred from detecting what I thought a cheat, by the menaces of a ruffian—put an end to our correspondence.

" The state of the question is this. He, and Dr. Blair, whom I consider as deceived, say, that he copied the poem from old manuscripts. His copies, if he had them, and I believe him to have none, are nothing. Where are the manuscripts? They can be shown if they exist, but they were never shown. *De non existentibus et non apparentibus* says our law, *eadem est ratio*. No man has a claim to credit upon his own word, when better evidence, if he had it, may be easily produced. But, so far as we can find, the Erse language was never written till very lately for the purposes of religion. A nation that cannot write, or a language that was never written, has no manuscripts.

⁴⁴ But whatever he has, he never offered to show. If old manuscripts should now be mentioned, I should, unless there were more evidence than can be easily had, suppose them another proof of Scotch conspiracy in national falsehood.

" Do not censure the expression; you know it to be true.

" Dr. Memis's question is so narrow as to allow no speculation; and I have no facts before me but those which his advocate has produced against you.

* The learned and worthy Dr. Lawrence, whom Dr. Johnson respected and loved AS his physician and friend.

^b My friend has, in this letter, relied upon my testimony with a confidence, of which the ground has escaped my recollection.

" I consulted this morning the President of the London College of Physicians, who says, that with us, *Doctor of Physick* (we do not say *Doctor of Medicine*) is the highest title that a practicer of physick can have; that *Doctor* implies not only *Physician*, but teacher of physick; that every *Doctor* is legally a *Physician*, but no man, not a *Doctor*, can *practice physick* but by *licence* particularly granted. The *Doctorate* is a *licence* of itself. It seems to us a very slender cause of prosecution.

* « * • * *

" I am now engaged, but in a little time I hope to do all you would have. My compliments to Madam and Veronica. I am, Sir,

" Your most humble servant,

" SAM. JOHNSON.

"February 7, 1775."

What words were used by Mr. Macpherson in his letter to the venerable Sage, I have never heard; but they are generally said to have been of a nature very different from the language of literary contest. Dr. Johnson's answer appeared in the newspapers of the day, and has since been frequently re-published; but not with perfect accuracy. I give it as dictated to me by himself, written down in his presence, and authenticated by a note in his own hand-writing, "*This, I think, is a true copy.*"**

" Mr. JAMES MACPHERSON,—I received your foolish and impudent letter. Any violence offered me I shall do my best to repel; and what I cannot do for myself, the law shall do for me. I hope I shall never be deterred from detecting what I think a cheat, by the menaces of a ruffian.

" What would you have me retract? I thought your book an imposture; I think it an imposture still. For this opinion I have given my reasons to the publick, which I here dare you to refute. Your rage I defy. Your abilities, since your Homer, are not so formidable; and what I hear of your morals inclines me to pay regard not to what you shall say, but to what you shall prove. You may print this if you will.

" SAM. JOHNSON."

Mr. Macpherson little knew the character of Dr. Johnson, if he supposed that he could be easily intimidated; for no man was ever more remarkable for personal courage. He had, indeed, an awful

Cor. et Ad.—Line 22: On "copy" put the following note:—"I have deposited it in the British Museum."

dread of death, or rather " of something after death;" and what rational man, who seriously thinks of quitting all that he has ever known, and going into a new and unknown state of being, can be without that dread? But his fear was from reflection, his courage natural. His fear, in that one instance, was the result of philosophical and religious consideration. He feared death, but he feared nothing else, not even what might occasion death. Many instances of his resolution may be mentioned. One day, at Mr. Beauclerk's house in the country, when two large dogs were fighting, he went up to them, and beat them till they separated; and at another time, when told of the danger there was that a gun might burst if charged with many balls, he put in six or seven, and fired it off against a wall. Mr. Langton told me, that when they were swimming together near Oxford, he cautioned Dr. Johnson against a pool, which was reckoned particularly dangerous; upon which Johnson directly swam into it. He told me himself that one night he was attacked in the street by four men, to whom he would not yield, but kept them all at bay, till the watch came up, and carried both him and them to the round-house. In the play-house at Lichfield, as Mr. Garrick informed me, Johnson having for a moment quitted a chair which was placed for him between the side-scenes, a gentleman took possession of it, and when Johnson on his return civilly demanded his seat, rudely refused to give it up; upon which Johnson laid hold of him, and tossed him and the chair into the pit. Foote, who so successfully revived the old comedy, by exhibiting living characters, had resolved to imitate Johnson on the stage, expecting great profits from his ridicule of so celebrated a man. Johnson being informed of his intention, and being at dinner at Mr. Thomas Davies's the bookseller, from whom I had the story, he asked Mr. Davies " what was the common price of an oak stick;" and being answered six-pence, " Why then, Sir, (said he,) give me leave to send your servant to purchase me a shilling one. I'll have a double quantity; for I am told Foote means to *take me off*, as he calls it, and I am determined the fellow shall not do it with impunity." Davies took care to acquaint Foote of this, which effectually checked the wantonness of the mimick. Mr. Macpherson's menaces made Johnson provide himself with the same implement of defence; and had he been attacked, I have no doubt that, old as he was, he would have made his corporal prowess be felt as much as his intellectual.

His "Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland,"* is a most valuable performance. It abounds in extensive philosophical views of society, and in ingenious sentiments and lively description. A considerable part of it, indeed, consists of speculations, which many

years before he saw the wild regions which we visited together, probably had employed his attention, though the actual sight of those scenes undoubtedly quickened and augmented them. Mr. Orme, the very able historian, agreed with me in this opinion, which he thus strongly expressed:—"There are in that book thoughts, which, by long revolution in the great mind of Johnson, have been formed and polished like pebbles rolled in the ocean !"

That he was to some degree of excess a *true-born Englishman*, so as to have ever entertained an undue prejudice against both the country and the people of Scotland, must be allowed. But it was a prejudice of the head, and not of the heart. He had no ill will to the Scotch; for, if he had been conscious of that, he would never have thrown himself into the bosom of their country, and trusted to the protection of its remote inhabitants with a fearless confidence. His remark upon the nakedness of the country, from its being denuded of trees, was made after having travelled two hundred miles along the eastern coast, where certainly trees are not to be found near the road, and he said it was "a map of the road" which he gave. His disbelief of the authenticity of the poems ascribed to Ossian, a Highland bard, was confirmed in the course of his journey, by a very strict examination of the evidence offered for it; and although their authenticity was made too much a national point by the Scotch, there were many respectable persons in that country who did not concur in this; so that his judgement upon the question ought not to be decried, even by those who differ from him. As to myself, I can only say, upon a subject now become very uninteresting, that when the fragments of Highland poetry first came out, I was much pleased with their wild peculiarity, and was one of those who subscribed to enable their editor, Mr. Macpherson, then a young man, to make a search in the Highlands and Hebrides for a long poem in the Erse language, which was reported to be preserved somewhere in those regions. But when there came forth an Epick Poem in six books, with all the common circumstances of former compositions of that nature; and when, upon an attentive examination of it, there was found a perpetual recurrence of the same images which appear in the fragments; and when no ancient manuscript, to authenticate the work, was deposited in any publick library, though that was insisted on as a reasonable proof, *who* could forbear to doubt?

