For

Lady Thoatchbulle

Original ms of Jane Austen's
Lady Susan.

Letter 1.

Lady Susan Vernon to Mr. Vernon. —

Langford, Dec.r — —

My dear Brother

I can no longer refuse myself the pleasure of profitting by your kind invitation when we last parted, of spending some weeks with you at Churchill, & therefore if quite convenient to you & Mrs Vernon to receive me at present, I shall hope within a few days to be introduced to a Sister, whom I have so long desired to be acquainted with. — My kind friends here are most affectionately urgent with me to prolong my stay, but their hospitable & chearful dispositions lead them

too much into Society for my present situation & state of mind; & I impatiently look forward to the hour when I shall be admitted into your delightful Retirement. I long to be made known to your dear little Children, in whose hearts I shall be very eager to secure an interest. — I shall soon have occasion for all my fortitude, as I am on the point of separation from my own daughter. — The long illness of her dear Father prevented my paying her that attention which Duty & affection equally dictated, & I have but too much reason to fear that the Governess to whose care I consigned her, was unequal to the charge. — I have therefore resolved on placing her at one of the best Private Schools in Town, where I shall have an opportunity of leaving her myself, in my way to you. I am determined you see, not to be denied admittance at Churchill. — It would indeed give me most painful sensations to know that it were not in your power to receive me. — Yr. most obliged & affec: Sister

S. Vernon. —

Letter 2.

Lady Susan to Mrs Johnson

Langford

You were mistaken my dear Alicia, in sup-
:posing me fixed at this place for the rest of the
winter. It grieves me to say how greatly you were
mistaken, for I have seldom spent three months
more agreably than those which have just flown
away. — At present nothing goes smoothly. — The
Females of the Family are united against me. — You
foretold how it would be, when I first came to
Langford; & Manwaring is so uncommonly plea-
:sing that I was not without apprehensions myself.
I remember saying to myself as I drove to the
House, "I like this Man; pray Heaven no harm
come of it." — But — I was determined to be discreet,
to bear in mind my being only four months a wi-
:dow, & to be as quiet as possible, — and I have been

so; - My dear Creature, I have admitted no one's attention but Mannwaring's, I have avoided all general flirtation whatever, I have distinguished no Creature besides of all the Numbers resorting hither, except Sir James Martin, on whom I bestowed a little notice in order to detach him from Miss Mannwaring. But if the World could know my motive there, they would honour me. - I have been called an unkind Mother, but it was the sacred impulse of maternal affection, it was the advantage of my Daughter that led me on; & if that Daughter were not the greatest simpleton on Earth, I might have been rewarded for my Exertions as I ought. - Sir James did make proposals to me for Frederica - but Frederica, who was born to be the torment of my life, chose to set herself so violently against the match, that I thought it better to lay aside the scheme for the present. - I have more than once repented that I did not.

marry him myself, & were he but one degree
less contemptibly weak I certainly should, but
I must own myself rather romantic in that re-
:spect, & that Riches only, will not satisfy me.
The event of all this is very provoking.— Sir James
is gone, Maria highly incensed, & Mrs Shanwaring
insupportably jealous;— so jealous in short, & so en-
:raged against me, that in the fury of her temper
I should not be surprised at her appealing to her
Guardian if she had the liberty of addressing him—
but there is your Husband's friend, & the
kindest, most amiable action of his life was his
throwing her off forever on her Marriage.— Keep up
his resentment therefore I charge you.— We are
now in a sad state; no house was ever more altered;
the whole family are at war, & Shanwaring scarcely
dares speak to me. It is time for me to be gone;
I have therefore determined on leaving them, & shall
spend I hope a comfortable day with you in Town.

