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SAMUEL RICHARDSON,

CLARISSA:

Preface, Hints of Prefaces, and Postscript.

Introduction
BY

R. F. BRISSENDEN.

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INTRODUCTION [-i-]

The seven volumes of the first edition of *Clarissa* were published in three instalments during the twelve months from December 1747 to December 1748. Richardson wrote a Preface for Volume I and a Postscript for Volume VII, and William Warburton supplied an additional Preface for Volume III (or IV).[1] A second edition, consisting merely of a reprint of Volumes I-IV was brought out in 1749. In 1751 a third edition of eight volumes in duodecimo and a fourth edition of seven volumes in octavo were published simultaneously.

For the third and fourth editions the author revised the text of the novel, rewrote his own Preface and Postscript, substantially expanding the latter, and dropped the Preface written by Warburton. The additions to the Postscript, like the letters and passages 'restored' to the novel itself, are distinguished in the new editions by points in the margin.

The revised Preface and Postscript, which in the following pages are reproduced from the fourth edition, constitute the most extensive and fully elaborated statement of a theory of fiction ever published by Richardson. The Preface and concluding Note to *Sir Charles Grandison* are, by comparison, brief and restricted in their application; while the introductory material in *Pamela* is, so far as critical theory is concerned, slight and incoherent.

The *Hints of Prefaces for Clarissa*, a transcript of which is also included in this publication, is an equally important and in some ways an even more interesting document. It appears to have been put together by Richardson while he was revising the Preface and Postscript to the first edition. Certain sections of it are preliminary drafts of some of the new material incorporated in the revised Postscript. Large portions of *Hints of Prefaces*, however, were not used then and have never previously appeared in print. Among these are two critical assessments of the novel by Philip Skelton and Joseph Spence; and a number of observations —some merely jottings—by Richardson himself on the structure of the novel and the virtues of the epistolary style. The statements of Skelton and Spence are unusual amongst contemporary discussions of *Clarissa* for their brevity, lucidity, and sustained critical relevance. Richardson's own comments, though disorganized and fragmentary, show that he was attempting to develop a theory of the epistolary novel as essentially dramatic, psychologically realistic, and inherently superior to 'the dry Narrative',[2] particularly as [-ii-] exemplified in the novels of Henry Fielding.

It is impossible to determine how much of *Hints of Prefaces* or of the published Preface and Postscript is Richardson's own work. All were to some extent the result of collaborative effort, and Richardson did not always distinguish clearly between what he had written and what had been supplied by other people.[3] The concluding paragraph of the Postscript, for example, appears in the first edition to be the work of Richardson himself, although in the revised version he indicates that it was composed by someone else. In this instance due acknowledgment may have been easy; but in many other places it may have been extraordinarily difficult for the author/editor to disentangle his own words and ideas from those of his friends.

In preparing the Preface and Postscript Richardson was faced with a genuine problem. He realised that his achievement in *Clarissa* was of sufficient magnitude and novelty to demand some theoretical defence and explanation. But he realised also that he was himself inadequate to the task. 'The very great Advantage of an Academical Education, I have wanted,'[4] he confessed to Mr. D. Graham of King's College. He lacked that familiarity with literature and with the conventions of literary criticism which would have made it easy for him to produce the analysis of his novel which he felt was needed. No wonder he told Graham that 'of all the Species of Writing, I love not Preface-Writing;'[5] and it is not surprising that, both before and after the publication of *Clarissa*, he should have besieged his friends with requests for their opinions of the novel.

In making these requests he was not simply seeking flattery. What he needed were sympathetic critics who could clothe in acceptable language statements which he would recognise as expressing the truth about his masterpiece. *Hints of Prefaces*, especially if read in the context of the numerous replies Richardson received, reveals very plainly the extent to which he was aware of what he wanted from his correspondents. Most, unfortunately, were sadly incapable of producing a *critical* account of the novel. In this company Skelton and Spence were brilliant exceptions; and Richardson's adoption of their statements, apparently to the exclusion of all others, indicates the soundness of his own critical intuitions. Equally interesting is his treatment of Warburton's Preface. Although he did not reprint this in the third and fourth editions, one paragraph from it is preserved in *Hints of Prefaces*.[6] Significantly, it is the only paragraph in Warburton's essay which has something to say about the distinctive qualities of *Clarissa*.

In formulating all these critical statements Richardson is concerned less with developing a [-iii-]
theory of fiction for its own sake than with justifying his action in writing a novel. His main defence, of course, is that *Clarissa* is morally valuable. The reader who expects it to be a 'mere *Novel* or *Romance*'[7] will be disappointed; and, as 'in all Works of This, and of the Dramatic Kind, STORY, or AMUSEMENT, should be considered as little more than the *Vehicle* to the more necessary INSTRUCTION'[8]—a dictum that Fielding was to quote with approval.[9]

The argument, though valid, is excessively laboured. In the Postscript, especially, Richardson is so preoccupied with demonstrating that *Clarissa* is a Christian tragedy that he neglects to develop in any detail the other claims he makes for it. Yet *Hints of Prefaces* shows that he had given considerable thought to what might be called the purely fictive qualities of his novel, and that at one stage he intended to present a much fuller account of them than he finally did. It is also clear that he realized that his didactic purposes could be achieved only if the novel succeeded first at the level of imaginative realism.

From the beginning Richardson claimed to be a realist: *Pamela*, it is announced on the title page, is a 'Narrative which has its Foundation in TRUTH and NATURE;' and the main purpose of the Postscript to *Clarissa* is to demonstrate that the story and the manner in which it is told are consonant both with the high artistic standards set by the Greek dramatists and with the facts of everyday life. The decision not to conclude the story with the reformation of Lovelace and his marriage to the heroine is defended on the grounds that 'the Author ... always thought, that *sudden Conversions* ... had neither *Art*, nor *Nature*, nor even *Probability*, in them;'[10] and in the passage in *Hints of Prefaces*[11] of which this is a condensation, he attempts to make out a case for the second part of *Pamela* as a realistic study of married life. *Clarissa* is stated to be superior to pagan tragedies because it dispenses with the old ideas of poetic justice and takes into account the continuance of life after death. (Richardson has his cake while eating it, however, for he points out that 'the notion of *Poetical Justice* founded on the *modern rules*'[12] is strictly observed in *Clarissa*).

The claim that *Clarissa* presents a generally truthful rendering of life is given its clearest expression by Skelton and Spence. Both emphasize that it is different from conventional romances and novels: 'it is another kind of Work, or rather a new Species of Novel,'[13] we have 'a Work of a new kind among us'.[14] *Clarissa* is concerned with 'the Workings of [-iv-]
private and domestic Passions', says Skelton, and '[not] those of Kings, Heroes, Heroines ... it comes home to the Heart, and to common Life, in every Line.'[15] The author, says Spence, has not followed the example of the writers of romances, but 'has attempted to give a plain and natural Account of an Affair that happened in a private Family, just in the manner that it did happen.'[16]

Richardson's decision not to include these two essays in the Postscript was perhaps influenced by the fact that he was able to use a similar testimonial which had the added virtue of being patently unsolicited. This is the 'Critique on the History of CLARISSA, written in French, and published at Amsterdam',[17] an English translation of which had been printed in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of June and August, 1749. Published anonymously, but written by Albrecht von Haller,[18] this review must have been particularly attractive also to Richardson because of the singular praise it accords his Epistolary method'. It had already been asserted by de Freval, in the first of the introductory letters to *Pamela*, that with this way of writing 'the several Passions of the Mind must ... be more affectingly described, and Nature may be traced in her undisguised Inclinations with much more Propriety and Exactness, than can possibly be found in a Detail of Actions long past;'[19] and von Haller carries the charge even further by claiming not only that it allows the author a greater degree of psychological veracity but also that the convention itself is inherently more realistic than ordinary narrative: 'Romances in general ... are wholly improbable; because they suppose the History to be written after the series of events is closed by the catastrophe: A circumstance which implies a strength of memory beyond all example and probability in the persons concerned.'[20]

Richardson also believed that the epistolary method was superior to the narrative because it was essentially dramatic. Aaron Hill, in one of the introductory letters to *Pamela*, had maintained that 'one of the best-judg'd Peculiars of the Plan' was that the moral instruction was conveyed 'as in a kind of Dramatical Representation';[21] while in the Postscript to *Clarissa* Richardson describes it as a 'History (or rather Dramatic Narrative)'.[22] The parallels which he draws between *Clarissa* and Greek tragedy are directed mainly to

illuminating the tragic rather than the specifically dramatic qualities of the novel. But it is clear that he regarded his work as being closer in every way to the drama than to the epic.

The basic distinction between drama and epic (or any other form of narrative) had been drawn by Aristotle: [-v-]

> The poet, imitating the same object ... may do it either in narration—and that, again, either by personating other characters, as Homer does, or in his own person throughout ... —or he may imitate by representing all his characters as real, and employed in the action itself.[23]

Le Bossu, in his *Treatise of the Epick Poem*, gives his own restatement of this, and amplifies it by pointing to the particular virtues of the drama: by presenting characters directly to the spectators drama 'has no parts exempt from the Action,' and is thus 'entire and perfect'. Fielding was familiar with the *Treatise*, and it is possible that Richardson had also looked at Le Bossu to prepare himself for dealing with the epic theory of his rival.[24]

There were also precedents for placing the novel in the dramatic rather than the epic tradition. Congreve, when he wrote *Incognita* (1692), took the drama as his model. 'Since all Traditions must indisputably give place to the *Drama*,' he wrote in the Preface, 'and since there is no possibility of giving that life to the Writing or Repetition of a Story which it has in the Action, I resolved ... to imitate *Dramatick* Writing ... in the Design, Contexture, and Result of the Plot. I have not observed it before in a Novel.'[25] The analogy with drama had also been drawn by Henry Gally in his *Critical Essay on Characteristic-Writings* (1725), who, after maintaining that 'the essential Parts of the Characters, in the *Drama*, and in *Characteristic-Writings* are the same,' goes on to praise the *Tatler* and the *Spectator* for the 'excellent Specimens in the Characteristic-Way' that they offered their readers.[26] Such acknowledgments of the dramatic potentialities in prose fiction were, however, unusual. The romances were modelled on the epic (Fielding, in fact, describes *Joseph Andrews* in his Preface as a 'comic Romance'); and the picaresque mode in which Smollett wrote had no obviously dramatic qualities. Richardson's advocacy of the novel in which action is presented rather than retailed seems, indeed, curiously modern: it is something Henry James would certainly have understood and approved.

In formulating his own theory of fiction Richardson had Fielding very much in mind. It would be surprising if he had not: the rivalry between the two novelists was open and recognised, although by the time *Clarissa* was published it had assumed the appearance of friendliness. [-vi-] Sarah Fielding's association with Richardson probably had something to do with this; but the reconciliation was largely her brother's own work. His just and generous praise of *Clarissa*—publicly in the *Jacobite's Journal* and privately in a letter to the author—[27] makes full and honourable amends for his mockery of Richardson in *Shamela* and *Joseph Andrews*. If he had not published *Tom Jones* all might have been well. But Richardson could not forgive his old enemy for achieving a triumph in his chosen field so soon after the publication of his own masterpiece. He abused Fielding covertly in letters to his friends; and his revisions of the Preface and Postscript were designed in part to counter the claims for the comic prose epic advanced in *Tom Jones* and elsewhere. *Hints of Prefaces* reveals this more clearly than the published versions of the Preface and Postscript: Richardson unfortunately lacked the courage and confidence to press home the attack.

Hints of Prefaces bears no date, but there is evidence that it was assembled after the first edition of *Clarissa* had appeared and, in part at least, after the publication of *Tom Jones*. Richardson refers directly at one point to 'this Second Publication',[28] and several sections in it are printed (either in full or in a condensed form) only in the revised Postscript. *Hints of Prefaces* therefore cannot be a discarded draft of the Preface and Postscript to the first edition. The final volumes of this first edition came out in December 1748, and *Tom Jones* was published in the following February. A letter from Skelton, dated June 10th, 1749,[29] which mentions an 'inclosed Paper' on *Clarissa*, indicates that his essay did not reach Richardson until after this date; and in the letter to Graham, from which I have already quoted, we find him in the May of 1750 still seeking assistance in the preparation of his Preface.