Johnson's grateful acknowledgements of kindnesses received in the course of this tour, completely refute the brutal reflections which have been thrown out against him, as if he had made an ungrateful return; and his delicacy in sparing in his book those who we find

from his letters to Mrs. Thrale, were just objects of censure, is much to be admired. His candour and amiable disposition is conspicuous from his conduct, when informed by Mr. Macleod, of Rasay, that he had committed a mistake, which gave that gentleman some uneasiness. He wrote him a courteous and kind letter, and inserted in the newspapers an advertisement, correcting the mistake/

The observations of my friend Mr. Dempster in a letter written to me, soon after he had read Dr. Johnson's book, are so just and liberal, that they cannot be too often repeated :

* * * * *

" There is nothing in the book, from beginning to end, that a Scotchman need to take amiss. What he says of the country is true; and his observations on the people are what must naturally occur to a sensible, observing, and reflecting inhabitant of a convenient metropolis, where a man on thirty pounds a year may be better accommodated with all the little wants of life, than Col or Sir Allan.

" I am charmed with his researches concerning the Erse language, and the antiquity of their manuscripts. I am quite convinced ; and I shall rank Ossian, and his Fingals and Oscars, amongst the nursery tales, not the true history of our country, in all time to come.

" Upon the whole, the book cannot displease, for it has no pretensions. The authour neither says he is a geographer, nor an antiquarian, nor very learned in the history of Scotland, nor a naturalist, nor a fossilist. The manners of the people, and the face of the country, are all he attempts to describe, or seems to have thought of. Much were it to be wished, that they who have travelled into more remote, and of course more curious regions, had all possessed his good sense. Of the state of learning, his observations on Glasgow University shew he has formed a very sound judgement. He understands our climate too; and he has accurately observed the changes, however slow and imperceptible to us, which Scotland has undergone, in consequence of the blessings of liberty and internal peace."

* * * * *

Mr. Knox, another native of Scotland, who has since made the same tour, and published an account of it, is equally liberal. " I have read (says he,) his book again and again, travelled with him

from Berwick to Glenelg, through countries with which I am well acquainted; sailed with him from Glenelg to Rasay, Sky, Rum, Col, Mull, and Icolmkill, but have not been able to correct him in any matter of consequence. I have often admired the accuracy, the precision, and the justness of what he advances, respecting both the country and the people.

"The Doctor has every where delivered his sentiments with freedom, and in many instances with a seeming regard for the benefit of the inhabitants, and the ornament of the country. His remarks on the want of trees and hedges for shade, as well as for shelter to the cattle, are well founded, and merit the thanks, not the illiberal censure of the natives. He also felt for the distresses of the Highlanders, and explodes, with great propriety, the bad management of the grounds, and the neglect of timber in the Hebrides."

Having quoted Johnson's just compliments on the Rasay family, he says, "On the other hand, I found this family equally lavish in their encomiums upon the Doctor's conversation, and his subsequent civilities to a young gentleman of that country, who, upon waiting upon him at London, was well received, and experienced all the attention and regard that a warm friend could bestow. Mr. Macleod having also been in London, waited upon the Doctor, who provided a magnificent and expensive entertainment, in honour of his old Hebridean acquaintance."

And talking of the military road by Fort Augustus, he says, "By this road, though one of the most rugged in Great-Britain, the celebrated Dr. Johnson passed from Inverness to the Hebride Isles. His observations on the country and people are extremely correct, judicious, and instructive."⁴

His private letters to Mrs. Thrale, written during the course of his journey, which therefore may be supposed to convey his genuine feelings at the time, abound in such benignant sentiments towards the people who shewed him civilities, that no man whose temper is not very harsh and sour, can retain a doubt of the goodness of his heart.

It is painful to recollect with what rancour he was assailed by num-

* Page 103.

Cor. et Ad.—Line 28: After "instructive," read; "Mr. Tytler, the acute and able vindicator of Mary Queen of Scots, in one of his letters to Mr. James Elphinstone, published in that gentleman's 'Forty Years' Correspondence, says, 'I read Dr. Johnson's Tour with very great pleasure. Some few errors he has fallen into, but of no great importance, and those are lost in the numberless beauties of his work.

"'If I had leisure, I could perhaps point out the most exceptional places; but at present I am in the country, and have not his book at hand. It is plain he meant to speak well of Scotland: and he has in my apprehension done us great honour in the most capital article, the character of the inhabitants.'"

bers of shallow irritable North-Britons, on account of his supposed injurious treatment of their country and countrymen, in his "Journey."^v Had there been any just ground for such a charge, would the virtuous and candid Dempster have given his opinion of the book, in the terms which I have quoted? Would the patriotick Knox * have spoken of it as he has done? And let me add, that, citizen of the world as I hold myself to be, I have that degree of predilection for my *natale solum*, nay, I have that just sense of the merit of an ancient nation, which has been ever renowned for its valour, which in former times maintained its independence against a powerful neighbour, and in modern times has been equally distinguished for its ingenuity and industry in civilised life, that I should have felt a generous indignation at any injustice done to it. Johnson treated Scotland no worse than he did even his best friends, whose characters he used to give as they appeared to him, both in light and shade. Some people, who had not exercised their minds sufficiently, condemned him for censuring his friends. But Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose philosophical penetration and justness of thinking are not less known to those who live with him, than his genius in his art is admired by the world, explained his conduct thus: ¹¹ He was fond of discrimination, which he could not shew without pointing out the bad as well as the good in every character; and as his friends were those whose characters he knew best, they afforded him the best opportunity for shewing the acuteness of his judgement."

He expressed to his friend Mr. Windham of Norfolk, his wonder at the extreme jealousy of the Scotch, and their resentment at having their country described by him as it really was; when, to say that it was a country as good as England, would have been a gross falsehood. "None of us, (said he,) would be offended if a foreigner who has travelled here should say, that vines and olives don't grow in England." And as to his prejudice against the Scotch, which I always ascribed to that nationality which he observed in *them*, he said to the same gentleman, "When I find a Scotchman to whom an Englishman is as a Scotchman, that Scotchman shall be as an Englishman to me." His intimacy with many gentlemen of Scotland, and his employing so many natives of that country as his amanuenses, prove that his prejudice was not virulent; and I have deposited in the British Museum, amongst other pieces of his writing,

* I observe with much regret, while this work is passing through the press, (August, 1790,) that this ingenious gentleman is dead.

Cor. et Ad.—Line 6: After "done," read: "Would Mr. Tytler, surely

— a Scot, if ever Scot there were—

have expressed himself thus?

the following note, in answer to one from me, asking if he would meet me at dinner at the Mitre, though a friend of mine, a Scotchman, was to be there :—"Mr. Johnson does not see why Mr. Boswell should suppose a Scotchman less acceptable than any other man. He will be at the Mitre."