within this week. — If I am as little in favour with Mr. Johnson as ever, you must come to me at No. 10 Wigmore St. — but I hope this may not be the case, for as Mr. Johnson with all his faults is a Man to whom that great word "Respectable" is always given, & I am known to be so intimate with his wife, his slighting me has an awkward Look. — I hate a Town in my way to that insupportable spot, a Country Village, for I am really going to Churchill. — Forgive me my dear friend, it is my last resource. Were there another place in England open to me, I would prefer it. — Charles Vernon is my aversion, & I am afraid of his Wife. — At Churchill however I must remain till I have something better in view. My young Lady accompanies me to Town, where I shall deposit her under the care of Mrs Summers in Wigmore Street, till she becomes a little more reasonable. She will make good Connections there, as the Girls are all of the best Families. — The price is

immense, & much beyond what I can ever attempt to pay. - Adieu. I will send you a line, as soon as I arrive in Town. - Yours &c, S. Vernon.

Letter 3. —

Mrs Vernon to Lady De. Courcy.

Churchill

My dear Mother

I am very sorry to tell you that it will not be in our power to keep our promise of spending the Christmas with you; & we are prevented that happiness by a circumstance which is not likely to make us any amends. - Lady Susan in a letter to her Brother, has declared her intention of visiting us almost immediately — & as such a visit is in all probability merely an affair of convenience, it is impossible to conjecture it's length. I was by no means prepared for such an event, nor can I now

account for her Ladyship's conduct. — Langford appeared so exactly the place for her in every respect, as well from the elegant & expensive stile of living there, as from her particular attachment to Mrs Manwaring, that I was very far from expecting so speedy a distinction, tho' I always imagined from her increasing friendship for us since her Husband's death, that we should at some future period be obliged to receive her. — Mr. Vernon I think was a great deal too kind to her, when he was in Staffordshire. Her behaviour to him, independant of her general character, has been so inexcusably artful & ungenerous since our marriage was first in agitation, that no one less amiable & mild than himself could have overlooked it at all; & tho' as his Brother's widow & in narrow circumstances it was proper to render her pecuniary assistance, I cannot help thinking his pressing invitation to her to visit us at Churchill perfectly unnecessary. — Disposed however as he always is to think the best of every one, her display of

Grief, & professions of regret, & general resolutions of prudence were sufficient to soften his heart, & make him really confide in her sincerity. But as for my: :self, I am still unconvinced; & plausibly as her Ladyship has now written, I cannot make up my mind, till I better understand her real meaning in coming to us. — You may guess therefore my dear Madam. with what feelings I look forward to her arrival. — She will have occasion for all those attractive Powers for which she is celebrated, to gain any share of my regard; & I shall certainly endeavour to guard myself against their influence, if not accompanied by some: :thing more substantial. — She expresses a most eager desire of being acquainted with me, & makes very gracious mention of my Children, but I am not quite weak enough to suppose a woman who has behaved with inattention if not unkindness to her own Child, should be attached to any of mine.

Miss Vernon is to be placed at a school in Town be:
:fore her Mother comes to us, which I am glad of, for
her sake & my own. It must be to her advantage to
be separated from her Mother; a girl of sixteen who
has received so wretched an education would not be
a very desirable companion here. — Reginald has long
wished I know to see this captivating Lady Susan, &
we shall depend on his joining our party soon. —
I am glad to hear that my Father continues so well,
I am, with best Love &c, Cath Vernon. —

Letter 4. —

Mrs. DeCourcy to Mrs. Vernon.

Parklands

My dear Sister

I congratulate you & Mr. Vernon on being
about to receive into your family, the most accom:
:plished Coquette in England. — As a very distinguished
Flirt, I have been always taught to consider her; but

it has lately fallen in my way to hear some par-
: ticulars of her conduct at Langford, which prove
that she does not confine herself to that sort of
honest flirtation which satisfies most people, but
aspires to the more delicious gratification of making
a whole family miserable. — By her behaviour to
Mr. Manwaring, she gave jealousy & wretchedness to his
wife, & by her attentions to a young Man previously
attached to Mr. Manwaring's Sister, deprived an a-
: miable girl of her Lover. — I learnt all this from
a Mr. Smith now in this neighbourhood — (I have
dined with him at Hurst & Wilford / — who is just
come from Langford, where he was a fortnight in
the house with her Ladyship, & who is therefore
well qualified to make the communication. —
What a Woman she must be! — I long to see her,
& shall certainly accept your kind invitation, that I
may
form some idea of those bewitching powers which can
do so much — engaging at the same time & in the