Apart from such evidence it is obvious that one section of *Hints of Prefaces* is directed specifically at Fielding. In pages [12] and [13] of the manuscript Richardson seems to be answering, consciously and in sequence, arguments brought forward in the Preface to *Joseph Andrews*; the Prefaces contributed by Fielding to the second edition of *The Adventures of David Simple* (1744), by his sister, Sarah, and its sequel, *Familiar Letters between the Principal Characters in David Simple* (1747); and, of course, the introductory chapters in *Tom Jones*. Richardson begins this part of *Hints of Prefaces* with a discussion of the three kinds of romance: those that offer us '*Ridicule*; or *Serious Adventure*; or, lastly, a *Mixture of both*'. He admits 'that there are some Works under the First of these Heads, which have their Excellencies,' but doubts 'whether *Ridicule* is a proper basis ... whereon to [-vii-] build instruction.'[30] The reference here seems clearly to be to the Preface to *Joseph Andrews* where Fielding presents his theory of the comic romance and the ridiculous. Richardson then proceeds to defend his epistolary method—a convention which Fielding had singled out for attack in his Preface to *Familiar Letters*, remarking that 'no one will contend, that the epistolary Style is in general the most proper to a Novelist, or that it hath been used by the best Writers of this Kind.'[31] Even if Richardson had not been a subscriber to Miss

Fielding's small volume, he could scarcely have overlooked a challenge so unequivocal as this. In *Clarissa* he knew that the challenge had been answered triumphantly: among other things it is a complete vindication of the epistolary technique:

> We need not insist on the evident Superiority of this Method to the dry Narrative; where the *Novelist* moves on, his own dull Pace, to the End of his Chapter and Book, interweaving impertinent Digressions, for fear the Reader's Patience should be exhausted...[32]

Tom Jones, with its books, chapters, critical interpolations, and ironical apologies to the reader, is the target here; and Richardson clearly longed to inflict a defeat on its author in the realm of theory as resounding as the one he believed he had achieved over him in practice. His nerve failed him, however, and his defence of the epistolary method as it finally appears in the revised Postscript is cursory and deceptively restrained: 'The author ... perhaps mistrusted his talents for the narrative kind of writing. He had the good fortune to succeed in the Epistolary way once before.'[33]

After completing *Clarissa* Richardson had a clear and conscious apprehension of the scope and unique qualities of his achievement. His ability to give an account of these things, however, was limited, though not so limited as he feared: for his theory of the novel to be fully understood, the final versions of his Preface and Postscript need to be read in conjunction with the hitherto unpublished *Hints of Prefaces for Clarissa*.

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FOOTNOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

[-viii-]

[1] See *Samuel Richardson: a bibliographical Record of his literary Career*, by William Merritt Sale (New Haven, 1936), pp. 49-50.

[2] *Hints of Prefaces for Clarissa*, p. [13], 13.

[3] Postscript (fourth edition), p. 370.

[4] Forster MSS., XV, f 84, May 3, 1750.

[5] Ibid., f 85.

[6] [6], ... Warburton's Preface is reproduced in *Prefaces to Fiction*, With an Introduction by Benjamin Boyce, Augustan Reprint Society Publication Number 32 (Los Angeles, 1952).

[7] Postscript (fourth edition), p. 367.

[8] Preface (first edition) Vol. I, vi.

[9] '*Pleasantry*, (as the ingenious Author of Clarissa says of a Story) *should be made only the Vehicle of Instruction*. *The Covent-Garden Journal*, Number 10, 4th February, 1752. 'If entertainment, as Mr. Richardson observes, be but a secondary consideration in a romance ... it may well be so considered in a work founded, like this, on truth.' *Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon* (London, 1755), The Preface, pp. xvi-xvii.

[10] Postscript (fourth edition), p. 349.

[11] *Hints of Prefaces*, p. [2], 2.

[12] Postscript (fourth edition), p. 359.

[13] *Hints of Prefaces*, p. [8], 7.

[14] Ibid., p. [9], 8.

[15] Ibid., p. [8], 7.

[16] Ibid., p. [9], 8.

[17] Postscript (fourth edition), p. 366, footnote (a).

[18] See Lawrence Marsden Price, 'On The Reception of Richardson in Germany', *JEGP*, XXV (1926), 7-33.

[19] *Pamela* (London, 1741), Vol. I, vii. See *Samuel Richardson's Introduction to Pamela*, edited by Sheridan W. Baker, Jr., Augustan Reprint Society Publication Number 48 (Los Angeles, 1954).

[20] Postscript (fourth edition), p. 366.

[21] *Pamela* (London, 1741), second edition, Vol. I, xviii.

[22] Postscript (fourth edition), p. 351.

[23] *The Poetics*, I, iv, in *Aristotle's Poetics and Rhetoric* (Everyman's Library) (London, 1953), p. 8. [-ix-]

[24] *Monsieur Bossu's Treatise of the Epick Poem* (London, 1695), p. 114. Le Bossu's *Treatise* was first published in France in 1675. Compare, for example, Richardson's use of the term 'episodes' (*Hints of Prefaces*, p. [4], 4) with the *Treatise*, Book II, chapters II-VI.

[25] Op. cit. The Preface to the Reader (unpaginated).

[26] *The Moral Characters of Theophrastus ... To which is prefix'd A Critical Essay on Characteristic-Writings* (London, 1725), pp. 98-99. Reproduced, with an Introduction by Alexander H. Chorney, as Augustan Reprint Society Publication Number 33 (Los Angeles, 1952).

[27] *The Jacobite's Journal*, January 2, 1747 [in mistake for 1748]. Number 5. 'Such Simplicity, such Manners, such deep Penetration into Nature; such Power to raise and alarm the Passions, few Writers, either ancient or modern, have been possessed of ... Sure this Mr. *Richardson* is Master of all that Art which Horace compares to Witchcraft ...' Also, March 5, 1748, Number 14. The letter, dated October 15, 1748, is reprinted in 'A New Letter from Fielding', by E. L. McAdam, Jr., *Yale Review* (NS), XXXVIII (1948-49), 300-310.

[28] *Hints of Prefaces*, p. [12], 11.

[29] Forster MSS., Vol. XV, f 47.

[30] *Hints of Prefaces*, p. [12], 11.

[31] *Familiar Letters between the Principal Characters in David Simple* (London, 1747), Vol. I, ix.

[32] *Hints of Prefaces*, p. [13], 13.

[33] Postscript (fourth edition), p. 365.

HINTS OF PREFACES FOR CLARISSA [-x-]

APPENDIX: Philip Skelton and Joseph Spence

Philip Skelton (1707-1787) was an Irish divine who could well have served as a model for Parson Adams, for in his life he exhibited a vigorous combination of good humour, physical bravery, quixotic gallantry and practical Christianity. The article in the DNB records that 'he studied physic and prescribed for the poor, argued successfully with profligates and sectaries, persuaded lunatics out of their delusions, fought and trounced a company of profane travelling tinkers, and chastised a military officer who persisted in swearing.' During famine he gave liberally to sustain his poor parishioners, on one occasion selling his library to help them. *The Life of Philip Skelton*, by Samuel Burdy, first published in 1792, still makes entertaining and interesting reading. Richardson met Skelton when he visited London in 1748 to publish *Ophiomaches, or Deism Revealed*. On David Hume's recommendation Andrew Millar published the work; and Richardson also seems to have played some part in getting the book accepted (Forster MSS, XV, f 34).

The author of Spence's *Anecdotes* needs no special introduction, although some aspects of his relationship with Richardson are of interest. He apparently first met the novelist late in 1747 or early in 1748. Richardson sought his opinion on *Clarissa* before the final volumes of the first edition had appeared: his letter discussing the novel [*The Correspondence of Samuel Richardson*, edited by Anna Laetitia Barbauld (London, 1804), Vol. II, 319-327], which emphasizes Richardson's truth to 'Nature' and lack of 'Art', makes an interesting contrast with the more considered verdict delivered in his contribution to *Hints of Prefaces*. Before writing this he had almost certainly read *Tom Jones*. In a letter, dated April 15, 1749, he says: 'Tom Jones is my old acquaintance, now; for I read it, before it was publisht: & read it with such rapidity, that I began & ended with in the compass of four days; tho' I took a Journey to St. Albans, in ye same time. He is to me extreamly entertaining....' He seems to have contemplated writing a memoir of Richardson after the novelist's death in 1760.

[See Austin Wright, *Joseph Spence: a critical Biography* (Chicago, 1950), 120-123, 232 n.]

NOTES TO POSTSCRIPT [-xi-]

p. 368, l. 31—p. 369, l. 10:

This passage is part of Richardson's new material for his revised Postscript. What he wrote

in this paragraph, however, was not reproduced completely or accurately in either the third or the fourth editions, in each of which it appears in different but equally incorrect versions. W.M. Sale has offered a convincing explanation of how the mistakes in printing came about, and suggests that the passage should read as follows:

> She was very early happy in the conversation-visits of her learned and worthy Dr. Lewen, and in her correspondencies, not with him only, but with other Divines mentioned in her last Will. Her Mother was, upon the whole, a good woman, who did credit to her birth and her fortune; and was able to instruct her in her early youth: Her Father was not a free-living, or free-principled man; and *both* delighted in her for those improvements and attainments, which gave her, *and them in her*, a distinction that caused it to be said, that when she was out of the family, it was considered but as a common family.

[*Samuel Richardson: a bibliographical Record of his Literary Career* (New Haven, 1936), 59-61].

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The Preface to the first edition is reproduced from a copy at the Huntington Library, the Postscript to the fourth edition of *Clarissa* from a copy in the Rare Books Room of the Library of the University of North Carolina. *Hints of Prefaces for Clarissa* is a transcript of a manuscript in the Forster Collection (Vol. XV, ff 49-58) in the Victoria and Albert Museum. (Single underlinings have been rendered in italics, double underlinings in boldface.) Thanks is extended to these institutions for their kind permission for the reproduction of this material.

CLARISSA.

OR, THE

HISTORY

OF A

YOUNG LADY:

Comprehending

The most Important Concerns *of* Private LIFE,

And particularly shewing,

The DISTRESSES that may attend the Miſconduct
Both of PARENTS and CHILDREN,

In Relation to MARRIAGE.

Publiſhed by the EDITOR *of* PAMELA.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
Printed for S. Richardſon:
And Sold by A. MILLAR, over-againſt *Catharine-ſtreet* in the *Strand*:
J. and JA. RIVINGTON, in *St. Paul's Church-yard*:
JOHN OSBORN, in *Paternoſter Row*;
And by J. LEAKE, at *Bath*.

M.DCC.XLVIII.

Text of Title Page

PREFACE.

The following History is given in a Series of Letters, written principally in a double, yet separate, Correspondence;

Between Two young Ladies of Virtue and Honour, bearing an inviolable Friendship for each other, and writing upon the most interesting Subjects: And

Between Two Gentlemen of free Lives; one of them glorying in his Talents for Stratagem and Invention, and communicating to the other, in Confidence, all the secret Purposes of an intriguing Head, and resolute Heart.

But it is not amiss to premise, for the sake of such as may apprehend Hurt to the Morals of Youth from the more freely-written Letters, That the Gentlemen, tho' professed Libertines as to the Fair Sex, and making it one of their wicked Maxims, to keep no Faith with any of the Individuals of it who throw themselves into their Power, are not, however, either Infidels or Scoffers: Nor yet such as think themselves freed from the Observance of those other moral Obligations, which bind Man to Man. [iv]

On the contrary, it will be found, in the Progress of the Collection, that they very often make such Reflections upon each other, and each upon himself, and upon his Actions, as reasonable Beings, who disbelieve not a future State of Rewards and Punishments (and who one day propose to reform) must sometimes make:—One of them actually reforming, and antidoting the Poison which some might otherwise apprehend would be spread by the gayer Pen, and lighter Heart, of the other.