My much valued friend Dr. Barnard, now Bishop of Killaloe, having once expressed to him an apprehension, that if he should visit Ireland he might treat the people of that country more unfavourably than he had done the Scotch, he answered with strong pointed double-edged wit, "Sir, you have no reason to be afraid of me. The Irish are not in a conspiracy to cheat the world by false representations of the merits of their countrymen. No, Sir; the Irish are a FAIR PEOPLE :—they never speak well of one another."

Johnson told me an instance of Scottish nationality, which made a very unfavourable impression upon his mind. A Scotchman, of some consideration in London, solicited him to recommend, by the weight of his learned authority, to be master of an English school, a person of whom he who recommended him confessed he knew no more but that he was his countryman. Johnson was shocked at this unconscientious conduct.

All the miserable cavillings against his *'Journey,'¹ in newspapers, magazines, and other fugitive publications, I can speak from certain knowledge, only furnished him with sport. At last there came out a scurrilous volume, larger than Johnson's own, filled with malignant abuse, under a name, real or fictitious, of some low man in an obscure corner of Scotland, though supposed to be the work of another Scotchman, who has found means to make himself well known both in Scotland and England.¹ The effect which it had

¹ By one McNicol. "There has been lately published at London a book entitled 'Remarks on Dr. Johnson's Tour into the Hebrides.' This book has been many years in composing. It underwent a vast variety of editions in MS., and has been corrected, amended, and improved by many hands in Scotland, and, finding its way to London, was prepared for the press by a friendly embellisher. These amendments and additions are ascribed to Mr. Macpherson himself. How far this is true I do not pretend to say. . . . The book was written on purpose to establish the genuineness of the poems. How far it has succeeded appears from the following fraud, the only argument adduced:—* But as Dr. Johnson may think it too great a trouble to travel again to the Highlands for a sight of old

MSS-, I shall put him in a way of being satisfied nearer home. If he will but call some morning on John Machewrie, Esq., of the Temple, secretary to the Highland Society, he will find in London more volumes in the Gaelic character, &c. . . . Among these is a volume which contains some of Ossian's poems.' "Mr. Shaw eagerly inspected these papers, and found them to be Irish, and having no connection with Ossian. "We have every reason to believe that this is the very manuscript, if any, that was left at Becket's by Mr. Macpherson, some time ago, with a view to impose it as that of Ossian; for I am credibly informed this very piece was sent to Mr. Machewrie by him."—*Enquiry into the Authenticity of the Poems ascribed to Ossian*, by W. Shaw, 1871.

upon Johnson was, to produce this pleasant observation to Mr. Seward, to whom he lent the book : " This fellow must be a block-head. They don't know how to go about their abuse. Who will read a five shilling book against me ? No, Sir, if they had wit, they should have kept pelting me with pamphlets."

Mr. BOSWELL to Dr. JOHNSON.

" Edinburgh, Feb. 18, 1775.

" You would have been very well pleased if you had dined with me to day. I had for my guests, Macquharrie, young Maclean of Col, the successor of our friend, a very amiable man, though not marked with such active qualities as his brother, Mr. Maclean of Torloisk in Mull a gentleman of Sir Allan's family, and two of the clan Grant, so that the Highland and Hebridean genius reigned. We had a great deal of conversation about you, and drank your laealth in a bumper. The toast was not proposed by me, which is a circumstance to be remarked, for I am now so connected with you, that any thing that I can say or do to your honour has not the value of an additional compliment. It is only giving you a guinea out of that treasure of admiration which already belongs to you, and which is no hidden treasure; for I suppose my admiration of you is co-existent with the knowledge of my character.

¹⁴ I find that the Highlanders and Hebrideans in general are much fonder of your ' Journey,' than the low-country or *hither* Scots. One of the Grants said to day, that he was sure you were a man of a good heart, and a candid man, and seemed to hope he should be able to convince you of the antiquity of a good proportion of the poems of Ossian. After all that has passed, I think the matter is capable of being proved to a certain degree. I am told that Macpherson got one old Erse MS. from Clanranald, for the restitution of which he executed a formal obligation ; and it is affirmed, that the Gaelick (call it Erse or call it Irish,) has been written in the Highlands and Hebrides for many centuries. It is reasonable to suppose, that such of the inhabitants as acquired any learning, possessed the art of writing as well as their Irish neighbours and Celtick cousins; and the question is, can sufficient evidence be shewn of this ?

" Those who are skilled in ancient writings can determine the age of MSS. or at least can ascertain the century in which they were written ; and if men of veracity, who are so skilled, shall tell us that MSS. in the possession of families in the Highlands and isles, are the works of a remote age, I think we should be convinced by their testimony.

THE LIFE OF DR. JOHNSON.

" There is now come to this city, Ranald Macdonald, from the Isle of Egg, who has several MSS. of Erse poetry, which he wishes to publish by subscription. I have engaged to take three copies of the book, the price of which is to be six shillings, as I would subscribe for all the Erse that can be printed, be it old or new, that the language may be preserved. This man says, that some of his manuscripts are ancient; and, to be sure, one of them which was shewn to me does appear to have the duskyness of antiquity.

* * * * *

" The inquiry is not yet quite hopeless, and I should think that the exact truth may be discovered, if proper means be used. I am, &c.

" JAMES BOSWELL."

To JAMES BOSWELL, Esq.

" DEAR SIR,—I am sorry that I could get no books for my friends in Scotland. Mr. Strahan has at last promised to send two dozen to you. If they come, put the names of my friends into them; you may cut them out,* and paste them with a little starch in the book.

" You then are going wild about Ossian. Why do you think any part can be proved? The dusky manuscript of Egg is probably not fifty years old; if it be an hundred, it proves nothing. The tale of Clanranald has no proof. Has Clanranald told it? Can he prove it? There are, I believe, no Erse manuscripts. None of the old families had a single letter in Erse that we heard of. You say it is likely that they could write. The learned, if any learned there were, could; but knowing by that learning some written language, in that language they wrote, as letters had never been applied to their own. If there are manuscripts, let them be shewn, with some proof that they are not forged for the occasion. You say many can remember parts of Ossian. I believe all those parts are versions of the English, at least there is no proof of their antiquity.

" Macpherson is said to have made some translations himself; and having taught a boy to write it, ordered him to say that he had learned it of his grandmother. The boy, when he grew up, told the story. This Mrs. Williams heard at Mr. Strahan's table. Do not be credulous; you know how little a Highlander can be trusted. Macpherson is, so far as I know, very quiet. Is not that proof enough? Everything is against him. No visible manuscript; no inscription in the language: no correspondence among friends: no transaction of business, of which a single scrap remains in the

* From a list in his hand-writing.

ancient families. Macpherson's pretence is, that the character was Saxon. If he had not talked unskilfully of *manuscripts*^a he might have fought with oral tradition much longer. As to Mr. Grant's information, I suppose he knows much less of the matter than ourselves.