same house the affections of two Men who were neither of them at liberty to bestow them — & all these, without the charm of Youth. — I am glad to find that Miss Vernon does not come with her Mother to Churchill, as she has not even manners to recommend her, & according to Mr. Smith's account, is equally ~~heavy~~ dull & proud. Where Pride & Stupidity unite, there can be no depos= =sulation worthy notice, & Miss Vernon shall be con= =signed to unrelenting Contempt; but by all that I can gather, Lady Susan possesses a degree of captivating Deceit which it must be pleasing to witness & detect. I shall be with you very soon, & am your affec. Brother

R. Delamere. —

Letter 5. —

Lady Susan to Mrs. Johnson

Churchill

I received your note my dear Alicia, just before I left Town, & rejoice to be assured that Mr.

Johnson suspected nothing of your engagement the evening before; it is undoubtedly better to deceive him entirely; - since he will be stubborn, he must be tricked. - I arrived here in safety, & have no reason to complain of my reception from Mr. Vernon; but I confess myself not equally satisfied with the behaviour of his Lady. - She is perfectly well bred indeed, & has the air of a woman of fashion, but her manners are not such as can persuade me of her being prepossessed in my favour. - I wanted her to be delighted at seeing me. - I was as amiable as possible on the occasion - but all in vain - she does not like me. - To be sure, when we consider that I did take some pains to prevent my Brothers in- -laws marrying her, their want of cordiality is not very surprising - & yet it shews an illiberal & vindictive spirit to resent a project which in: :fluenced me six years ago, & which never succ: :ceeded at last. - I am sometimes half disposed

to repent that I did not let Charles buy Vernon Castle.
when we were obliged to sell it, but it was a trying
circumstance, especially as the sale took place exactly
at the time of his marriage — & everybody ought to
respect the delicacy of those feelings, which could not
endure that my Husband's Dignity should be lessened
by his youngest brother's having possession of the Family
Estate. — Could Matters have been so arranged as to pre-
:vent the necessity of our leaving the Castle, could we
have lived with Charles & kept him single, I should
have been very far from persuading my husband to
dispose of it elsewhere; — but Charles was then on
the point of marrying Miss De Lancey, & the event
has justified one. Here are Children in abundance,
& what benefit could have accrued to me from his
purchasing Vernon? — My having prevented it, may
perhaps have given his wife an unfavourable im-
:pression — but where there is a disposition to dislike

a motive will never be wanting; & as to Money-
-matters, it has not with-held him from being very
useful to me. I really have a regard for him, he
is so easily imposed on!

The house is a good one, the Furniture
fashionable, & every thing announces plenty & Ele-
:gance. - Charles is very rich I am sure; when a
Man has once got his name in a Banking House
he rolls in Money. But they do not know what to
do with their fortune, Keep very little Company,
& never go to Town but on business. — We shall
be as stupid as possible. — I mean to win my
Sister-in-law's heart through her Children; I know
all their names already, & am going to attach myself
with the greatest sensibility to one in particular, a
young Frederic, whom I take on my Lap & sigh over
for his dear Uncle's sake. —

Poor Shamwaring! — I need not tell you

how much I miss him — how perpetually he is in my thoughts. — I found a dismal Letter from him on my arrival here, full of complaints of his wife & sis: :ter, & lamentations on the cruelty of his fate. I pass'd off the letter as his wife's, to the Vernons, & when I write to him, it must be under cover to you. —