And yet that other, [altho' in unbosoming himself to a *select Friend*, he discover Wickedness enough to intitle him to general Hatred] preserves a Decency, as well in his Images, as in his Language, which is not always to be found in the Works of some of the most celebrated modern Writers, whose Subjects and Characters have less warranted the Liberties they have taken.

Length will be naturally expected, not only from what has been said, but from the following Considerations: [v]

That the Letters on both Sides are written while the Hearts of the Writers must be supposed to be wholly engaged in their Subjects: The Events at the Time generally dubious:—So that they abound, not only with critical Situations; but with what may be called *instantaneous* Descriptions and Reflections; which may be brought home to the Breast of the youthful Reader:—As also, with affecting Conversations; many of them written in the Dialogue or Dramatic Way.

To which may be added, that the Collection contains not only the History of the excellent Person whose Name it bears, but includes The Lives, Characters, and Catastrophes, of several others, either principally or incidentally concerned in the Story.

But yet the Editor [to whom it was referred to publish the Whole in such a Way as he should think would be most acceptable to the Public] was so diffident in relation to this Article of *Length*, that he thought proper to submit the Letters to the Perusal of several judicious Friends; whose Opinion he desired of what might be best spared.

One Gentleman, in particular, of whose Knowlege, Judgment, and Experience, as well as Candor, the Editor has the highest Opinion, advised him to give a Narrative Turn to the Letters; and to publish only what concerned the principal Heroine;—striking off the collateral Incidents, and all that related to the Second Characters; tho' he allowed the Parts which would have been by this means excluded, to be both instructive and entertaining. But being extremely fond of the affecting Story, he was desirous to have every-thing parted with, which he thought retarded its Progress. [vi]

This Advice was not relished by other Gentlemen. They insisted, that the Story could not be reduced to a Dramatic Unity, nor thrown into the Narrative Way, without divesting it of its Warmth; and of a great Part of its Efficacy; as very few of the Reflections and Observations, which they looked upon as the most useful Part of the Collection, would, then, find a Place.

They were of Opinion, That in all Works of This, and of the Dramatic Kind, STORY, or AMUSEMENT, should be considered as little more than the *Vehicle* to the more necessary INSTRUCTION: That many of the Scenes would be render'd languid, were they to be made less busy: And that the Whole would be thereby deprived of that Variety, which is deemed the Soul of a Feast, whether *mensal* or *mental*.

They were also of Opinion, That the Parts and Characters, which must be omitted, if this Advice were followed, were some of the most natural in the whole Collection: And no less instructive; especially to *Youth*. Which might be a Consideration perhaps overlooked by a Gentleman of the Adviser's great Knowlege and Experience: For, as they observed, there is a Period in human Life, in which, youthful Activity ceasing, and Hope contenting itself to peep out of its own domestic Wicket upon bounded Prospects, the half-tired Mind aims at little more than *Amusement*.—And, with Reason; for what, in the *instructive* Way, can appear either *new* or *needful* to one who has happily got over those dangerous Situations which call for Advice and Cautions, and who has fill'd up his Measures of Knowlege to the Top? [vii]

Others, likewise gave *their* Opinions. But no Two being of the same Mind, as to the Parts which could be omitted, it was resolved to present to the World, the Two First Volumes, by way of Specimen: and to be determined with regard to the rest by the Reception those should meet with.

If that be favourable, Two others may soon follow; the whole Collection being ready for the Press: That is to say, If it be not found necessary to abstract or omit some of the Letters, in order to reduce the Bulk of the Whole. [viii]

Thus much in general. But it may not be amiss to add, in particular, that in the great Variety of Subjects which this Collection contains it is one of the principal Views of the Publication,

To caution Parents against the *undue* Exertion of their natural Authority over their Children, in the great Article of Marriage:

And Children against preferring a Man of Pleasure to a Man of Probity, upon that dangerous, but too commonly received Notion, *That a Reformed Rake makes the best Husband*.

But as the Characters will not all appear in the Two First Volumes, it has been thought advisable, in order to give the Reader some further Idea of Them, and of the Work, to prefix

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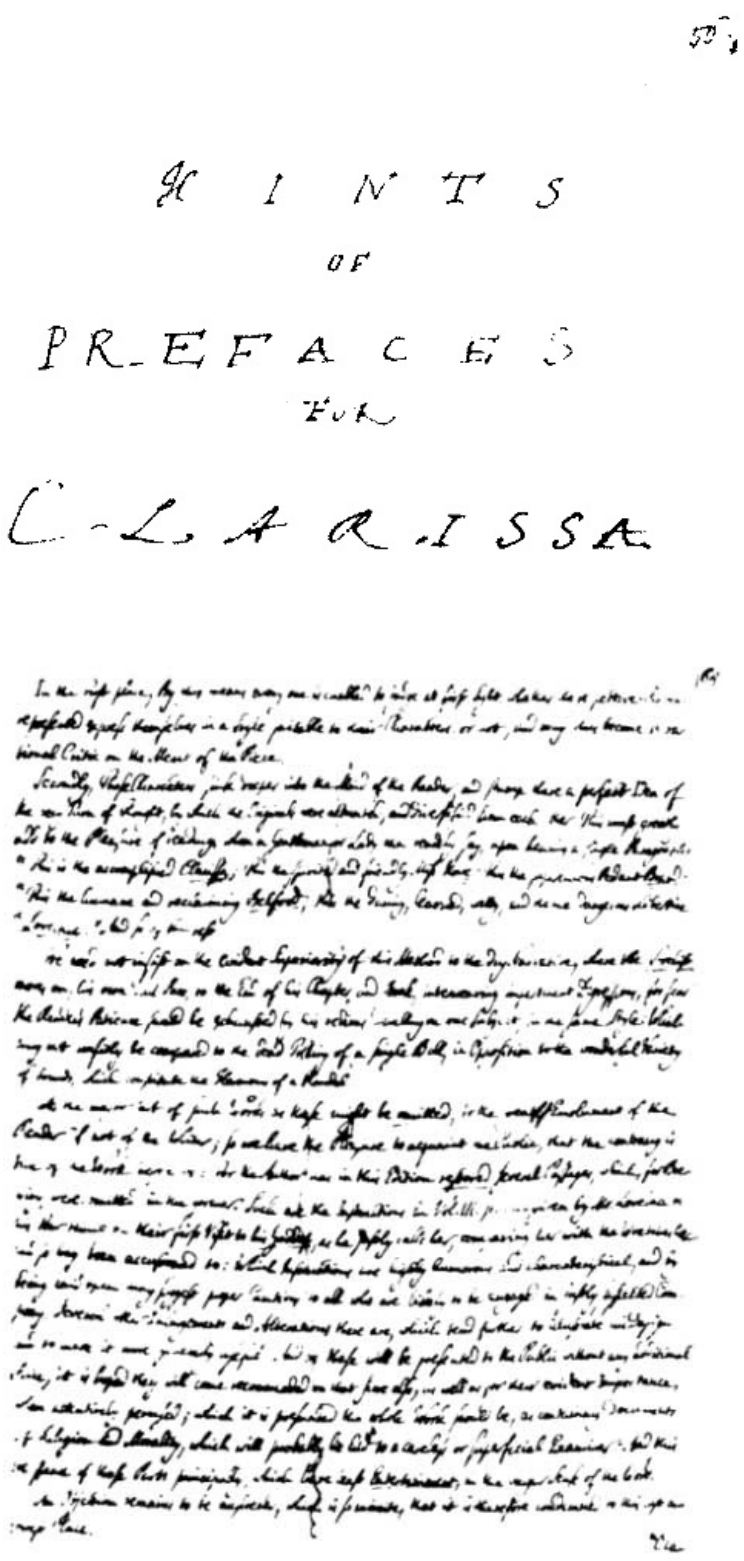

HINTS OF PREFACES FOR CLARISSA

[Pg 1]

Prefatical Hints. Partly taken from Letters to the Warrington Lady, Letter VI.

[1] As Religion is too often wounded thro' the sides of its Professors, whether all good Men or not; so is Virtue, where Women are thought too meanly of, and depretiated. The Author of the following Work, being convinced of the Truth of this Observation, has endeavoured in it to exalt the Sex. He has made his Heroine pass thro' many Persecutions from her Friends,

and ardent Trials from her Lover; yet in the first to keep her Duty in her Eye, and in the latter to be proof against the most insidious Arts, Devices, and Machinations of a Man, who holds, as Parts of the Rake's Credenda, these two Libertine Maxims; That no Woman can resist *Opportunity* and *Importunity*, especially when attacked by a Man she loves; and, That, *when once subdued, she is always subdued*; and who sets out with a Presumption, that in the Conquest of such a Lady he shall triumph over the whole Sex, against which he had vowed Revenge for having been used ill, as he thought, by one of it.

The Lady's Sufferings and Distresses are unequalled. Like pure Gold, tried by the Fire of Affliction, she is found pure. She preserves her Will inviolate, her Sincerity unimpeachable, her Duty to those who do not theirs by her, intire—Is patient, serene, resigned; and, from the best Motives, aspires to a World more worthy of her, than that she longs to quit.

The Christian System, in short, is endeavoured in her Conduct to be recommended and enforced. This Life she looks upon as a Life of Probation only. She prepares for a better. Her Preparation is exemplarily set forth, and expatiated upon. She has her perfidious Lover for her Vindicator. He engages all his own Relations, who adore her (while hers, influenced by wicked Reports, persecute her) to plead for him; and that she will accept of him upon her own Terms.

Here is her Triumph. Yet not glorying in it herself; but, on reasonable and just Motives, rejecting him; Motives, that every virtuous Heart must approve of. Yet believing that she shall not long live, in the true Christian Spirit of Forgiveness, wishes and prays for his Reformation. She as nobly forgives, and prays for, and endeavours to give posthumous Comfort to, her persecuting Relations; wounding all of them deeper by the Generosity of her Forgiveness, than if they were to suffer the most cruel Deaths. [Pg 2]

While it is one of the latent Morals of this Work, that Women, in chusing Companions for Life, should chuse companiable Men; should chuse for Men whose Hearts would probably be all their own, rather than to share with Scores perhaps the volatile mischievous one of a Libertine: In short, that they should chuse for *Mind* and not for *Person*; and not make a Jest of a good Man, in favour of a bad, who would make a Jest of them, and of their whole Sex. / /

[2] "May my Story," says our Heroine, Vol. p. "be a Warning to all my Sex, how they perfer a Libertine to a Man of true Honour; and how they permit themselves, where they mean the best) [sic] to be misled by the specious, but foolish Hope of subduing *rivetted Habits*, and, as I may say, of *altering Natures*. The more foolish, as Experience might convince us, that there is hardly one in ten, of even tolerably happy Marriages, in which the Wife keeps the Hold in the Husband's Affections, which she had in the Lover's. What Influence then can she hope to have upon the Morals of an avowed Libertine, who marries perhaps for Conveniency; who despises the Tie; and whom it is too probable that nothing but Age or Sickness, or Disease (the Consequence of ruinous Riot), can reclaim." There cannot be a more pernicious Notion, than that which is so commonly received, That a reformed Rake makes the best Husband. This Notion it was the Intent of the Author of Clarissa to explode.

The Authors of Novels and Romances, who always make their Heroes and Heroines contend with great Distresses (the more romantic, with them, the better) seem to think they have done every-thing, when they have joined the Lovers Hands; and this is called a *happy Ending* of the Story. But, alas! it is then, too generally, that the Lovers have the greatest Difficulties to encounter with, as they then see each other in nearer and truer Lights.

And I have moreover always thought, that these sudden Conversions have neither Art, nor Nature, nor Probability in them; and that they are, besides, of very bad Example. To have a Libertine, for a Series of Years, glory in his Wickedness, and to think he had nothing to do, but, as an Act of Grace and Favour, to hold out his Hand to receive that of the best of Women, whenever he pleased, and that Marriage would be a sufficient Amends for his Villainies, I could not bear that, nor wished I, that the World should think it Amends.

