

that his manners, address, style and tone were copied by the more intelligent and polite of the rising generation of his contemporaries. To make more fully believe in his aim, it is enough for him if he could make them something less offensive, a little more pleasant. Far from undertaking to improve the morals of his age, he drew a clear distinction between good manners and good morals, and frankly intimated that he was only an authority on the former. "Good manners," he wrote, "are to particular societies what good morals are to society in general—their cement and their security. And as the laws are enacted to enforce good morals, or at least to prevent the ill effects of bad ones, so there are certain rules of civility, universally implied and received, to enforce good manners and punish bad ones." It may be a matter for regret that good manners and good morals are not identical; but no one can deny that a distance exists between them now no less than in the days of George the Second and his grandson, or that the regulations of the former are very generally substituted for the rules of the latter in that "particular society" which, with characteristic arrogance, claims for itself the honour of being "society *par excellence*." That he had no wish to exalt good breeding above morality, and that notwithstanding his care and industry in defining the rules of polite manners he did not shut his eyes to the existence of another and higher code, the writer intimates further on in the letter just quoted. It is enough for him to know that his ambition, he would be known as Chesterfield the Well Bred, he would prefer to be known as Chesterfield the Just.

Of the letters that have been placed in our hands four were addressed by Chesterfield in his later years to his niece Gertrude, daughter of Sir Charles Hotham, of Scarborough, who married Gertrude Stanhope, daughter of the third Earl of Chesterfield, and sister of the writer. The first of the series contains an allusion to the scandalous connexion of the Duke of Cumberland and Lady Grosvenor, which resulted in loss of reputation to the Duke, and in the pecuniary embarrassment to His Royal Highness, which was compensated by 10,000*l.* as compensation for the injury which he had done a proud peer's domestic affections—

"London, Decem. 9th, 1729.

"Dear Gatty,—I thank you doubly for your last letter, for though I have often heard you say *Bis dat qui cito dat*, your letter, though a short one, was worth two if you had taken more time for them. Had I thought it necessary when we parted to have bid you write to me, I would not have done it, for I love none but free-will offerings; no sacrifices for me. Now that I am writing, what shall I write! The town is at present, in the usual and elegant phrase, barren of news. Lady Grosvenor's scandalous enlivens it, whose *Histoire Amoureuse* sometimes publicly asserted and as often denied, is now confirmed and established. St. Alban's, and not St. James's Street, as at first reported, was the scene of the tender though unfortunate love of the lovely pair. My Lord takes the Law, and my Lady has taken a Lodging in Bond Street, where she now is, and his Highness is not a little proud of having unaltered the reputation of a Woman of Quality. Much good may it do them both, say I. The weather seems to be now set in for frost and snow, so that one may now take air, exercise, and catch cold into the bargain, according to the present fashion. But I will not comply with that fashion, for I find the air in my little Yellow Room rarefied by a good fire, exceedingly comfortable. Lady Chesterfield is somewhat better, though not well yet. Once for all, I now convey her compliments to you and Mr. Agar, but I will do so no more; I likewise desire mine to Mr. Agar, but I will do so no more neither, for Man and Wife till divorced are looked upon both in Law and Gospel as one: nor will I give you of the commonplace New Year's shift, or mingle the form of lying in this season with the real truth, with which I am Yours, C."

At this date Gertrude Hotham had become the wife of Mr. Welbore Ellis Agar.

The "my boy" of the next letter was the writer's godson and heir to the Earldom of Chesterfield,—the remote kinsman whose education was

an affair of amiable and constant concern to Philip Dormer in his declining years. It was to this boy,—while he was Dr. Dodd's pupil in Bloomsbury—that Lord Chesterfield addressed the series of letters on "The Art of Pleading," which were presented to the public in 1753 by an anonymous editor, who observes: "They were chiefly written during the Earl's residence at Bath, and received by his pupil, who was then under the care of Dr. Dodd, that unfortunate and much-to-be-lamented victim to dissipation and extravagance, by whom they were copied, and, as is generally believed, transmitted to the public through the *disgraceful channel of a provincial magazine*." It is worthy of observation that in the education of his lively and very intelligent godson Lord Chesterfield had recourse with undiminished confidence to the system which did so little good for the clownish boy for whom he first initiated the famous "Letters" by which he is chiefly known at the present day. Characteristic also is the tone of gratulation with which the Earl, already in his seventy-sixth year, predicts that his beloved godchild will turn out a gentlemanly prodigy:—

"London, Jan. 20, 1730.

"Dear Gatty,—You will be extremely disappointed when you come to town by finding that I have no cough at all. I am sure you was preparing to attack me upon my ill-breeding in coughing, and people unnecessarily, and when I could so easily hinder it, but if you do, say nothing, for one side are apt to provoke the other. I will deny having ever coughed in my life; so be quiet, and Munk be quiet. My Brother is extremely well, and thinks himself tolerably so, notwithstanding this damp, nuzzling weather. He dines with me to-morrow, together with my Boy, whom he cannot dine without. He does much more to spoil him than I do; for he encourages him in great familiarities, which I never do. I am apt to think he will be something of a libertine when he grows older, but I do not mind that, for I don't like an old young fellow. I will never know his vices, provided they are not scandalous, and as he has parts and knowledge, all will come right again in time. What is doing in the silly, busy world I believe you are as indifferent about as I am. All I know of the matter is, that those who have the places, that is the money, are exceedingly desirous to keep them, and those who have them not are as desirous to get them, that is the money; for the service of the King or the interest of the Public are only pretences for a guinea or two more. Yours most affectionately, C."