Ever Dear, S V. —

Letter 6. —

Mrs Vernon to Mr De Courcy

Churchill

Well my dear Reginald, I have seen this dan: :gerous creature, & must give you some description of her, tho' I hope you will soon be able to form your own judgement. She is really exceedingly pretty. How: :ever you may chuse to question the allurements of a Lady no longer young, I must for my own part de: :clare that I have seldom seen so lovely a woman

as Lady Susan. — She is delicately fair, with fine grey eyes & dark eyelashes; & from her appearance one would not suppose her more than five & twenty, tho' she must in fact be ten years older. — I was cer: :tainly not disposed to admire her, tho' always hearing she was beautiful; but I cannot help feeling that she possesses an uncommon union of Symmetry, Brilliancy & Grace. — Her address to me was so gentle, frank & even affectionate, that if I had not known how much she has always disliked me for marrying Mr. Vernon, & that we had never met before, I should have imagined her an at: :tached friend. — She is apt I believe to connect assurance of manner with coquetry, & to expect that an impudent address will necessarily attend an impudent mind; — at least I was myself pre: :pared for an improper degree of confidence in Lady Susan; but her Countenance is absolutely sweet, &

her voice & manner winningly smiled. — I am sorry it is so, for what is this but Deceit? — Unfortunately one knows her too well. — She is clever & agreable, has all that knowledge of the world which makes conversation easy, & talks very well, with a happy command of language, which is too often used I believe to make Black appear White. — She has already almost persuaded one of her being warmly attached to her daugh: ter, tho' I have so long been convinced of the contrary. She speaks of her with so much tenderness & anxiety, lamenting so bitterly the neglect of her education, which she represents however as wholly unavoidable, that I am forced to recollect how many successive Springs her Ladyship spent in Town, while her daughter was left in Staffordshire to the care of Servants or a Governess very little better, to prevent my believing whatever she says.

If her Manners have so great an influence

on my resentful heart, you may guess how much more strongly they operate on Mr. Vernon's generous temper. — I wish I could be as well satisfied as he is, that it was really her choice to leave Langford for Churchill; & if she had not staid three months there before she discovered that her friends manner of Living did not suit her situation or feelings, I might have believed that concern for the loss of such a Husband as Mr. Vernon, to whom far from her own behaviour was ~~not~~ unexceptionable, might for a time make her wish for retirement. But I cannot forget the length of her visit to the Manwarings, & when I reflect on the different mode of life which she led with them, from that to which she must now submit, I can only suppose that the wish of establishing her reputation by following, tho' late, the paths of propriety, occasioned her removal from a family where she must

in reality have been particularly happy. If your friend Mr. Smith's story however cannot be quite true, as she corresponds regularly with Mrs Stanhope; at any rate it must be exaggerated; it is scarcely poss: sible that two men should be so grossly deceived by her at once. — Yrs. &c. C. Vernon.

Letter 7.

Lady Susan to Mrs Johnson

Churchill.

My dear Alicia

You are very good in taking notice of Frederica, & I am grateful for it as a mark of your friendship; but as I cannot have a doubt of the warmth of that friendship, I am far from exacting so heavy a sacrifice. She is a stupid girl, & has nothing to recommend her. — I would not therefore on any account have you encumber one moment of your precious time by sending for her to Edward's,

especially as every visit is so many hours deducted from the grand affair of Education, which I really wish to be attended to, while she remains with Miss Summers. I want her to play & sing with some portion of Taste, & a good deal of assurance, as she has my ~~xxx~~ hand & arm, & a tolerable voice. I was so much indulged in my infant ~~ages~~ years that I was never obliged to attend to anything, & conse=quently am without those accomplishments which are now necessary to finish a pretty woman. Not that I am an advocate for the prevailing fashion of acquiring a perfect knowledge in all the Languages, Arts & Sciences; - it is throwing time away; - to be Mistress of French, Italian, German, Music, Singing, Drawing &c will gain a Woman some applause, but will not add one Lover to her list. Grace & Manner after all are of the greatest im: portance. I do not mean therefore that Frederica's

acquirements should be more than superficial, & I flatter myself that she will not remain long enough at School to understand anything thoroughly. — I hope to see her the wife of Sir James within a twelvemonth. — You know on what I ground my hope, & it is certainly a good foundation, for School must be very humiliating to a girl of Frederica's age; & by the bye, you had better not invite her any more on that account, as I wish her to find her situation as unpleasant as possible. — I am sure of Sir James at any time, & could make him renew his application by a Line. — I shall trouble you meanwhile to prevent her forming any other attachment when he comes to Town; — ask him to your House occasionally, & talk to him about Frederica that he may not forget her. —