I had given in the Story of Pamela what is called a happy Issue. It was, however, owing to her implicit Submission to a lordly and imperious Husband, who hardly deserved her, that she was happy; a Submission which every Woman could not have shewn. And yet she had a too well grounded Jealousy to contend with afterwards; which, for the time, tore her Heart in pieces. Nor was Mr. B's Reformation secured, till religious Considerations obtained place, on seeing the Precipice he was dancing upon with the Countess. *For we must observe*, that Reformation is not to be secured by a fine Face, by a Passion that has Sense for its Object; nor by the Goodness of a Wife's Heart, if the Husband have not a good one of his own; and that properly touched by the divine Finger. [Pg 3]

The Author of this Piece was willing to try to do something in this way, that never before had been done. The Tragic Poets have seldom made their Heroes *true* Objects of Pity; and very seldom have made them in their Deaths look forward to a better Hope. And thus, when they die, they seem *totally* to perish. Death in *such* Instances must be terrible. It must be considered as the greatest Evil. But why is Death set in such shocking Lights, when it is the common Lot? / /

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The Heroine of this Piece shews, that she has well considered this great Point, when she

[3] says—"What is even the long Life, which in high Health we wish for? What but, as we go along, a Life of Apprehension, sometimes for our Friends, oftener for ourselves? And at last, when arrived at the old Age we covet, one heavy Loss or Deprivation having succeeded another, we see ourselves stript, as I may say, of every one we loved; and find ourselves exposed, as uncompaniable poor Creatures, to the Slights, the Contempts, of jostling Youth, who want to push us off the Stage, in Hopes to possess what we have. And, superadded to all, our own Infirmities every Day increasing; of themselves enough to make the Life we wished for, the greatest Disease of all."

Such are the Doctrines, such the Lessons, which are endeavoured to be inculcated in the following Sheets by an Example in natural Life. The more unfashionable, the more irksome, these Doctrines, these Lessons, are to the Young, the Gay, and the Healthy, the more necessary are they to be inculcated. Religion never since the Reformation was at so low an Ebb as at present: And if there be those, who suppose this Work to be of the Novel Kind, it may not be amiss, even in the Opinion of such, to try whether, by an Accommodation to the [Pg 4] light Taste of the Age a Religious Novel will do Good.

But altho' the Work, according to the Account thus far given of it, may be thought to wear a solemn Aspect, and is indeed intended to be of the Tragic Species, it will not be amiss to acquaint our youthful Readers, that they will find in the Letters of the Gentlemen, and even in many of those of one of the Ladies, Scenes and Subjects of a diverting Turn; one of the Men humorously, yet not uninstructively, glorying in his Talents for Stratagem and Invention, as he communicates to the other, in Confidence, all the secret Purposes of his Heart.

Not uninstructively, we repeat; for it is proper to apprise the serious Reader, and such as may apprehend Hurt to the Morals of Youth from their Perusal of the more freely written Letters, that the Gentlemen, tho' professed Libertines as to the Fair Sex, are not, however, Infidels or Scoffers; nor yet such as think themselves freed from the Observance of those other moral Obligations which bind Man to Man. / /

The Reader is referred to the Postscript, at the End of the last Volume, for what may be
[4] further necessary to be observed in relation to this Work.

Judges will see, that, long as the Work is, there is not one Digression, not one Episode, not one Reflection, but what arises naturally from the Subject, and makes for it, and to carry it on.

Variety of Styles and Circumstances.

> The Two first Volumes chiefly written by the Two Ladies.
> Two next.....by Lovelace.
> Three last.....by the reforming Belford.

Whence different Styles, Manners, &c. that make Episodes useless.

~~*Clarissa an Example to the Reader: The Example not to be taken from the Reader.*~~

The vicious Characters in this History are more pure, Images more chaste, than in the most virtuous of the Dramatic Poets.

Clarissa is so ready to find fault with herself on every Occasion, that we cannot consent, that a Character so exemplary in the greater Points should suffer merely from the Inattention of the hasty Reader. Let us therefore consider of some of the Objections made against her Story: And yet we may venture to assert, that there is not an Objection that is come to Knowlege [sic], but is either answered or anticipated in the Work.

Obj. I. *Clarissa has been thought by some to want Love*—To be prudish—To be over-delicate.

Those who blame Clarissa for Over-niceness, would most probably have been an easy Prey [Pg 5] to a Lovelace.

One Design in her Character is to shew, that Love ought to be overcome, when it has not Virtue or Reformation for its Object.

Many Persons readier to find fault with a supposed perfect Character, than to try to imitate it: To bring it down to their Level, rather than to rise to it.

Clarissa an Example *to* the Reader: The Example not to be taken *from* the Reader.

Obj. II. *Lovelace could not be so generous, and so wicked.* Common Experience confutes this Objection.

Obj. III. *There could not be such a Tyrant of a Father: Such an insolent and brutal Brother: Such an unrelenting Sister: Such a passive Mother*—Every-body is not of this Opinion. It were to be wished, that this Objection were unanswerable.

Obj. IV. *The History is too minute.* Its Minuteness one of its Excellencies.

Attentive Readers have found, and will find, that the Probability of all Stories told, or of

[5] Narrations given, depends upon small Circumstances; as may be observed, that in all Tryals for Life and Property, the/ /Merits of the Cause are more determinable by such, than by the greater Facts; which usually are so laid, and taken care of, as to seem to authenticate themselves.

Cannot consent, that the History of Clarissa should be looked upon as a mere Novel or Amusement—since it is rather a History of Life and Manners; the principal View of which, by an Accommodation to the present light Taste of an Age immersed in Diversions, that engage the Eye and the Ear only, and not the Understanding, aims to investigate the great Doctrines of Christianity, and to teach the Reader how to die, as well as how to live.

Step by Step, Difficulties varied and enumerated, that young Creatures may know, that tho' they may not have all her Trials, how to comport gradatim.

If provoked and induced as she was, yet so loth to leave her Friends, and go off with her Lover, what Blame must those incur, who take such a Step, and have not her Provocations and Inducements!

Obj. V. *Why did she not throw herself into Lady Betty's Protection?*

For Answer, see Vol. III, p. 152, and before: Also p. 158, 159, that Lady's writing to her, and not inviting her to her. See also their Debate, p. 159, 160.—Miss Montague wishes to see her [Pg 6] at M. Hall; but it is after she should be married. See further, her Observations on Miss Montague's not excusing her self for not meeting her on the Road; yet Clarissa's Willingness to say something for L. / /

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[6] On the contrary, it will be found, that they every-where disclaim the Impiety of such as endeavour to make a Religion to their Practices; and very often make such Reflections upon each other, and, / each upon himself, and upon his Actions, as reasonable Beings, who disbelieve not a future State of Rewards and Punishments (and who one Day propose to reform) must sometimes make—one of them actually reforming, and antidoting the Poison spread by the gayer Pen, and lighter Heart, of the other.

And yet that other (altho', in unbosoming himself to a select Friend, he discover Wickedness enough to intitle him to general Hatred) preserves a Decency as well in his Images, as in his Language, which is not always to be found in the Works of some of the most celebrated modern Writers, whose Subjects and Characters have less warranted the Liberties they have taken.

The Writer chose to tell his Tale in a Series of Letters, supposed to be written by the Parties concerned, as the Circumstances related passed: For this Juncture afforded him the only natural Opportunity that could be had, of representing with any Grace those lively and delicate Impressions, which *Things present* are known to make upon the Minds of those affected by them. And he apprehends, that in the Study of human Nature the Knowlege [sic] of those Apprehensions leads us farther into the Recesses of the human Mind, than the colder and more general Reflections suited to a continued and more contracted Narrative.

On the Contents.

Obj. *Contents will anticipate the Reader's Curiosity.*

The Curiosity not so much the View to excite, as the Attention to the Instruction. When the Curiosity is partly gratified, there will be the more room for the Attention. Rather instruct, than divert or amuse.

The Reader will remember, that the Instructions, Lessons, and Warnings, both to Parents and Children, for the sake of which the Whole was published, cannot appear in a Table of Contents, that means only to point out the principal Facts, the Connexion of the Whole, and [Pg 7] to set before the Reader as well the blameable as the laudable Conduct of the principal Characters, and to teach them what to pursue, and what to avoid, in a Piece that is not to be considered as an Amusement only, but rather as a History of Life and Manners. / /

[7] Drawn up with a View to obviate such of the Objections as have been made to particular Characters and Passages, thro' want of Attention to the Story.

—In such as have pursued the Story with too much Rapidity to attend to the Connexion, and to the Instruction aimed to be given, and to the Example proposed to be set.

So many important Lessons, as to Life and Manners, in the Work, that the Reader may be intrusted with the Contents. / /

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Rev. Mr. Skelton.

[8] They who read Romances and Novels, being accustomed to a Variety of Intrigues and Adventures, thro' which they are hurried to the Catastrophe; when they take up Clarissa, not considering that it is another kind of Work, or rather a new Species of Novel, are apt to

think it tedious, towards the Beginning especially, because they have not the same Palate for natural Incidents, as for imaginary Adventures; for the Workings of private and domestic Passions, as for those of Kings, Heroes, Heroines; for a Story English as to its Scenes, Names, Manners, as for one that is foreign: But a Reader of true Taste and Judgment will like it infinitely better, because it comes home to the Heart, and to common Life, in every Line; because it abounds with a surprising Variety of Strokes and Paintings, that seem to be taken from real Life, and of Maxims and Reflections too just, and too useful, to be passed over unnoticed or unremembred [sic] by a Reader of Experience. These, together with the masterly Management of the Characters, serve better to entertain, while they instruct, a judicious Reader, than a Croud of mere imaginary Amours, Duels, and such-like Events, which abound with Leaves and Flowers, but no Fruits; and therefore cannot be relished but by a vitiated Taste, by the Taste of a Chameleon, not of a Man. Two or three Hours furnish Matter for an excellent Play: Why may not Two or Three Months supply Materials for as many Volumes? Is the History of Thucydides less entertaining or instructive, because its Subject is confined to narrow Bounds, than that of Raleigh, which hath the World for its Subject? Is Clarissa a mere Novel? Whoever considers it as such, does not understand it. It is a System of religious and moral Precepts and Examples, planned on an entertaining Story, [Pg 8] which stands or goes forward, as the excellent Design of the Author requires; but never stands without pouring in Incidents, Descriptions, Maxims, that keep Attention alive, that engage and mend the Heart, that play with the Imagination, while they inform the Understanding. / /

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Rev. Mr. Spence.

[9] It is the more necessary to say something, by way of Preface, of the following Work; because it is a Work of a new kind among us.

The Writers of *Novels* and *Romances* have generally endeavoured to pick out the most pleasing Stories; to pass over the dry Parts in them; and to hurry the Reader on from one striking Event to another. Their *only* Aim seems to be that of making a Tissue of Adventures, which by their Strangeness and Variety are meant only to surprise and please. Nature they have not much in View; and Morality is often quite out of the Question with them.

Instead of following this way of writing, the Author of Clarissa has attempted to give a plain and natural Account of an Affair that happened in a private Family, just in the manner that it did happen. He has aimed solely at following Nature; and giving the Sentiments of the Persons concerned, just as they flowed warm from their Hearts.

The best way to do this he thought was to carry on the Story, not in the narrative way, as usual; but by making them write their own Thoughts to Friends, soon after each Incident happened; with all that Naturalness and Warmth, with which they felt them, at that time, in their own Minds.

This must necessarily lead the Work into a great Length: For as his Aim was to give a true and full Picture of Nature, the whole Course of the Affair is represented; frequently, even to the most minute Particulars: And as they are related by Persons concerned, you have not only the Particulars, but what they felt in their own Minds at the time, and their Reflections upon them afterwards: Beside, that Letters always give a Liberty of little Excursions; and when between Intimate Friends, require an Opening of the Heart, and consequently a Diffuseness, that the narrative Style would not admit of.

The chief Intent of the Work was, to draw off the Ladies, if possible, from the distinguishing Fondness many of them are too apt to entertain for Rakes; and to shew them, that if they put [Pg 9] themselves into the Power of a Rake, they are sure of being ill used by him.