Chesterfield's comparative freedom from a vicious tendency generally prevalent amongst persons of all classes in the eighteenth century, and his endeavour to drive gross drunkenness out of fashion at the point of his pen, have been favourite subjects for eulogy with the Earl's biographers and apologists; and it appears from the following letter that this comparative sobriety was less the consequence of a righteous disposition or good taste than of a weak stomach. Making a virtue of necessity, he resigned from habitual excess in wine because vertigo compelled him to do so.

"London, Decem. 9th, 1730.

"Dear Gatty,—I sit down now to acknowledge your letter without the least fear of being interrupted by visitors, for the whole town is in violent motion to-day, and has other and more important things to think of than of me. This strong curiosity in the presence and private interest the public good is endeared to me by my insignificance and retirement in my little yellow room by a good fire. My pulse does not beat one jot quicker because the King goes to the House to-day, and so little curiosity have I that I shall, in all probability, be in bed and asleep to-night without knowing the important events of to-day. Mr. Ellis, who dined with me yesterday, gave me a very bad account of my brother, who, he said, had had stronger and more frequent vertigo than usual. I had them still stronger for twenty years together, and nothing cured them but my totally leaving off wine, and nothing cured them but my accidental salivation; but as this cure is, if possible, worse than the disease, I recommend it to nobody. I know

nobody as tough as your Mother, who braves this cold weather with the utmost intrepidity, and one may very properly say that her Faith has made her whole. I have not seen her these some days, for her Metropolitan, Lady Huntingdon, is in town, and there is general council held upon arduous affairs. Would you think it? I was last week at the famous puppet-show which is *le bon ton* at present, but it was in the morning. I confess my eyes were well entertained with it, for I did not think it possible for the mechanism of wires to cause such various and natural motions. I met many fashionable heads reeking hot as they got out of bed, and I took a great deal of snuff. Good night.—Affectionately yours, C. My compliments to Mr. Agar; but for the last time, *car cela s'en va sans dire*."

Here is a peep into the new rooms at Bath, in which the aged man of fashion, after outliving his contemporaries, found himself alone amidst a crowd:—

"Bath, Oct. 9, 1771.

"Dear Gatty,—When we parted, we agreed to correspond by way of letter, but we did not, as I remember, stipulate which should make the first advance: but as I always sacrifice my Dignity to my Pleasure, I here make the first step, though cozen and counsellor to the King, and your uncle, which is a kind of Deputy Parent. Admire my condescension. To begin, then, with an account of my caducy. I made my journey to this place in two days, which did not think I could have done; much tried with it last night. Since I came I have seen no mortal till last night, when I went to the Ball with which the new Rooms were opened, and when I was there I knew not one creature except Lord and Lady Vere. The new Rooms are really magnificent: finely finished and furnished. The Dancing Room, which the late Lady Thanet used to call the Postures Room, particularly spacious and adorned; a large and fine Glass Room, and a convenient Tea Room, well contrived either to drink or feast with that liquor. So much for this, and more I cannot tell you. As for the people, who are not yet many, they are mostly strangers to me, and I to them. In my review of the fair sex last night I did not see one tolerably handsome, so that I am in no danger of falling in love this season, and indeed my heart and mind are so engrossed by Mr. Agar's fair cousin Mrs. Mathews, that I have no room left for a second choice. I hope that at her return to England he will do me what good offices he can with her. My way is to end my letters abruptly, and without a well-turned period. So God bless you. CHESTERFIELD."

The morality of these notes, no less than the tone of the letter which we purpose to publish next week, is altogether in harmony with the taste and principles of the Earl's published epistles.

CUT OR UN CUT.

Dorn, Bromley, Kent, Jan. 1, 1867.

I was glad to see in your paper of the 15th ult. that you have allowed "A Great Reader" to protest against books being sold uncut. He is obliged to own that many persons like to read and cut the pages at the same time; but, on the other hand, many more like to turn rapidly over the pages of a new book so as to get some notion of its contents and see its illustrations, if thus ornamented. But "A Great Reader" does not notice three valid objections against uncut books. In the first place they sometimes get torn or badly cut, as may be seen with many books in Medley's Library; and I know a lady who is habitually guilty of cutting books with her thumb. Secondly, and which is much more important, dust accumulates on the rough edges, and gradually works in between the leaves, as the books vibrate on their shelves. Thirdly, and most important of all, for those who not merely read but have to study books, is the slowness in finding by the aid of the index any lost passage, especially in works of reference. Who could tolerate a dictionary with rough edges? I have had London's "Encyclopedia of Plants" and Lindley's "Vegetable Kingdom" in constant use during many years, and the cloth binding is still so good that it would have been a useless expense