Upon the whole I commend my own conduct in this affair extremely, & regard it as a very

happy

mixture of circumspection & tenderness. Some Mo:
: thers would have insisted on their Daughters ac:
: cepting so great an offer on the first overture,
but I could not answer it to myself to force
Frederica into a Marriage from which her heart
revolted; & instead of adopting so harsh a mea:
: sure, merely propose to make it her own choice
by rendering her thoroughly uncomfortable till
she does accept him. But enough of this tire:
: some Girl. —

You may well wonder how I contrive to
pass my time here — & for the first week, it was
most insufferably dull. Now however, we begin
to mend; - One party is enlarged by Mr! Vernon's
brother, a handsome young Man, who promises
one some amusement. There is something about
him that rather interests me, a sort of saucy-
=ness, of familiarity which I shall teach him to

connect. He is lively & seems clever, & when I have
inspired him with greater respect for me than his
sister's kind offices have implanted, he may be an
agreable Suit. — There is exquisite pleasure in sub-
=duing an insolent spirit, in making a person
pre-determined to dislike, acknowledge one's superi-
=ority. — I have disconcerted him already by my calm-
ness, & it shall be my endeavour to humble the
Pride of these self-important Decourcis still low-
=er, to convince Mrs Vernon that her virtuous cau-
=tions have been bestowed in vain, & to persuade
Reginald that she has scandalously belied me.
This project will serve at least to amuse me, &
prevent my feeling so acutely this dreadful sepa-
=ration from You & all whom I love. Adieu.

Your Ever

S. Vernon.

Lettee 8.

Mrs Vernon to Lady DeCourcy.

Chesterfield

My dear Mother

You must not expect Reginald back again for some time. He desires me to tell you that the present open weather induces him to accept Mr. Vernon's invitation to prolong his stay in Sussex that they may have some hunting together. - He means to send for his Horses immediately, & it is impossible to say when you may see him in Kent. I will not disguise my sentiments on this change from you my dear Madam, tho' I think you had better not communicate them to my Father, whose excessive anxiety about Reginald would subject him to an alarm which might seriously affect his health & spirits. Lady Susan has certainly contrived in the

space of a fortnight to make my Brother like her. —
In short, I am persuaded that her continuing here
beyond the time originally fixed for her return, is
occasioned as much by ~~the~~ a degree of fascination to-
wards her, as by the wish of hunting with Mr. Vernon,
& of course I cannot receive that pleasure from the
length of her visit which any Brother's company would
otherwise give me. — I am indeed provoked at the
artifice of this unprincipled woman. What stronger
proof of her dangerous abilities can be given, than
their perversion of Reginald's Judgement, which when
he entered the house was so decidedly against her. —
In his last letter he actually gave me some particu-
lars of her behaviour at Langford, such as he received
from a Gentleman who knew her perfectly well, whilst
if true must excite abhorrence against her, & which he:
generally himself was entirely disposed to credit. His
opinion of her I am sure, was as low as of any Woman

in England, & when he first came it was evident that he considered her as one entitled neither to Delicacy nor respect, & that he felt she would be delighted with the attentions of any Man inclined to flirt with her.