To this End the Author has chosen out a Story, which is as strong a Proof of it as can well be.
[10] A Lady of particular good Sense, Breeding, and Morals, is so ill used by her Family, in order to oblige her to marry a Man she cannot like, that they drive her at last into the Hands of a Rake, who professes the most honourable Passion for her. From the Moment she is in his Hands, he is plotting how to ruin her: Her Innocence is above all his Art and Temtations [sic]; so that he is forced to use other, and yet viler Means. In spite / / of all her Virtue, her Person is abused. She resents it, as she ought; and escapes from him: But, worn out with a continued Series of ill Usage (from her own Family, as well as from the Villain, and his Adherents), she continues languishing; and at last dies forgiving all her Enemies.

To give this the greater Strength, the Lady is represented as superior to all her Sex; and the Rake of a mixt Character, and not so bad as several of his. She likes the Man; but has no violent Passion for him: He loves her above all Women; and yet is resolved most steadily to pursue her Ruin. All her Calamities with him are occasioned, at first,[34] by going scarce sensibly out of the Bounds of her Duty; and afterwards, by being betrayed into an Action[35], which she did not intend; and which, had she intended [it] [sic], under her Circumstances, was scarce to be blamed. When in his Hands, her Virtue is invincible: She is perpetually alarmed, and her Prudence is ever on the Watch. And yet she falls a Prey to his Villainy; and from being the Glory of her Sex, becomes an Object of our Compassion. If a Clarissa thus fell, what must the rest of Women expect, if they give greater Encouragements to yet more abandoned Men?

There are other Side-Morals (and particularly that very instructive one to Parents, not to insist too rigidly on forcing their Childrens Inclinations); but this is the direct Moral of the whole Story: "That a Woman, even of the greatest Abilities, should not enter into any, even the most guarded, Correspondence with a Rake; and that if she once falls into his Power, she is undone."

To enforce this Moral, it was necessary to Paint out all the Distresses of the Sufferer; and to [Pg 10] make her suffer to the End: In doing which, the Author, I dare say, has given several Pangs to his own Heart, as well as to the Hearts of his Readers. But these should be looked upon like the Incisions made by a kind Surgeon; who feels himself for every Stroke that he gives; and who gives them only out of Humanity, and to save his Patients.

Indeed, as the Patients here are the Ladies, the Suffering must be the greater; to the Author, as well as to them: But had they not better suffer, from these generous Tendernesses of their own Hearts, than from the Villainies of such Enemies, as they are here warned to avoid? Their Tears look beautifully, when they are shed for a Clarissa; but they would be a killing Sight to one, were they to be shed for themselves, upon falling into Distresses like hers.

I do not wonder, that in reading this Story, many of them should wish, that it might have
[11] ended less unfortunately. It is agreeable to the Tenderness and Goodness of their Hearts. The Author, no doubt, wished so too: But that could not be brought about, without taking away the Moral, or, at least, very much weakening the Force of it. The Business of this Work is to shew the Distresses of an almost innocent Sufferer, and the Villainies of a debauched Man, who wanted chiefly to pride himself in the Conquest of her. It / / is all but one Story, with one Design; and the making the Lady fortunate in the End, would have varied the Fact, and undermined his Design. In a Picture that represents any melancholy Story, a good Painter will make the Sky all dark and cloudy; and cast a Gloom on every thing in it: If the Subject be gay, he gives a Brightness to all his Sky; and an Enlivening to all the Objects: But he will never confound these Characters; and give you a Picture that shall be sad in one half of it, and gay in the other. In this Work the Design is as much one, and the Colouring as much one, as they can be in a Picture; and to confuse either, would be the most ready way to spoil both.

Clarissa takes but one false Step in the whole Piece. She is impelled toward it, in general, by the strange Behaviour of her Family; and betrayed into it, at the time, by the strange Contrivances of her Deceiver. But this single Step was of the utmost Consequence. It flings her into the Power of the most dangerous of Men; and that makes all the Remainder of her Life melancholy and distressed. This is the Lesson: And if it be a good one, the Force of it [Pg 11] ought not to be weakened by her Recovering from all her Distresses, and growing quite happy again; which indeed would not only weaken, but intirely take away, all the Force that was intended to be given to it.

Yet if Clarissa be unfortunate, she is not miserable. She preserved her Innocence thro' all her Trials, after that one false Step: When she had no Comfort to expect in this World, she turns her Hopes and Confidence toward Heaven: Her Afflictions are soon ended, for the Course of this whole Affair (taking it from the very Beginning) is included within the Bounds of one Year: And she departs with Pleasure from a Life full of Trouble, to be rewarded without End. So that, tho' we are warned by Clarissa's Example, we have no Reason to be concerned at her Dissolution: Much more noble, and more to be admired, in her Steadiness, and just Conduct, then, than when she was caressed by all her Relations, in the Bloom of her unviolated Innocence, and busied in all the little endearing Offices of her good Nature, and good Sense. / /

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All the Objections to the Design and Conduct of the History of **Clarissa**, which have seemed
[12] to carry any Weight in them, being, we presume, obviated in the PS. to this Work, we apprehend it will be only expected from us, on this Second Publication, that we exhibit some Particulars, which may help to shew the superiority of its Moral to any of the Morals of those Works of Invention, which have been offered to the Public under the Name of **Novel**, or **Romance**.

Now what a Romance usually professes to entertain us with, may be considered under Three General Heads; *Ridicule*; or, *Serious Adventures*; or, lastly, a *Mixture of both*.

It must be owned, that there are some Works under the First of these Heads, which have their Excellencies; Tho' we may be permitted to doubt, whether *Ridicule* is a proper Basis (without the Help of more solid Buttresses) whereon to build Instruction, whatever Delight it may administer to the Reader.

As to those Authors who have given us the *Serious*; some of them make use of a Style as horrid as their Matter: We may be excused mentioning their Names, in this Place, since, without Self-flattery, we may say, we disdain to appear on the same Page with them. We shall only observe in general, that they are far from being clear of the strained Metaphors, and unnatural Rants, of the old Romances, whose enormous Volumes would be enough to [Pg 12] terrify a Reader who sought only for Amusement, and not for Employment of his better to be employed Hours.

Between these two Extremes that something useful to the Cause of Religion and Virtue should be struck out, was the Author of Clarissa's Intent. Such an Intent has Two manifest Advantages over all other Works of Invention ~~that~~which have yet appeared.

The First of these is, That, by the Work now presented to our Fair Readers, they may be instructed to render themselves superior to that *extravagant* Taste in Courtship, which was the prevailing Mode in Two or Three preceding Centuries; and from which the present, we are sorry to say, is not absolutely free.

The Second, That, by containing their Views *within the Bounds* of Nature and Reason, they may be sweetly, but insensibly, drawn to preserve a proper Dignity of Behaviour, whereby to awe the Presumption of the Bold and Forward: So that, while we behold them as Angels of Light, they would be pleased not to give too convincing Evidence of their *Fall* from that to a lower Character; a detestable one too, which will in a short time sink them as much in the Esteem of their flattering Admirers, as those very Deceivers had before persuaded them, that they were elevated above the common Lot of Mortality.

The Choice the Author has made, in this and a former Performance, of delivering the Sentiments of his Characters in their own Words, by way of Letters, has also Two principal Advantages, which we beg leave to specify. / /

In the First place, By this means every one is enabled to judge at first Sight, whether the
[13] respective Persons represented express themselves in a Style suitable to their Characters, or not, and may thus become a rational Critic on the Merit of the Piece.

Secondly, Those Characters sink deeper into the Mind of the Reader, and stamp there a perfect Idea of the very Turn of Thought, by which the Originals were actuated, and diversified from each other. This must greatly add to the Pleasure of reading, when a Gentleman or Lady can readily say, upon hearing a single Paragraph, "This is the accomplished **Clarissa**; This the spirited and friendly Miss **Howe**; This the supercilious Pedant **Brand**; This the humane and reclaiming **Belford**; This the daring, learned, witty, and thence dangerous Libertine **Lovelace**:" And so of the rest.

We need not insist on the evident Superiority of this Method to the dry Narrative; where the [Pg 13]
Novelist moves on, his own dull Pace, to the End of his Chapter and Book, interweaving impertinent Digressions, for fear the Reader's Patience should be exhausted by his tedious Dwelling on one Subject, in the same Style: Which may not unfitly be compared to the dead Tolling of a single Bell, in Opposition to the wonderful Variety of Sounds, which constitute the Harmony of a Handel.

As the major Part of such Works as these might be *omitted*, to the greater Emolument of the Reader, if not of the Writer; so we have the Pleasure to acquaint the Public, that the contrary is true of the Work before us: For the Author has in this Edition *restored* several Passages, which, for Brevity, were omitted in the former. Such are the Instructions in Vol. III. p. ... given by Mr. Lovelace to his Four Friends on their first Visit to his *Goddess*, as he justly calls her, comparing her with the wretches he had so long been accustomed to: Which instructions are highly humorous and characteristical, and by being laid open may suggest proper Cautions to all who are likely to be engaged in justly suspected Company. Several other Inlargements and Alterations there are, which tend further to illustrate his Design, and to make it more generally useful. And as these will be presented to the Public without any additional Price, it is hoped they will come recommended on that score also, as well as for their evident Importance, when attentively perused; which it is presumed the whole Work should be, as containing Documents of Religion and Morality, which will probably lie hid to a careless or superficial Examiner: And this we speak of those Parts principally, which have least *Entertainment*, in the vulgar sense of the word.

An Objection remains to be answered; which is so minute, that it is therefore condemned to this last and lowest Place. / /

"Clarissa is too delicate."—The Author readily acknowleges [sic], that too delicate she is for
[14] the Hearts of such as, by Conformity to the loose Manners of the present Age, have confounded Purity with Prudery. But, for all this, it may be hoped, that the latter will rather endeavour to raise their Affections to **Clarissa's** virtuous Standard, than by striving to impeach her Character, effectually debase, if not violently tear up, the decisive Standard of Right and Wrong.

The just Detestation that injured Lady had of Lovelace's vile Attempt to corrupt her Mind as
well as Person, was surely a sufficient Argument against uniting her untainted Purity (surely [Pg 14]
we may say so, since the Violation reached not her Soul) in Marriage with so gross a Violator; and must for ever continue in Force, till the eternal Differences of Vice and Virtue shall coalesce, and make one putrid Mass, a Chaos in the Moral and Intellectual World.

We have a remarkable, and in some Degree a parallel Case in Scripture; where we find, that the Rape of *Dinah* was revenged, cruelly revenged, by the Sons of Jacob. *Dinah*, like **Clarissa**, had Proposals of Marriage made to her by the Ravisher. But these were not thought sufficient to expunge the Stain upon a Person of that Family, from which was to proceed the **Son** of Him whose eyes are purer than to behold Iniquity. Therefore a Massacre was made of the King Hamor, and his son Shechem; and their People were led into Captivity.

The Answer of Simeon and Levi to their Father's Complaint of Cruelty was only this: *Should he deal with* **our Sister**, *as with an* **Harlot**?

The only Use we intend to make of this Passage is, to shew that it is no new thing, that a Violation of this sort should be desperately resented, as this was by the resolute **Morden**; however *new* it may be, that a young Lady should disdain the Villain, who had betrayed her Person, and soon after laid her Hopes, and the Hopes of all her flourishing Family, in the Dust of the Grave.

[Pg 348]

P O S T S C R I P T.

Referred to in the Preface.

IN WHICH

Several Objections that have been made, as well to the Catastrophe as to different Parts of the preceding History, are briefly considered.

The foregoing Work having been published at three different periods of time, the Author, in the course of its publication, was favoured with many anonymous Letters, in which the Writers differently expressed their wishes with regard to the apprehended catastrophe.

Most of those directed to him by the gentler Sex, turned in favour of what they called a *Fortunate Ending*. Some of the fair writers, enamoured, as they declared, with the character of the Heroine, were warmly solicitous to have her made happy: "And others, likewise of their mind, *insisted that Poetical Justice* required that it should be so. And when, says one ingenious Lady, whose undoubted motive was good-nature and humanity, it must be concluded, that it is in an author's power to make his piece end as he pleases, why should he not give pleasure rather than pain to the Reader whom he has interested in favour of his principal characters?