"In the mean time, the bookseller says that the sale * is sufficiently quick. They printed four thousand. Correct your copy wherever it is wrong, and bring it up. Your friends will all be glad to see you. I think of going myself into the country about May.

"I am sorry that I have not managed to send the books sooner. I have left four for you, and do not restrict you absolutely to follow my directions in the distribution. You must use your own discretion.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell; I suppose she is now just beginning to forgive me. I am, dear Sir,

"Your humble servant,

"Feb. 25, 1775"

"S A M. JOHNSON.

On Tuesday, March 21, I arrived in London;¹ and on repairing to Dr. Johnson's before dinner, found him in his study, sitting with Mr. Peter Garrick, the elder brother of David, strongly resembling him in his countenance and voice, but of more sedate and placid manners. Johnson informed me, that "though Mr. Beauclerk was in great pain, it was hoped he was not in danger, and that he now wished to consult Dr. Heberden to try the effect of a *new understanding*." Both at this interview, and in the evening at Mr. Thrale's, where he and Mr. Peter Garrick and I met again, he was vehement on the subject of the Ossian controversy; observing, "We do not know that there are any ancient Erse manuscripts; and we have no other reason to disbelieve that there are men with three heads, but that we do not know that there are any such men." He also was outrageous, upon his supposition that my countrymen "loved Scotland better than truth," saying, "All of them,—nay not all,—but *droves* of them, would come up, and attest any thing for the honour of Scotland." He also persevered in his wild

a Of his "Journey tu the Western Islands ot Scotland."

¹ Boswell was eager to get te town. "I am still very-unhappy with my father," he had written; "we are so totally different, that a good understanding is scarcely possible. He looks on my going to London just now as an

expedition, as idle and extrava[^]nnat. when in re.dity it is highly improving us me, considering the company whith I enjoy; and I think it is also for my interest, as in time I may get something." —*Letter to Temple*.

allegation, that he questioned if there was a tree between Edinburgh and the English borders older than himself. I assured him he was mistaken, and suggested that the proper punishment would be that he should receive a stripe at every tree above a hundred years old, that was found within that space. He laughed, and said, "I believe I might submit to it for a *bawbie*!"

The doubts which, in my correspondence with him, I had ventured to state as to the justice and wisdom of the conduct of Great-Britain towards the American colonies, while I at the same time requested that he would enable me to inform myself upon that momentous subject, he had altogether disregarded; and had recently published a pamphlet, entitled, "Taxation no Tyranny; an Answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress."*

He had long before indulged most unfavourable sentiments of our iellow subjects in America. For, as early as 1769, I was told by Dr. John Campbell, that he had said of them, "Sir, they are a race of convicts, and ought to be thankful for anything we allow them short of hanging."

Of this performance I avoided to talk with him; for I had now formed a clear and settled opinion, that the people of America were well warranted to resist a claim that their fellow-subjects in the mother-country should have the entire command of their fortunes, by taxing them without their own consent; and the extreme violence which it breathed, appeared to me so unsuitable to the mildness of a Christian philosopher, and so directly opposite to the principles of peace which he had so beautifully recommended in his pamphlet respecting Falkland's Islands, that I was sorry to see him appear in so unfavourable a light. Besides, I could not perceive in it that ability of argument, or that felicity of expression, for which he was, upon other occasions, so eminent. Positive assertion, sarcastical severity, and extravagant ridicule, which he himself reprobated as a test of truth, were united in this rhapsody.

That this pamphlet was written at the desire of those who were then in power, I have no doubt; and, indeed, he owned to me, that it had been revised and curtailed by some of them. He told me, that they had struck out one passage, which was to this effect: "That the Colonists could with no solidity argue from their not having been taxed while in their infancy, that they should not now be taxed. We do not put a calf into the plough; we wait till he is an ox." He said, "They struck it out either critically, as too ludicrous, or politically, as too exasperating. I care not which. It was their business. If an architect says, I will build five stories,

and the man who employs him says, I will have only three, the employer is to decide." " Yes, Sir, (said I,) in ordinary cases. But should it be so when the architect gives his skill and labour *gratis?*¹¹

Unfavourable as I am constrained to say my opinion of this pamphlet was, yet, since it was congenial with the sentiments of numbers at that time, and as every thing relating to the writings of Dr. Johnson is of importance in literary history, I shall therefore insert some passages which were struck out, it does not appear why, either by himself or those who revised it. They appear printed in a few proof leaves of it in my possession, marked with corrections in his own hand-writing. I shall distinguish them by *Italicks*.

In the paragraph where he says, the Americans were incited to resistance by European intelligence from " men whom they thought their friends, but who were friends only to themselves," there followed,—"*and made, by their selfishness, the enemies of their country.*"¹¹

And the next paragraph ran thus : " On the original contrivers of mischief, *rather than on those whom they have deluded,* let an insulted nation pour out its vengeance."

The paragraph which came next was in these words: " *Unhappy is that country, in which men can hope for advancement by favouring its enemies. The tranquillity of stable government is not always easily preserved against the machinations of single innovators; but what can be the hope of quiet, when factions hostile to the legislature can be openly formed and openly avowed?*"¹¹

After the paragraph which now concludes the pamphlet, there followed this, in which he certainly means the great Earl of Chatham, and glances at a certain popular Lord Chancellor:

" *If, by the fortune of war, they drive us utterly away, what they will do next can only be conjectured. If a new monarchy is erected, they will want a KING. He who first takes into his hand the sceptre of America, should have a name of good omen. WILLIAM has been known both as conqueror and deliverer; and perhaps England, however contemned, might yet supply them with ANOTHER WILLIAM. Whigs, indeed, are not willing to be governed; and it is possible that KING WILLIAM may be strongly inclined to guide their measures; but Whigs have been cheated like other mortals, and suffered their leader to become their tyrant, under the name of their PROTECTOR. What more they will receive from England, no man can tell. In their rudiments of empire they may want a CHANCELLOR.*"

Then came this paragraph:

"Their numbers are, at present, not quite sufficient for the greatness which, in some form of government or other, is to rival the ancient monarchies ; but, by Dr. Franklin's rule of progression, they will, in a century and a quarter, be more than equal to the inhabitants of Europe. When the Whigs of America are thus multiplied, let the Princes of the earth tremble in their palaces. If they should continue to double and to double, their own hemisphere will not contain them. But let not our boldest opponents of authority look forward with delight to this futurity of Whiggism."

How it ended I know not, as it is cut off abruptly at the foot of the last of these proof pages.

His pamphlets in support of the measures of administration were published on his own account, and he afterwards collected them into a volume, with the title of " Political Tracts, by the Authour of the Rambler," with this motto,

*" Fallitur egregio quisquis sub Principe credit
Servitium, numquam libertas gratior extat
Quam sub Rege pio"* CLAUDIANUS.