Her behaviour I confess has been calculated to do away such an idea, I have not detected the smallest impropriety in it, — nothing of Vanity, of pretension, of Levity — & she is altogether so ~~pleasing~~ attractive, that I should not wonder at her being delighted with her, had he known nothing of her previous to their personal acquaintance; — but against Reason, against conviction, to be so well pleased with her as I am sure he is, does really astonish me. — His admiration was at first very strong, but no more than was natural; & I did not wonder at his being struck by the gentleness & delicacy of her Manners; — but when he has mentioned her of late, it has been in terms of more extraordinary praise, & yesterday he actually said, that he could not be surprised at any effect produced on the heart of Man

by such Loveliness & such Abilities; & when I lamented in reply the badness of her disposition, he observed that whatever might have been her errors, they were to be imputed to her neglected Education & early Mar: :riage, & that she was altogether a wonderful Wo: :man. —

This tendency to censure her conduct, or to for: :get it in the warmth of admiration vexes me; & if I did not know that Reginald is too much at home at Churchill to need an invitation for long: :thening his visit, I should regret Mr. Vernon's go: :ing here any. —

Lady Susan's intentions are of course those of absolute coquetry, or a desire of universal admi: :ration. I cannot for a moment imagine that she has anything more serious in view, but it morti: :fies me to see a young Man of Reginald's sense duped by her at all. — I am &c.

Cath. Vernon. —

Letter 9.

Mrs Johnson to Lady Susan

Edward St ——

My dearest Friend

I congratulate you on Mr. De Courcy's arrival, & advise you by all means to marry him, his Father's Estate is we know considerable, & I believe certainly entailed. — Sir Reginald is very infirm, & not likely to stand in your way long. — I hear the young Man well spoken of, & tho' no one can really deserve you my dearest Susan, Mr. De Courcy may be worth having. — Manwaring will storm of course, but you may easily pacify him. Besides, the most scrupulous point of honour could not require you to wait for his emancipation. — I have seen Sir James, — he came

to Town for a few days last week, & called several times in Edward Street. I talked to him about you & your daughter, & he is so far from having forgotten you, that I am sure he would many either of you with pleasure. — I gave him hopes of Frederica's relenting, & told him a great deal of her improvements. — I scolded him for making Love to Maria Manwaring; he protested that he had been only in joke, & we both laughed heartily at her disappointment, & in short were very agreable. — He is as silly as ever. — Yours faithfully

Alicia. ——

Letter 10.

Lady Susan to Mrs Johnson.

Churchill

I am much obliged to you my dear Friend, for your advice respecting Mr. De Courcy, which I know

was given with the fullest conviction of it's expe:
:diency, tho' I am not quite determined on following
it. — I cannot easily resolve on anything so serious
as Marriage, especially as I am not at present in
want of money, & might perhaps title the old Gen:
:tleman's death, be very little benefited by the match.
It is true that I am vain enough to believe it within
my reach. — I have made him sensible of my power,
& can now enjoy the pleasure of triumphing over
a Mind prepared to dislike me, & prejudiced against
all my past actions. Mrs Sirlen too, is I hope con:
:vinced how little the ingenuous representations
of any one to the disadvantage of another will
avail, when opposed to the immediate influence
of Intellect & Manner. — I see plainly that she is
uneasy at my progress in the good opinion of her
Brother, & conclude that nothing will be wanting

on her part to counteract me; - but having once made him doubt the justice of her opinion of me, I think I may defy her. —

It has been delightful to me to watch his advances towards intimacy, especially to observe his altered manner in consequence of my repressing by the calm dignity of my deportment, his insolent approach to direct familiarity. — My conduct has been equally guarded from the first, & I never behaved less like a Coquette in the whole course of my life, tho' per: haps my desire of dominion was never more decided. I have subdued him entirely by sentiment & serious Conversation, & made him - I may venture to say at least half in Love with me, without the slen: blance of the most common-place flirtation..

Mrs Vernon's consciousness of deserving every sort of revenge that it can be in my power to inflict, for her ill-offices, could alone enable her to perceive

that I am actuated by any design in behaviour so gentle & unpretending. — Let her think & act as she chuses however; I have never yet found that the advice of a Sister could prevent a young Man's being in love if he chose it. — We are advancing now towards some kind of confidence, & in short are likely to be engaged in a kind of platonic friendship. — On my side, you may be sure of it's never being more, for if I were not already as much attached to another person as I can be to any one, I should make a point of not bestowing my affection on a Man who had dared to think so meanly of me. —

Reginald has a good figure, & is not un: worthy the praise you have heard given him, but is still greatly inferior to our friend at Lang: ford. — He is less polished, less insinuating than Shamewing, & is comparatively deficient in the

power of saying those delightful things which put one in good humour with oneself & all the world. He is quite agreable enough however, to afford me amusement, & to make many of those hours pass very pleasantly which would be otherwise spent in endeavouring to overcome my Sister in law's reserve, & listening to her Husband's insipid talk. —

Your account of Sir James is most satisfactory, & I mean to give Miss Frederica a hint of my intentions very soon. — Yours &c,

I. Vernon.

Letter 11.