"Others, and some Gentlemen, declared against Tragedies in general, and in favour of Comedies, almost in the words of Lovelace, who was supported in his taste by all the women at Mrs. Sinclair's, and by Sinclair herself. 'I have too much *Feeling*, said he[36]. There is [Pg 349] enough in the world to make our hearts sad, without carrying grief into our diversions, and making the distresses of others our own.'

"And how was this happy ending to be brought about? Why by this very easy and trite expedient; to wit, by reforming Lovelace, and marrying him to Clarissa—Not, however, abating her one of her tryals, nor any of her sufferings [for the sake of the *sport* her distresses would give to the *tender-hearted* reader as she went along] the last outrage excepted: That indeed, partly in compliment to Lovelace himself, and partly for delicacy-sake, they were willing to spare her.

"But whatever were the fate of his work, the Author was resolved to take a different method. He always thought, that *sudden Conversions*, such especially, as were left to the candour of the Reader to *suppose* and *make out*, had neither *Art*, nor *Nature*, nor even *Probability*, in them; and that they were moreover of very *bad* example. To have a Lovelace for a series of years glory in his wickedness, and think that he had nothing to do, but as an act of grace and favour to hold out his hand to receive that of the best of women, whenever he pleased, and to have it thought, that Marriage would be a sufficient amends for all his enormities to others, as well as to her; he could not bear that. Nor is Reformation, as he has shewn in another piece, to be secured by a fine face; by a passion that has sense for its object; nor by the goodness of a Wife's heart, or even example, if the heart of the Husband be not graciously touched by the Divine Finger.

"It will be seen by this time, that the Author had a great end in view. He has lived to see Scepticism and Infidelity openly avowed, and even endeavoured to be propagated from the *Press*: The great doctrines of the Gospel brought into question: Those of self-denial and [Pg 350] mortification blotted out of the catalogue of christian virtues: And a taste even to wantonness for out-door pleasure and luxury, to the general exclusion of domestic as well as public virtue, industriously promoted among all ranks and degrees of people.

"In this general depravity, when even the Pulpit has lost great part of its weight, and the Clergy are considered as a body of *interested* men, the Author thought he should be able to answer it to his own heart, be the success what it would, if he threw in his mite towards introducing a Reformation so much wanted: And he imagined, that if in an age given up to diversion and entertainment, he could *steal in*, as may be said, and investigate the great doctrines of Christianity under the fashionable guise of an amusement; he should be most likely to serve his purpose; remembring that of the Poet:

> *"A verse may find him who a sermon flies,*
> *"And turn delight into a sacrifice.*

"He was resolved therefore to attempt something that never yet had been done. He considered, that the Tragic poets have as seldom made their heroes true objects of pity, as the Comic theirs laudable ones of imitation: And still more rarely have made them in their deaths look forward to a *future Hope*. And thus, when they die, they seem totally to perish. Death, in such instances, must appear terrible. It must be considered as the greatest evil. But why is Death set in shocking lights, when it is the universal lot?

"He has indeed thought fit to paint the death of the wicked as terrible as he could paint it. But he has endeavoured to draw that of the good in such an amiable manner, that the very Balaams of the world should not forbear to wish that their latter end might be like that of the Heroine.

"And after all, what is the *poetical justice* so much contended for by some, as the generality of writers have managed it," but another sort of dispensation than that with which God, by Revelation, teaches us, He has thought fit to exercise mankind; whom placing here only in a state of probation, he hath so intermingled good and evil, as to necessitate us to look forward for a more equal dispensation of both. [Pg 351]

The author of the History (or rather Dramatic Narrative) of Clarissa, is therefore well justified by the *Christian System*, in deferring to extricate suffering Virtue to the time in which it will meet with the *Completion* of its Reward.

But not absolutely to shelter the conduct observed in it under the sanction of Religion [an authority perhaps not of the greatest weight with some of our modern critics] it must be observed, that the author is justified in its Catastrophe by the greatest master of reason, and the best judge of composition, that ever lived. The learned Reader knows we must mean ARISTOTLE; whose sentiments in this matter we shall beg leave to deliver in the words of a very amiable writer of our own Country.

'The English writers of Tragedy, *says Mr. Addison*[37], are possessed with a notion, that when they represent a virtuous or innocent person in distress, they ought not to leave him till they have delivered him out of his troubles, or made him triumph over his enemies.

'This *error* they have been led into by a *ridiculous* doctrine in *Modern Criticism*, that they are obliged to an *equal distribution* of *rewards* and *punishments*, and an impartial execution of *poetical justice*.

'Who were the first that established this rule, I know not; but I am sure it has no foundation in NATURE, in REASON, or in the PRACTICE OF THE ANTIENTS.

'We find, that good and evil happen alike unto ALL MEN on this side the grave: And as the principal design of Tragedy is to raise commiseration and terror in the minds of the audience, we shall defeat this great end, if we always make Virtue and Innocence happy and successful. [Pg 352]

'Whatever crosses and disappointments a good man suffers in the *Body* of the Tragedy, they will make but small impression on our minds, when we know, that, in the *last Act*, he is to arrive at the end of his wishes and desires.

'When we see him engaged in the depth of his afflictions, we are apt to comfort ourselves, because we are sure he will find his way out of them, and that his grief, how great soever it may be at present, will soon terminate in gladness.

'For this reason, the antient Writers of Tragedy treated men in their *Plays*, as they are dealt with in the *World*, by making Virtue sometimes happy and sometimes miserable, as they found it in the Fable which they made choice of, or as it might affect their Audience in the most agreeable manner.

'Aristotle considers the Tragedies that were written in either of those kinds; and observes, that those which ended unhappily had always pleased the people, and carried away the Prize, in the public disputes of the Stage, from those that ended happily.

'Terror and Commiseration leave a *pleasing anguish* in the mind, and fix the Audience in such a serious composure of thought, as is much more lasting and delightful, than any little transient Starts of Joy and Satisfaction.

'Accordingly we find, that more of our English Tragedies have succeeded, in which the Favourites of the Audience sink under their calamities, than those in which they recover

themselves out of them.

'The best Plays of this kind are *The Orphan*, *Venice Preserved*, *Alexander the Great*, *Theodosius*, *All for Love*, *Oedipus*, *Oroonoko*, *Othello*, &c.

'King *Lear* is an admirable Tragedy of the same kind, as Shakespeare wrote it: But as it is reformed according to the *chimerical notion* of POETICAL JUSTICE, in my humble opinion it has lost half its beauty. [Pg 353]

'At the same time I must allow, that there are very noble Tragedies, which have been framed upon the other Plan, and have ended happily; as indeed most of the good Tragedies which have been written since the starting of the above-mentioned Criticism, have taken this turn: As *The Mourning Bride*, *Tamerlane*[38], *Ulysses*, *Phædra and Hippolytus*, with most of Mr. Dryden's. I must also allow, that many of Shakespeare's, and several of the celebrated Tragedies of Antiquity, are cast in the same form. I do not therefore dispute against this way of writing Tragedies; but against the Criticism that would establish This as the *only* method; and by that means would very much cramp the English Tragedy, and perhaps give a wrong bent to the genius of our writers.'

'This subject is further considered in a Letter to the Spectator[39].

"I find your opinion, says the author of it, concerning the *late-invented* term called *Poetical Justice*, is controverted by some eminent critics. I have drawn up some additional arguments to strengthen the opinion which you have there delivered; having endeavoured to go to the bottom of that matter....

"The most perfect man has vices enough to draw down punishments upon his head, and to justify Providence in regard to any miseries that may befal him. For this reason I cannot think but that the instruction and moral are much finer, where a man who is virtuous in the main of his character falls into distress, and sinks under the blows of fortune, at the end of a Tragedy, than when he is represented as happy and triumphant. Such an example corrects the insolence of human nature, softens the mind of the beholder with sentiments of pity and compassion, comforts him under his own private affliction, and teaches him not to judge of mens virtues by their successes[40]. I cannot think of one real hero in all antiquity so far raised above human infirmities, that he might not be very naturally represented in a Tragedy as plunged in misfortunes and calamities. The Poet may still find out some prevailing passion or indiscretion in his character, and shew it in such a manner as will sufficiently acquit Providence of any injustice in his sufferings: For, as Horace observes, the best man is faulty, tho' not in so great a degree as those whom we generally call vicious men[41]. [Pg 354]

"If such a strict *Poetical Justice* (*proceeds the Letter-writer*), as some gentlemen insist upon, were to be observed in this art, there is no manner of reason why it should not extend to heroic Poetry, as well as Tragedy. But we find it so little observed in Homer, that his Achilles is placed in the greatest point of glory and success, tho' his Character is morally vicious, and only *poetically* good, if I may use the phrase of our modern Critics. The *Æneid* is filled with innocent unhappy persons. Nisus and Euryalus, Lausus and Pallas, come all to unfortunate ends. The Poet takes notice in particular, that, in the sacking of Troy, Ripheus fell, who was the most just man among the Trojans:

> *"——Cadit & Ripheus justissimus unus*
> *Qui fuit in Teucris, & servantissimus æqui.*
> *Diis aliter visum est.——*
>
> "The gods thought fit.—So blameless Ripheus fell,
> Who lov'd fair Justice, and observ'd it well."

"And that Pantheus could neither be preserved by his transcendent piety, nor by the holy fillets of Apollo, whose priest he was: [Pg 355]

> *"——Nec te tua plurima, Pantheu,*
> *Labentem pietas, nec Apollinis infula texit.* Æn. II.
>
> "Nor could thy piety thee, Pantheus, save,
> Nor ev'n thy priesthood, from an early grave.

"I might here mention the practice of antient Tragic Poets, both Greek and Latin; but as this particular is touched upon in the Paper above-mentioned, I shall pass it over in silence. I could produce passages out of Aristotle in favour of my opinion: And if in one place he says, that an absolutely virtuous man should not be represented as unhappy, this does not justify any one who shall think fit to bring in an absolutely virtuous man upon the stage. Those who are acquainted with that author's way of writing, know very well, that to take the whole extent of his subject into his divisions of it, he often makes use of such cases as are imaginary, and not reducible to practice....

"I shall conclude, *says this gentleman*, with observing, that tho' the *Spectator* above-mentioned is so far against the rule of *Poetical Justice*, as to affirm, that good men may meet

with an unhappy Catastrophe in Tragedy, it does not say, that ill men may go off unpunished. The reason for this distinction is very plain; namely, because the best of men [as is said above] have faults enough to justify Providence for any misfortunes and afflictions which may befal them; but there are many men so criminal, that they can have no claim or pretence to happiness. The *best* of men may deserve punishment; but the *worst* of men cannot deserve happiness."

Mr. Addison, as we have seen above, tells us, that Aristotle, in considering the Tragedies that were written in either of the kinds, observes, that those which ended unhappily had always pleased the people, and carried away the prize, in the public disputes of the Stage, [Pg 356] from those that ended happily. And we shall take leave to add, that this preference was given at a time when the entertainments of the Stage were committed to the care of the magistrates; when the prizes contended for were given by the State; when, of consequence, the emulation among writers was ardent; and when learning was at the highest pitch of glory in that renowned commonwealth.

It cannot be supposed, that the Athenians, in this their highest age of taste and politeness, were less humane, less tender-hearted, than we of the present. But they were not *afraid* of being moved, nor *ashamed* of shewing themselves to be so, at the distresses they saw well painted and represented. In short, they were of the opinion, with the wisest of men, *That it was better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of mirth*; and had fortitude enough to trust themselves with their own generous grief, because they found their hearts mended by it.

Thus also Horace, and the politest Romans in the Augustan age, wished to be affected:

> *Ac ne forte putes me, quæ facere ipse recusem,*
> *Cum recte tractant alii, laudare maligne;*
> *Ille per extentum funem mihi posse videtur*
> *Ire poeta, meum qui pectus inaniter angit,*
> *Irritat, mulcet; falsis terroribus implet,*
> *Ut magus; & modo me Thebis, modo ponit Athenis*.