These pamphlets drew upon him numerous attacks. Against the common weapons of literary warfare he was hardened ; but there were two instances of animadversion which I communicated to him, and from what I could judge, both from his silence and his looks, appeared to me to impress him much.

One was, a " A Letter to Dr. Samuel Johnson, occasioned by his late political Publications."¹ It appeared previous to his " Taxation no Tyranny," and was written by Dr. Joseph Towers. In that performance, Dr. Johnson was treated with the respect due to so eminent a man, while his conduct as a political writer was boldly and pointedly arraigned, as inconsistent with the character of one, who, if he did employ his pen upon politicks, " it might reasonably be expected should distinguish himself, not by party violence and rancour, but by moderation and by wisdom."

It concluded thus : " I would, however, wish you to remember, should you again address the publick under the character of a political writer, that luxuriance of imagination or energy of language will ill compensate for the want of candour, of justice, and of truth.

¹ Another, entitled " Resistance no Rebellion," was by " Dick Good-enough." Dr. Hoadly, writing of it to

Garrick, speaks of Johnson by the nickname of " Puffly Pensioner."*—*Gar. Car.*, **il 68.**

And I shall only add, that should I hereafter be disposed to read, as I heretofore have done, the most excellent of all your performances, * THE RAMBLER,* the pleasure which I have been accustomed to find in it will be much diminished by the reflection that the writer of so moral, so elegant, and so valuable a work, was capable of prostituting his talents in such productions as * The False Alarm,* the * Thoughts on the Transactions respecting Falkland's Islands,* and «The Patriot.' "

I am willing to do justice to the merit of Dr. Towers, of whom I will say, that although I abhor his Whiggish democratical notions and propensities, (for I will not call them principles,) I esteem him as an ingenious, knowing, and very convivial man.¹

The other instance was a paragraph of a letter to me, from my oid and most intimate friend the Reverend Mr. Temple, who wrote the character of Gray, which has had the honour to be adopted both by Mr. Mason and Dr. Johnson in their accounts of that poet. The words were, " How can your great, I will not say your *pious*, but your *moral* friend, support the barbarous measures of administration, which they have not the face to ask even their infidel pensioner Hume to defend."

However confident of the rectitude of his own mind, Johnson may have felt sincere uneasiness that his conduct should be erroneously imputed to unworthy motives, by good men, and that the influence of his valuable writings should on that account be in any degree obstructed or lessened.

He complained to a Right Honourable friend,² of distinguished talents and very elegant manners, with whom he maintained a long intimacy, and whose generosity towards him will afterwards appear,

¹ About this time there arrived in town a lively Irish clergyman, Dr. Campbell, who was anxious to mix in the literary society of London. His diary, though it found its way to New South Wales, has by an extraordinary chance been preserved, with some characteristic passages where Boswell's reports are defective. Sterne's journal, kept for Mr. Draper's amusement, has escaped destruction by a similar fortunate chance, being found, as its possessor, Mr. Gibbs of Bath, informs me, in a plate-warmer. On March the 16th Dr. Campbell dined with the Thrales, where he met Baretti and Johnson. His first impressions of the latter were singular: "He has the aspect of an idiot, without the faintest ray of sense gleaming from any one feature—with the most awkward garb

and unpowdered grey wig on one side only of his head—he is for ever dancing the devil's jig, and sometimes he makes the most drivelling efforts to whistle some thought in his absent paroxisms." "When "Taxation no Tyranny" was spoken of, "he cast out all his nets to know the sense of the town about his pamphlet, which he said did not sell. Mr. Thrale told him that such and such members of the House admired it. * And why did you not tell me that,' quoth Johnson." Sir Joshua Reynolds was then mentioned. "'I suppose,' quoth Thrale, 'he has been busy of late.' 'No,' says the Doctor; 'but I nevei look at his pictures, so he won't read my writings.'"

^a Presumed to be "single-speech" Hamilton.

that his pension having been given to him as a literary character, he had been applied to by administration to write political pamphlets; and he was even so much irritated, that he declared his resolution to resign his pension. His friend shewed him the impropriety of such a measure, and he afterwards expressed his gratitude, and said he had received good advice. To that friend he once signified a wish to have his pension secured to him for his life; but he neither asked nor received from government any reward whatsoever for his political labours.

On Friday, March 24, I met him at the LITERARY CLUB, where were Mr. Beauclerk, Mr. Langton, Mr. Colman, Dr. Percy, Mr. Vesey, Sir Charles Bunbury, Dr. George Fordyce, Mr. Steevens, and Mr. Charles Fox. Before he came in, we talked of his "Journey to the Western Islands," and of his coming away, "willing to believe the second sight," which seemed to excite some ridicule. I was then so impressed with the truth of many of the stories of it which I had been told, that I avowed my conviction, saying, "He is only *willing* to believe, I *do* believe. The evidence is enough for me, though not for his great mind. What will not fill a quart bottle will fill a pint bot'le. I am filled with belief." "Are you? (said Colman,) then cckk it up."

I found his "Journey" the common topick of conversation in London at this time, wherever I happened to be. At one of Lord Mansfield's formal Sunday evening conversations, strangely called *Levees*, his Lordship addressed me, "We have all been reading your travels, Mr. Boswell." I answered, "I was but the humble attendant of Dr. Johnson." The Chief Justice replied, with that air and manner which none, who ever saw and heard him, can forget, "He speaks ill of nobody but Ossian."

Johnson was in high spirits this evening at the club, and talked with great animation and success. He attacked Swift, as he used to do upon all occasions. " *The Tale of a Tub' is so much superiour to his other writings, that one can hardly believe he was the authour of it. There is in it such a vigour of mind, such a swarm of thoughts, so much of nature, and art, and life." I wondered to hear him say of "Gulliver's Travels," "When once you have thought of big men and little men, it is very easy to do all the rest." I endeavoured to make a stand for Swift, and tried to rouse those who were much more able to defend him; but in vain. Johnson at last of his own accord allowed very great merit to the inventory of articles found in the pockets of the Man Mountain, particularly the description of his watch, which it was conjectured was his GOD, as

^a Johnson's "Journey to the Westc'H Islands of Scotland," edit. 1785, p. 256.

he consulted it upon all occasions. He observed, that "Swi't put his name to but two things, (after he had a name to put,) * *The Plan for the Improvement of the English Language,*' and the last * *Drapier's Letter.*"

From Swift, there was an easy transition to Mr. Thomas Sheridan. —JOHNSON. "Sheridan is a wonderful admirer of the tragedy of Douglas, and presented its authour with a gold medal.¹ Some years ago, at a coffee-house in Oxford, I called to him, 'Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Sheridan, how came you to give a gold medal to Home, for writing that foolish play?' This, you see, was wanton and insolent; but I *meant* to be wanton and insolent. A medal has no value but as a itamp of merit. And was Sheridan to assume to himself the right of giving that stamp? If Sheridan was magnificent enough to bestow a gold medal as an honorary reward of dramattick excellence, he should have requested one of the Universities to choose the person on whom it should be conferred. Sheridan had no right to give a stamp of merit: it was counterfeiting Apollo's coin."

On Monday, March 27, I breakfasted with him at Mr. Strahan's. He told us, that he was engaged to go that evening to Mrs. Abington's benefit. "She was visiting some ladies whom I was visiting, and begged that I would come to her benefit. I told her I could not hear: but she insisted so much on my coming, that it would have been brutal to have refused her." This was a speech quite characteristical. He loved to bring forward his having been in the gay circles of life; and he was, perhaps, a little vain of the solicitations of this elegant and fashionable actress. He told us, the play was to be "The Hypocrite," altered from Cibber's "Nonjuror," so as to satyryze the Methodists. ** I do not think, (said he,) the character of the Hypocrite justly applicable to the Methodists; but it was very applicable to the Nonjurors. I once said to Dr. Madan, a clergyman of Ireland, who was a great Whig, that perhaps a Nonjuror would have been less criminal in taking the oaths imposed by the ruling power, than refusing them; because refusing them, necessarily laid him under almost an irresistible temptation to be more criminal; for, a man *must* live, and if he precludes himself from the support furnished by the establishment, will probably be reduced to very wicked shifts to maintain himself." • BOSWELL. "I should

• This was not merely a cursory remark; for in his *Life of Fenton* he observes, *With many other wise and virtuous men, who at that time of discord and debate [about the beginning of this century,] consulted conscience well or ill informed, more than interest, he doubted the legality of the government; and refusing to

¹ He had promised the authour a night's receipts, which, however, fell short, and sent him the medal instead,

think, Sir, that a man who took the oaths contrary to his principles, was a determined wicked man, because he was sure he was committing perjury : whereas a Nonjuror might be insensibly led to do what was wrong, without being so directly conscious of it." JOHN-SON. " Why, Sir, a man who goes to bed to his patron's wife is pretty sure that he is committing wickedness.*" BOSWELL. " Did the nonjuring clergymen do so, Sir?" JOHN-SON. " I am afraid many of them did/'

I was startled at his argument, and could by no means think it convincing. Had not his own father complied with the requisition of government, (as to which he once observed to me, when I pressed him upon it, " *That, Sir, he was to settle with himself,*") he would probably have thought more unfavourably of a Jacobite who took the oaths:

"—————had he not resembled
My father as he *swore*—————"

Mr. Strahan talked of launching into the great ocean of London, in order to have a chance for rising to eminence, and observing that many men were kept back from trying their fortune there, because they were born to a competency, said, " Small certainties are the bane of men of talents:" which Johnson confirmed. Mr. Strahan put Johnson in mind of a remark which he had made to him ; " There are few ways in which a man can be more innocently employed than in getting money." " The more one thinks of this, (said Strahan,) the juster it will appear."

Mr. Strahan had taken a poor boy from the country as an apprentice, upon Johnson's recommendation. Johnson having inquired after him, said, " Mr. Strahan, let me have five guineas on account,

qualify himself for publick employment, by talcing the oaths required, left the university without a degree." This conduct, Johnson calls " perverseness Or integrity."

The question concerning the morality of taking oaths, of whatever kind, imposed by the prevailing power at the time, rather than to be excluded from all consequence, or even any considerable usefulness in society, has been agitated with all the acuteness of casuistry. It is related, that he who devised the oath of abjuration, profligately boasted, that he had framed a test which should damn one half of the nation, and starve the other. Upon minds not exalted to indexible rectitude, or minds in which zeal for a party is piedommant to excess, taking thai oath against conviction, may have been palliated under the plea of necessity, or ventured upon in heat, as upon the whole producing more good than evil.

At a county election in Scotland, many years ago, when there was a warm contest between the friends of the Hanoverian succession and those against it, the oath of abjuration having been demanded, the freeholders upon one side rose to go away. Upon which a very sanguine gentleman, *one of* their number, ran to the door to stop them, calling out with much earnestness, " Stay, stay, my friends, and let us swear the rogues out of it l "

and I'll give this boy one. Nay, if a man recommends a boy, and does nothing for him, it is sad work. Call him down."

I followed him into the court-yard, behind Mr. Strahan's house; and there I had a proof of what I had heard him profess, that he talked alike to all. "Some people (said he,) tell you that they let themselves down to the capacity of their hearers. I never do that. I speak uniformly, in as intelligible a manner as I can."

"Well, my boy, how do you go on?*"—"Pretty well, Sir; but they are afraid I ain't strong enough for some parts of the business." JOHNSON. "Why I shall be sorry for it; for when you consider with how little mental power and corporeal labour a printer can get a guinea a week, it is a very desirable occupation for you. Do you hear,—take all the pains you can; and if this does not do, we must think of some other way of life for you. There's a guinea."

Here was one of the many, many instances of his active benevolence. At the same time, the slow and sonorous solemnity with which, while he bent himself down, he addressed a little thick short-legged boy, contrasted with the boy's awkwardness and awe, could not but excite some ludicrous emotions.

I met him at Drury-lane playhouse in the evening. Sir Joshua Reynolds, at Mrs. Abington's request, had promised to bring a body of wits to her benefit; and having secured forty places in the front boxes, had done me the honour to put me in the groupe.¹ Johnson sat on the seat directly behind me; and as he could neither see nor hear at such a distance from the stage, he was wrapped up in grave abstraction, and seemed quite a cloud, amidst all the sunshine of glitter and gaiety. I wondered at his patience in sitting out a play of five acts, and a farce of two. He said very little; but after the prologue to "Bon Ton"² had been spoken, which he could hear pretty well from the more slow and distinct utterance, he observed, "Dryden has written prologues superiour to any that David Garrick has written; but David Garrick has written more good prologues than Dryden has done. It is wonderful that he has been able to write such a variety of them."

At Mr. Beauclerk's, where I supped, was Mr. Garrick, whom I made happy with Johnson's praise of his prologues; and I suppose, in gratitude to him, he took up one of his favourite topics,

¹ Mr. Johnson has allowed me to write out a supplement to his journey, but I wish I may be able to settle to it. This House of Commons* work will be good ballast for me. I am little in what is

called the gaiety of London. I went to Mrs. Abington's benefit to please Sir Joshua Reynolds."—*Boswell's Letters*,
² Written by Colman.

the nationality of the Scotch, which he maintained in his pleasant manner, with the aid of a little poetical fiction. "Come, come, don't deny it: they are really national. Why, now, the Adams are as liberal-minded men as any in the world: but, I don't know how it is, all their workmen are Scotch.¹ You are, to be sure, wonderfully free from that nationality; but so it happens, that you employ the only Scotch shoe-black in London." He imitated the manner of his old master with ludicrous exaggeration; repeating, with pauses and half whistlings interjected,

" *Os homini sublime dedit,—cælumque tueri—
Jussit,—et erectos ad sidera—tollere vultus.*"

looking downwards all the time, and, while pronouncing the four last words, absolutely touching the ground with a kind of contorted gesticulation.