Thus Englished by Mr. Pope:

> Yet, lest you think I railly more than teach,
> Or praise malignly *Arts* I cannot reach,
> Let me, for once, presume t'instruct the times
> To know the *Poet* from the *Man of Rhymes*.
> 'Tis He who gives my breast a thousand pains,
> Can make me *feel* each passion that he feigns;
> Enrage—compose—with more than magic art,
> With *pity* and with *terror* tear my heart;
> And snatch me o'er the earth, or thro' the air,
> To Thebes, to Athens, when he will, and where.

Our fair readers are also desired to attend to what a celebrated Critic[42] of a neighbouring [Pg 357] nation says on the nature and design of Tragedy, from the rules laid down by the same great Antient.

'Tragedy, says he, makes man *modest*, by representing the great masters of the earth humbled; and it makes him *tender* and *merciful*, by shewing him the *strange accidents of life*, and the *unforeseen disgraces* to which the most important persons are subject.

'But because Man is naturally timorous and compassionate, he may fall into other extremes. Too much fear may shake his constancy of mind, and too much compassion may enfeeble his equity. 'Tis the business of Tragedy to regulate these two weaknesses. It prepares and arms him against *disgraces*, by shewing them so frequent in the most considerable persons; and he will cease to fear extraordinary accidents, when he sees them happen to the *highest* part of Mankind. And still more efficacious, we may add, the example will be, when he sees them happen to the *best*.

'But as the end of Tragedy is to teach men not to fear too weakly *common misfortunes*, it proposes also to teach them to spare their compassion for objects that *deserve it*. For there is an *injustice* in being moved at the afflictions of those who *deserve to be miserable*. We may see, without pity, Clytemnestra slain by her son Orestes in Æschylus, because she had murdered Agamemnon her husband; yet we cannot see Hippolytus die by the plot of his Stepmother Phædra, in Euripides, without compassion, because he died not, but for being chaste and virtuous.'

'These are the great authorities so favourable to the stories that end unhappily. And we beg leave to reinforce this inference from them, That if the temporary sufferings of the Virtuous and the Good can be accounted for and justified on Pagan principles, many more and infinitely stronger reasons will occur to a Christian Reader in behalf of what are called unhappy Catastrophes from the consideration of the doctrine of *future rewards*; which is [Pg 358] every-where strongly inforced in the History of Clarissa.

'Of this (to give but one instance) an ingenious Modern, distinguished by his rank, but much more for his excellent defence of some of the most important doctrines of Christianity, appears convinced in the conclusion of a pathetic *Monody*, lately published; in which, after he had deplored, as a man *without hope*, (expressing ourselves in the Scripture phrase) the loss of an excellent Wife; he thus consoles himself:

'Yet, O my soul! thy rising murmurs stay,
Nor dare th' All-wise Disposer to arraign,
Or against his supreme decree
With impious grief complain.
That all thy full-blown joys at once should fade,
Was his most righteous Will: And be that Will obey'd.

'Would thy fond love his grace to her controul,
And in these low abodes of sin and pain
Her pure, exalted soul,
Unjustly, for thy partial good, detain?
No—rather strive thy groveling mind to raise
Up to that unclouded blaze,
That heav'nly radiance of eternal light,
In which enthroned she now with pity sees
How frail, how insecure, how slight
Is ev'ry mortal bliss.

'But of infinitely greater weight than all that has been above produced on this subject, are the words of the Psalmist.

"As for me, says he[43], my feet were almost gone, my step had well-nigh slipt: For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For their strength is firm: They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men—Their eyes [Pg 359] stand out with fatness: They have more than their heart could wish—Verily I have cleansed mine heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocence; for all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me. Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end—Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.'

'This is the Psalmist's comfort and dependence. And shall man, presuming to alter the common course of nature, and, so far as he is able, to elude the tenure by which frail mortality indispensibly holds, imagine, that he can make a better dispensation; and by calling it *Poetical Justice*, indirectly reflect on the *Divine*?'

The more pains have been taken to obviate the objections arising from the notion of *Poetical Justice*, as the doctrine built upon it had obtained general credit among us; and as it must be confessed to have the appearance of *humanity* and *good-nature* for its supports. And yet the writer of the History of Clarissa is humbly of opinion, that he might have been excused referring to them for the vindication of *his* Catastrophe, even by those who are advocates for the contrary opinion; since the notion of *Poetical Justice*, founded on the *modern rules*, has hardly ever been more strictly observed in works of this nature, than in the present performance.

For, Is not Mr. Lovelace, who could persevere in his villainous views, against the strongest and most frequent convictions and remorses that ever were sent to awaken and reclaim a wicked man—Is not this great, this *wilful* transgressor, condignly *punished*; and his punishment brought on thro' the intelligence of the very Joseph Leman whom he had corrupted[44]; and by means of the very women whom he had debauched[45]—Is not Mr. Belton, who has an Uncle's *hastened* death to answer for[46]—Are not the *whole* Harlowe-family—Is not the vile Tomlinson—Are not the infamous Sinclair, and her *wretched partners* [Pg 360] —And even the wicked *Servants*, who, with their eyes open, contributed their parts to the carrying on of the vile schemes of their respective principals—*Are they not All likewise exemplarily punished?*

On the other hand, Is not Miss Howe, for her noble friendship to the exalted Lady in her calamities—Is not Mr. Hickman, for his unexceptionable morals, and integrity of life—Is not the repentant and not ungenerous Belford—Is not the worthy Norton—*made signally happy*?

And who that are in earnest in their profession of Christianity, but will rather envy than regret the triumphant death of Clarissa; whose piety, from her *early childhood*; whose diffusive charity; whose steady virtue; whose Christian humility; whose forgiving spirit; whose meekness, and resignation, HEAVEN *only* could reward[47]?

"We shall now, according to expectation given in the *Preface* to this Edition, proceed to take brief notice of such other objections as have come to our knowlege: For as is there said, 'This Work being addressed to the Public as an History of *Life* and *Manners*, those parts of it which are proposed to carry with them the force of Example, ought to be as unobjectible as is consistent with the *design of the whole*, and with *human Nature*.'

"Several persons have censured the Heroine as too cold in her love, too haughty, and even

sometimes provoking. But we may presume to say, that this objection has arisen from want of attention to the Story, to the Character of Clarissa, and to her particular situation.

"It was not intended that she should be *in Love*, but *in Liking* only, if that expression may be admitted. It is meant to be every-where inculcated in the Story, for *Example-sake*, that she never would have married Mr. Lovelace, because of his immoralities, had she been left to herself; and that her ruin was principally owing to the persecutions of her friends. [Pg 361]

"What is too generally called *Love*, ought (perhaps *as* generally) to be called by another name. *Cupidity*, or a *Paphian Stimulus*, as some women, even of condition, have acted, are not words too harsh to be substituted on the occasion, however grating they may be to delicate ears. But take the word *Love* in the gentlest and most honourable sense, it would have been thought by some highly improbable, that Clarissa should have been able to shew such a command of her passions, as makes so distinguishing a part of her Character, had she been as violently in Love, as certain warm and fierce spirits would have had her to be. A few Observations are thrown in by way of Note in the present Edition, at proper places, to obviate this Objection, or rather to bespeak the *Attention* of hasty Readers to what lies obviously before them. For thus the Heroine anticipates this very Objection, expostulating with Miss Howe, on her contemptuous treatment of Mr. Hickman; which [far from being guilty of the same fault herself] she did on all occasions, and declares she would do, whenever Miss Howe forgot herself, altho' she had not a day to live:

"'O my dear, says she, that it had been my Lot (as I was not permitted to live single) to have met with a man, by whom I *could* have acted generously and unreservedly!

"'Mr. Lovelace, it is now plain, in order to have a pretence against me, taxed my behaviour to him with stiffness and distance. You, at one time, thought me guilty of some degree of Prudery. Difficult situations should be allowed for; which often make seeming occasions for censure unavoidable. I deserved not blame from *him*, who made mine difficult. And if I had [Pg 362] had any other man to deal with than Mr. Lovelace, or had he had but half the merit which Mr Hickman has, you, my Dear, should have found, that my Doctrine, on this Subject, should have governed my Practice.' See this whole Letter[48]; See also Mr. Lovelace's Letter Nº lxxvii. Vol. VII. p. 310. *& seq.* where, just before his Death, he entirely acquits her conduct on this head.

"It has been thought by some worthy and ingenious persons, that if Lovelace had been drawn an *Infidel* or *Scoffer*, his Character, according to the Taste of the present worse than Sceptical Age, would have been more natural. It is, however, too well known, that there are very many persons, of his Cast, whose actions discredit their belief. And are not the very Devils, in Scripture, said to *believe* and *tremble*?

"But the Reader must have observed, that great, and, it is hoped, good Use, has been made throughout the Work, by drawing Lovelace an Infidel only in *Practice*; and this as well in the arguments of his friend Belford, as in his own frequent Remorses, when touched with temporary Compunction, and in his last Scenes; which could not have been made, had either of them been painted as *sentimental* Unbelievers. Not to say, that Clarissa, whose great Objection to Mr. Wyerly was, that he was a Scoffer, must have been inexcusable had she known Lovelace to be so, and had given the least attention to his Addresses. On the contrary, thus she comforts herself, when she thinks she must be his—'This one consolation, however, remains: He is not an Infidel, an Unbeliever. Had he been an Infidel, there would have been no room at all for hope of him; but (priding himself as he does in his fertile invention) he would have been utterly abandoned, irreclaimable, and a Savage[49].' And it must be observed, that Scoffers are too witty in their own opinion; in other words, value [Pg 363] themselves too much upon their profligacy, to aim at concealing it.

"Besides, had Lovelace added ribbald jests upon Religion, to his other liberties, the freedoms which would then have passed between him and his friend, must have been of a nature truly infernal. And this farther hint was meant to be given, by way of inference, that the man who allowed himself in those liberties either of speech or action, which Lovelace thought shameful, was so far a worse man than Lovelace. For this reason is he every-where made to treat jests on sacred things and subjects, even down to the Mythology of the Pagans, among Pagans, as undoubted marks of the ill-breeding of the jesters; obscene images and talk, as liberties too shameful for even Rakes to allow themselves in; and injustice to creditors, and in matters of *Meum* and *Tuum*, as what it was beneath him to be guilty of.

"Some have objected to the meekness, to the tameness, as they will have it to be, of the character of Mr. Hickman. And yet Lovelace owns, that he rose upon him with great spirit in the interview between them; once, when he thought a reflection was but implied on *Miss Howe*[50]; and another time, when he imagined *himself* treated contemptuously[51]. Miss Howe, it must be owned (tho' not to the credit of her own character) treats him ludicrously on several occasions. But so she does her Mother. And perhaps a Lady of her lively turn would have treated as whimsically any man but a Lovelace. Mr. Belford speaks of him with honour and respect[52]. So does Colonel Morden[53]. And so does Clarissa on every occasion. And all that Miss Howe herself says of him, tends more to his reputation than discredit[54], as Clarissa indeed tells her[55].

"And as to Lovelace's treatment of him, the Reader must have observed, that it was his way [Pg 364] to treat every man with contempt, partly by way of self exaltation, and partly to gratify the

natural gaiety of his disposition. He says himself to Belford[56], 'Thou knowest I love him not, Jack; and whom we love not, we cannot allow a merit to; perhaps not the merit they should be granted.' 'Modest and diffident men,' writes Belford, to Lovelace, in praise of Mr. Hickman, 'wear not soon off those little precisenesses, which the confident, if ever they had them, presently get over[57].'

"But, as Miss Howe treats her Mother as freely as she does her Lover; so does Mr. Lovelace take still greater liberties with Mr. Belford, than he does with Mr. Hickman, with respect to his person, air, and address, as Mr. Belford himself hints to Mr. Hickman[58]. And yet he is not so readily believed to the discredit of Mr. Belford, by the Ladies in general, as he is when he disparages Mr. Hickman. Whence can this partiality arise?—

"*Mr. Belford had been a Rake: But was in a way of reformation.*

"*Mr. Hickman had always been a good man.*

"*And Lovelace* confidently says, *That the women love a man whose regard for them is founded in the knowlege of them*[59].