Garrick, however, when he pleased, could imitate Johnson very exactly; for that great actor, with his distinguished powers of expression which were so universally admired, possessed also an admirable talent of mimicry. He was always jealous that Johnson spoke lightly of him. I recollect his exhibiting him to me one day, as if saying, "Davy is futile," which he uttered perfectly with the tone and air of Johnson.

I cannot too frequently request of my readers while they peruse my account of Johnson's conversation, to endeavour to keep in mind his deliberate and strong utterance. His mode of speaking was indeed very impressive;* and I wish it could be preserved as

* My noble friend Lord Pembroke said once to me at Wilton, with a happy pleasantry and some truth, that "Dr. Johnson's sayings would not appear so extraordinary, were it not for his *bow-wow way*."* The sayings themselves are generally of sterling merit; but, doubtless, his *manner* was an addition to their effect, and therefore should be attended to as much as may be. It is necessary, however, to guard those who were not acquainted with him, against overcharged imitations or caricatures of his manner, which are frequently attempted, and many of which are second-hand copies from the late Mr. Henderson the actor, who, though a good mimick of some persons, did not represent Johnson correctly.

¹ On the site of the old Durham-yard, where Garrick and Johnson had lodged on first coming to town, they had reared what was then a vast pile, with great arches, the terrace, and adjoining streets. One of the houses, No. 4, was secured by Garrick before its completion. The whole was called the Adelphi, in honour of the brother architects, and the smaller streets, Robert and John, commemorated their Christian names. The interest of their countryman, Lord Mansfield, had to be exerted

to secure Garrick one of the houses, before it was completed. In a spirit of nationality, that now seems ludicrous, they had brought all their masons and bricklayers from Scotland, and the work was stimulated by the monotonous drone of the bagpipe. The labourers, however, soon found that this music made them give more *voivoo* than was profitable, and with a spirit as national as that of their employers, they struck for higher wages.

"Lord Pembroke," writes Boswell

musick is written, according to the very ingenious method of Mr. Steele,* who has shewn how the recitation of Mr. Garrick, and other eminent speakers, might be transmitted to posterity *in score*.

Next day I dined with Johnson at Mr. Thrale's. He attacked Gray, calling him "a dull fellow." BOSWELL. "I understand he was reserved, and might appear dull in company; but surely he was not dull in poetry." JOHNSON. "Sir, he was dull in company, dull in his closet, dull every where. He was dull in a new way, and that made many people think him GREAT. He was a mechanical poet." He then repeated some ludicrous lines, which have escaped my memory, and said, "Is not that GREAT, like his Odes?" Mrs. Thrale maintained that his Odes were melodious; upon which he exclaimed,

¹⁴ Weave the warp, and weave the woof;—

I added, in a solemn tone,

" ' The winding-sheet of Edward's race.'

There is a good line."—"Aye, (said he,) and the next line as a good one;" (pronouncing it contemptuously) :

" ' Give ample verge and room enough,'—

No, Sir, there are but two good stanzas in Gray's poetry, which are in his 'Elegy in a Country Church-yard.'" He then repeated the stanza,

" For who to dumb forgetfulness a prey," &c.

mistaking one word; for instead of *precincts* he said *confines*. He added, "The other stanza I forget."

A young lady who had married a man much her inferiour in rank—being mentioned, a question arose how a woman's relations should behave to her in such a situation; and, while I recapitulate the debate, and recollect what has since happened,¹ I cannot but be

^aSee "*Prosodia Rationalis* ; or, an Essay towards establishing the Melody and Measure of Speech, to be expressed and perpetuated by peculiar Symbols." London, 1779.

Cor. et Ad.—"Lint 3, on "*score*" put the following note :—"I use the phrase *in score*, as Dr. Johnson has explained it in his Dictionary. A *song in SCORE*, the words with the musical notes of a song annexed.' But I understand that in scientific propriety it means all the parts of a musical composition noted down in the characters by which it is exhibited to the eye of the skilful."

"was very obliging to me when he was in Scotland, and has corresponded with me since. I have hopes from him. How happy should I be to get an independency by my own influence while my father is alive ! " This shows amusingly

the motive of the compliments which Boswell distributed through his work to persons from whom "he had hopes."

¹Referring, of course, to Mrs. Thrale's second marriage with a singing-master.

struck in a manner that delicacy forbids me to express. While I contended that she ought to be treated with an inflexible steadiness of displeasure, Mrs. Thrale was all for mildness and forgiveness, and according to the vulgar phrase, making the best of a bad bargain. JOHNSON. "Madam, we must distinguish. Were I a man of rank, I would not let a daughter starve who had made a mean marriage; but having voluntarily degraded herself from the station which she was originally entitled to hold, I would support her only in that which she herself has chosen; and would not put her on a level with my other daughters. You are to consider, Madam, that it is our duty to maintain the subordination of civilised society; and when there is a gross and shameful deviation from rank, it should be punished so as to deter others from the same perversion."

After frequently considering this subject, I am more and more confirmed in what I then meant to express, and which was sanctioned by the authority, and illustrated by the wisdom, of Johnson; and I think it of the utmost consequence to the happiness of Society, to which subordination is absolutely necessary. It is weak, and contemptible, and unworthy, in a parent to relax in such a case. It is sacrificing general advantage to private feelings. And let it be considered, that the claim of a daughter who has acted thus, to be restored to her former situation, is either fanatical or unjust. If there be no value in the distinction of rank, what does she suffer by being kept in the situation to which she has descended? If there be a value in that distinction, it ought to be steadily maintained. If indulgence be shewn to such conduct, and the offenders know that in a longer or shorter time they shall be received as well as if they had not contaminated their blood by a base alliance, the great check upon that inordinate caprice which generally occasions low marriages, will be removed, and the fair and comfortable order of improved life will be miserably disturbed.

Lord Chesterfield's letters being mentioned, Johnson said, "It was not to be wondered at that they had so great a sale, considering that they were the letters of a statesman, a wit, one who had been so much in the mouths of mankind, one long accustomed *virum volitare per ora*"

On Friday, March 31, I supped with him and some friends at a tavern.¹ One of the company¹ attempted, with too much forwardness, to rally him on his late appearance at the theatre; but had reason to repent of his temerity. *'Why, Sir, did you go to Mrs. Abington's benefit? Did you see?" JOHNSON. "No, Sir." "Did

¹ A club meeting.—Croker.

² Probably Buswell himself.

you hear? ^M JOHNSON. "No, Sir." "Why then, Sir, did you go?" JOHNSON. "Because, Sir, she is a favourite of the publick: and when the publick cares the thousandth part for you that it does for her, I will go to your benefit too."

Next morning I won a small bett from Lady Diana Beauclerk, by asking him as to one of his particularities, which her Ladyship laid I durst not do. It seems he had been frequently observed at the club to put into his pocket the Seville oranges, after he had squeezed the juice of them into the drink which he made for himself. Beauclerk and Garrick talked of it to me, and seemed to think that he had a strange unwillingness to be discovered. We could not divine what he did with them; and this was the bold question to be put. I saw on his table the spoils of the preceding night, some fresh peels nicely scraped and cut into pieces. "O, Sir, (said I,) I now partly see what you do with the squeezed oranges which you put into your pocket at the club." JOHNSON. "I have a great love for them." BOSWELL. "And pray, Sir, what do you do with them? You scrape them, it seems, very neatly, and what next?" JOHNSON. "I let them dry, Sir." BOSWELL. "And what next?" JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, you shall know their fate no further." BOSWELL. "Then the world must be left in the dark. It must be said, (assuming a mock solemnity,) he scraped them, and let them dry, but what he did with them next, he never could be prevailed upon to tell." JOHNSON. "Nay, Sir, you should say it more emphatically:—he could not be prevailed upon, even by his dearest friends, to tell."¹

He had this morning received his Diploma as Doctor of Laws from the University of Oxford. He did not vaunt of his new dignity, but I understood he was highly pleased with it. I shall here insert the progress and completion of that high academical honour, in the same manner as I have traced his obtaining that of Master of Arts.

To the Reverend Dr. FOTHERGILL, Vice Chancellor of the University of OXFORD, to be communicated to Heads of Houses, and proposed in Convocation.

"MR. VICE-CHANCELLOR AND GENTLEMEN,—The honour of the degree of M. A. by diploma, formerly conferred upon Mr. SAMUEL JOHNSON, in consequence of his having eminently distinguished him-

¹ "We find, by Dr. Campbell's amusing diary, that Boswell posted straight to Thrale's, to retail the sayings of his great friend. His eagerness about the orange-peel secret was truly absurd. The Doctor's reply that his dearest friend should not know that, this has

made poor Boswell unhappy, and I verily think he is as anxious to know the secret as a green sick girl." Here Murphy told ". . . a comical story of a Scotchman's introduction to Johnson," which was only fresh ridicim* of Boswell, he being its hero.

THE LIFE OF DR. JOHNSON.

Self by the publication of a series of essays, excellently calculated to form the manners of the people, and in which the cause of religion and morality has been maintained and recommended by the strongest powers of argument and elegance of language, reflected an equal degree of lustre upon the University itself.

" The many learned labours which have since that time employed the attention and displayed the abilities of that great man, so much to the advancement of literature and the benefit of the community, render him worthy of more distinguished honours in the republick of letters: and I persuade myself, that I shall act agreeably to the sentiments of the whole University, in desiring that it may be proposed in Convocation to confer on him the degree of Doctor in Civil Law by diploma, to which I readily give my consent; and am,

" Mr. Vice-Chancellor and Gentlemen,

* Your affectionate friend and servant,

" NORTH."

"Dowtiing-street,
March 23, 1775."

DIPLOMA.

" CANCELLARIUS, *Magistri, et Scholares Universitatis Oxoniensis, omnibus ad quos pcesentes Leters pervenerint, Salutem in Domino Sempitertam.*

" SCIATIS, *virum illustrem, SAMUELEM JOHNSON, in omni humanorum literarum genere eruditum, omniumque scientiarum comprehension, felicissimum, scriptis suis, ad popularium mores formandos summd verborum elegantid ac sententiarum gravitate compositis, itu ol'un inclaruisse, ut dignus videretur cui ab Academid sua eximia qucedam laudis pnemia deferentur, qaique venerabilem Magistrorum Ordinem summd cum dignitate cooptaretur :*

" *Cthn verb eudent clarissimum virum tot postea (antique labores, in patriid prasertim lingud ormandd et stabiliendd feliciter impensi, ita insigniverint, nt in Literarum Republicd PRINCEPS jam et PRIMARWS jure habeatur; Nos CANCELLARIUS, Magistri et Scholares Universitatis Oxoniensis, quib talis viri mcrita pari honoris retmneratione exwquentur, et perpetuum sua? simul laudis, nostraque erga l'teras propensissiniie voluntatis extet monumentum, in solenni Convocation Doctorum et Magistrorum regentium et non regentium, pnedictum SAMUELEM JOHNSON Doctorem in Jure Civili renuncia* vimus et constituimus, eunque virtute prasentis Diplomatis singulis juribus, privilegiis et honoribus, ad istum gradum quaqua pertinentibus, frui et gaudere jussimus. In cujus rei testimonium commune Universitatis Oxoniensis sigillum pcesentibus apponi fecimus.*

* Extracted from the Convocation Register, Oxford.

*• *Datum in Domo nostra Convocations die tricesimo mensu Martii, Anno Domini Millesimo, septingentesimo, septuagesimo quinto*"*

⁴¹ *Viro reverendo THOMÆ FOTHERGILL, S. T. P. Universitatis Oxoniensis Vice-Cancellario.*

"S. P. D.

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"*MULTIS non est opus, ut testimonium quo, te pceside, Oxontenses nomen meum posteris commenddrunt, quali animo acceperim compertum faciam. Nemo sibi placens non latatur ; nemo sibi non placet, qui vobis, literarum arbitris, placere potuit. Hoc tamen habet incommodi tantum beneficium, quod mihi nunquam posthac sine vest?ce fames detrimento vel labi liceat vel cessare ; semperque sit timendum, ne quod mihi tarn eximia laudi est, vobis aliquando fiat opprobrio. Vale*"^b

" 7 Id. Apr. 1775."

• The original is in my possession.

Added for third Edition.—[He shewed me the diploma, and allowed me to read it, but would not consent to my taking a copy of it, fearing perhaps that I should blaze it abroad in his life-time. His objection to this appears from his 99th letter to Mrs. Thrale, whom in that letter he thus scolds for the grossness of her flattery of him.—"The other Oxford news is, that they have sent me a degree of Doctor of Laws, with such praises in the Diploma as perhaps ought to make me ashamed ; they are very like your praises. I wonder whether I shall ever shew it to you."

It is remarkable that he never, so far as I know, assumed his title of *Doctor*, but called himself *Mr. Johnson*, as appears from many of his cards or notes to myself, and I have seen many from him to other persons, in which he uniformly takes that designation.—I once observed on his table a letter directed to him with the addition of *Esquire*, and objected to it as being a designation inferiour to that of *Doctor*; but he checked me, and seemed pleased with it, because, as I conjectured, he liked to be sometimes taken out of the class of literary men, and to be merely *genteel*,—*un gentilhomme comme un autre.*]^f

^b The original is in the hands of Dr. Fothergill, then Vice-Chancellor, who made this transcript.

"T. WARTON."

The wordf between "crotchets" are foun- onlyin Malone's and later edition*

END OF VOL L



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