"Nevertheless, it must be owned, that it was not proposed to draw Mr. Hickman, as the man of whom the Ladies in general were likely to be very fond. Had it been so, *Goodness of heart*, and *Gentleness of manners*, *great Assiduity*, and *inviolable* and *modest* Love, would not of themselves have been supposed sufficient recommendations. He would not have been allowed the least share of *preciseness* or *formality*, altho' those defects might have been imputed to his reverence for the object of his passion: But in his character it was designed to [Pg 365] shew, that the same man could not be every-thing; and to intimate to Ladies, that in chusing companions for life, they should rather prefer the honest heart of a Hickman, which would be all their own, than to risque the chance of sharing, perhaps with scores, (and some of those probably the most profligate of the Sex) the volatile mischievous one of a Lovelace: In short, that they should chuse, if they wished for durable happiness, for rectitude of mind, and not for speciousness of person or address: Nor make a jest of a good man in favour of a bad one, who would make a jest of them and of their whole Sex.

"Two Letters, however, by way of accommodation, are inserted in this edition, which perhaps will give Mr. Hickman's character some heightening with such Ladies, as love spirit in a man; and had rather suffer by it, than not meet with it.—

Women, born to be controul'd,
Stoop to the Forward and the Bold,

Says Waller—And Lovelace too!

"Some have wished that the Story had been told in the usual narrative way of telling Stories designed to amuse and divert, and not in Letters written by the respective persons whose history is given in them. The author thinks he ought not to prescribe to the taste of others; but imagined himself at liberty to follow his own. He perhaps mistrusted his talents for the narrative kind of writing. He had the good fortune to succeed in the Epistolary way once before. A Story in which so many persons were concerned either principally or collaterally, and of characters and dispositions so various, carried on with tolerable connexion and perspicuity, in a series of Letters from different persons, without the aid of digressions and episodes foreign to the principal end and design, he thought had novelty to be pleaded for it: And that, in the present age, he supposed would not be a slight recommendation.

"But besides what has been said above, and in the *Preface*, on this head, the following [Pg 366] opinion of an ingenious and candid Foreigner, on this manner of writing, may not be improperly inserted here.

"'The method which the Author has pursued in the History of Clarissa, is the same as in the Life of Pamela: Both are related in familiar Letters by the parties themselves, at the very time in which the events happened: And this method has given the author great advantages, which he could not have drawn from any other species of narration. The minute particulars of events, the sentiments and conversation of the parties, are, upon this plan, exhibited with all the warmth and spirit, that the passion supposed to be predominant at the very time, could produce, and with all the distinguishing characteristics which memory can supply in a History of recent transactions.

"'Romances in general, and Marivaux's amongst others, are wholly improbable; because they suppose the History to be written after the series of events is closed by the catastrophe: A circumstance which implies a strength of memory beyond all example and probability in the persons concerned, enabling them, at the distance of several years, to relate all the particulars of a transient conversation: Or rather, it implies a yet more improbable confidence and familiarity between all these persons and the author.

"'There is, however, one difficulty attending the Epistolary method; for it is necessary, that all the characters should have an uncommon taste for this kind of conversation, and that they should suffer no event, nor even a remarkable conversation, to pass, without immediately committing it to writing. But for the preservation of the Letters *once written*, the author has provided with great judgment, so as to render this circumstance highly probable[60].'

"It is presumed that what this gentleman says of the difficulties attending a Story thus given in the Epistolary manner of writing, will not be found to reach the History before us. It is very well accounted for in it, how the two principal Female characters come to take so great a delight in writing. Their subjects are not merely subjects of amusement; but greatly interesting to both: Yet many Ladies there are who now laudably correspond, when at distance from each other, on occasions that far less affect their mutual welfare and friendships, than those treated of by these Ladies. The two principal gentlemen had motives of gaiety and vain-glory for their inducements. It will generally be found, that persons who have talents for familiar writeing, as these correspondents are presumed to have, will not forbear amusing themselves with their pens, on less arduous occasions than what offer to these. These Four (whose Stories have a connexion with each other) out of a great number of characters which are introduced in this History, are only eminent in the Epistolary way: The rest appear but as occasional writers, and as drawn in rather by necessity than choice, from the different relations in which they stand with the four principal persons." [Pg 367]

The Length of the piece has been objected to by some, who perhaps looked upon it as a mere *Novel* or *Romance*; and yet of *these* there are not wanting works of equal length.

They were of opinion, that the Story moved too slowly, particularly in the first and second Volumes, which are chiefly taken up with the Altercations between Clarissa and the several persons of her Family.

But is it not true, that those Altercations are the Foundation of the whole, and therefore a necessary part of the work? The Letters and Conversations, where the Story makes the slowest progress, are presumed to be *characteristic*. They give occasion likewise to suggest many interesting *Personalities*, in which a good deal of the instruction essential to a work of this nature is conveyed. And it will, moreover, be remembered, that the Author, at his first setting out, apprised the Reader, that the Story (interesting as it is generally allowed to be) was to be principally looked upon as the Vehicle to the Instruction. [Pg 368]

To all which we may add, that there was frequently a necessity to be very circumstantial and minute, in order to preserve and maintain that Air of Probability, which is necessary to be maintained in a Story designed to represent real Life; and which is rendered extremely busy and active by the plots and contrivances formed and carried on by one of the principal Characters.

'Some there are, and Ladies too! who have supposed that the excellencies of the Heroine are carried to an improbable, and even to an impracticable height, in this History. But the education of Clarissa from *early childhood* ought to be considered, as one of her very great advantages; as, indeed, the foundation of *all* her excellencies: And it is hoped, for the sake of the doctrine designed to be inculcated by it, that it will.

'She had a pious, a well-read, a not meanly descended woman for her Nurse, who with her milk, as Mrs. Harlowe says[61], gave her that nurture which no other Nurse could give her. She was very early happy in the conversation-visits of her learned and worthy Dr. Lewen, and in her correspondencies, not with him only, but with other Divines mentioned in her last Will. Her Mother was, upon the whole, a good woman; who did credit to her birth and her fortune, and was able to instruct her in her early youth: Her Father was not a free-living, or free-principled man; in the conversation-visits of her learned and worthy Dr. Lewen, and in her correspondencies, not with him only, but with other Divines mentioned in her lat Will. Her *Mother* was, upon the whole, a good woman, who did credit to her birth and her fortune; and *both* delighted in her for those improvements and attainments, which gave her, *and them in her*, a distinction that caused it to be said, that when she was out of the family, it was considered but as a common family[62]. She was moreover a Country Lady; and, as we have seen in Miss Howe's character of her[63], took great delight in rural and houshold employments; tho' qualified to adorn the brightest circle. [Pg 369]

'It must be confessed, that we are not to look for *Clarissa's* among the *constant frequenters* of Ranelagh and Vaux-hall, nor among those who may be called *Daughters of the Card-table*. If we do, the character of our Heroine may then indeed be justly thought not only improbable, but unattainable. But we have neither room in this place, nor inclination, to pursue a subject so invidious. We quit it therefore, after we have *repeated*, that we *know* there are *some*, and we *hope* there are *many*, in the British dominions [or they are hardly any-where in the European world] who, as far as *occasion* has called upon them to exert the like *humble* and *modest*, yet *steady* and *useful*, virtues, have reached the perfections of a Clarissa.

'Having thus briefly taken notice of the most material objections that have been made to different parts of this History, it is hoped we may be allowed to add, That had we thought ourselves at liberty to give copies of some of the many Letters that have been written on the other side of the question, that is to say, in approbation of the Catastrophe, and of the general Conduct and Execution of the work, by some of the most eminent judges of composition in every branch of Literature; most of what has been written in this Postscript might have been spared. [Pg 370]

'But as the principal objection with many has lain against the length of the piece, we shall add to what we have said above on that subject, in the words of one of those eminent writers: 'That, *If*, in the History before us, it shall be found, that the Spirit is *duly diffused throughout*; that the Characters are *various and natural*; *well distinguished* and *uniformly supported* and *maintained*: *If* there be a *variety of incidents* sufficient to excite Attention, and those so conducted, as to keep the Reader always awake; the Length then must add proportionably to the pleasure that every Person of Taste receives from a well-drawn Picture of Nature. But where the contrary of all these qualities shock the understanding, the extravagant performance will be judged tedious, tho' no longer than a Fairy-Tale.'

Footnotes:

[34] Writing on to him.

[35] Her Flight.

[36] See Vol. III. p. 358.

[37] Spectator, Vol I. Nº XL.

[38] Yet in Tamerlane, two of the most amiable characters, Moneses and Arpasia, suffer death.

[39] See Spect. Vol. VII. Nº 548.

[40] A caution that our Blessed Saviour himself gives in the case of the Eighteen persons killed by the fall of the tower of Siloam, Luke xiii. 4.

[41]

Vitiis nemo sine nascitur: optimus ille
Qui minimis urgetur——.

[42] Rapin, on Aristotle's Poetics.

[43] Psalm lxxiii.

[44] See Vol. VII. p. 301, 302.

[45] Ibid. p. 315.

[46] See Vol. VI. p. 268.

[47] And here it may not be amiss to remind the Reader, that so early in the Work as Vol. II. p. 159, 160, the dispensations of Providence are justified by herself. And thus she ends her Reflections—"I shall not live always—May my Closing Scene be happy!"

She had her wish. It was happy.

[48] Vol. VII. p. 64, 65, of the First Edition; and Vol. VI. p. 305 of this.

[49] Vol. IV. p. 122.

[50] Vol. VI. p. 10.

[51] Vol. VI. p. 14.

[52] Vol. VI. p. 71.

[53] Vol. VII. p. 244.

[54] See Vol. I. p. 314-319, and Vol. III. p. 44, 45.

[55] Vol. I. p. 363.

[56] Vol. VI. p. 1.

[57] Vol. VI. p. 71.

[58] Vol. VII. p. 197.

[59] Vol. IV. p. 302.

[60] This quotation is translated from a Critique on the History of CLARISSA, written in French, and published at Amsterdam. The whole Critique is rendered into English, and inserted in the Gentleman's Magazine of June and August 1749. The author has done great honour in it to the History of Clarissa; and as there are Remarks published with it, answering several objections made to different passages by that candid Foreigner, the Reader is referred to the aforesaid Magazines, for both.

[61] See Vol. III. p 287, 288.

[62] See Vol. VI. p. 274. See also her Mother's praises of her to Mrs. Norton, Vol. I. p. 251.

[63] See Vol. VII. p. 278-280.

1958-1959

75. John Joyne, *A Journal* (1679).

76. André Dacier, *Preface to Aristotle's Art of Poetry* (1705).

1959-1960

80. [P. Whalley's] *An Essay on the Manner of Writing History* (1746).

83. *Sawney and Colley (1742) and other Pope Pamphlets.*

84. Richard Savage's *An Author to be lett* (1729).

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85-6. *Essays on the Theatre from Eighteenth-Century Periodicals.*

87. Daniel Defoe, *Of Captain Mission and his Crew* (1728).

90. Henry Needler, *Works* (1728).

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93. John Norris, *Cursory Reflections Upon a Book Call'd. An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690).

94. An Collins, *Divine Songs and Meditacions* (1653).

95. *An Essay on the New Species of Writing Founded by Mr. Fielding* (1751).

96. *Hanoverian Ballads.*

1962-1963

97. Myles Davies, *Athenae Britannicae* (1716-1719).

98. *Select Hymns Taken Out of Mr. Herbert's Temple* (1697).

99. Thomas Augustine Arne, *Artaxerxes* (1761).

100. Simon Patrick, *A Brief Account of the New Sect of Latitude-Men* (1662).

101-2. Richard Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* (1762).

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Long "s" has been modernized.

Additional spacing after some of the quotes is intentional to indicate both the end of a

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