Mrs Vernon to Lady De Courcy.

I really grow quite uneasy my dearest Mother about Reginald, from witnessing the very rapid increase of Lady Susan's influence. They are now on terms of the most particular friend-

= Ship,

frequently engaged in long conversations together,
& she has continued by the most artful Coquetry
to subdue his Judgement to her own purposes. —
It is impossible to see the intimacy between them,
so very soon established, without some alarm,
tho' I can hardly suppose that Lady Susan's
views extend to Marriage. — I wish you could
get Reginald home again, under any plausible
pretence. He is not at all disposed to leave us, &
I have given him as many hints of my Father's
precarious state of health, as common decency will
allow me to do in my own house. — Her power
over him must now be boundless, as she has en-
: tirely effaced all his former ill-opinion, & pre-
: suaded him not merely to forget, but to justify
her conduct. — Mr. Smith's account of her proceed-
: ings at Langford, where he accused her of having

made Mr. Shanwaring a young Man engaged to
Miss Shanwaring distractedly in love with her, which
Reginald firmly believed when he came to Churchill,
is now he is persuaded only a scandalous invention.
He has told me so in a warmth of manner which
spoke his regret at having ever believed the contrary
himself. —

How sincerely do I grieve that the ever ex-
:tend their house. — I always looked forward to
her coming with uneasiness — but very far was it,
from originating in anxiety for Reginald. — I
expected a most disagreable companion to myself,
but could not imagine that my Brother would
be in the smallest danger of being captivated by
a Woman, with whose principles he was so well
acquainted, & whose Character he so heartily despised.
If you can get him away, it will be a good thing.

Ever affec: Y.
Cath: Vernon.

Letter 12.

Sir Reginald De Courcy to his Son

Parklands

I know that young Men in general do not ad:
:mit of any enquiry, even from their nearest rela:
:tions, into affairs of the heart; but I hope my dear
Reginald that you will be superior to such as al:
:low nothing for a Father's anxiety, & think them:
:selves privileged to refuse him their confidence
& slight his advice. — You must be sensible that
as an only son & the representative of an ancient
Family, your conduct in Life is most interesting
to your connections. — In the very important con:
:cern of Marriage especially, there is everything at
stake; your own happiness, that of your Parents,
& the credit of your name. — I do not suppose that
you would deliberately form an absolute engagement

of that nature without acquainting your Mother & myself, or at least without being convinced that we should approve your choice; but I cannot help fearing that you may be drawn in by the Lady who has lately attached you, to a Marriage, which the whole of your Family, far & near, must highly reprobate.

Lady Susan's age is itself a material objection, but her want of character is one so much more serious, that the difference of even twelve years becomes trifling in comparison of small account. Were you not blinded by a sort of fascination, it would be ridiculous in me to repeat the mistaken of great Misconduct on her side, so very generally known. Her neglect of her husband, her encouragement of other Men, her extravagance & dissipation were so gross & notorious, that no one could be ignorant of them at the time, nor can now have forgotten them. — To our Family, she has always been represented in softened

colours by the benevolence of Mr. Charles Vernon; yet inspite of his generous endeavours to excuse her, we know that she did, from the most selfish motives, take all possible pains to prevent his marrying Catherine. —

My Fears & increasing Infirmities make me very desirous my dear Reginald, of seeing you settled in the world. — To the Fortune of your Wife, the goodness of my own, will make me indifferent; but her family & character must be equally unexceptionable. When your choice is so fixed as that no objection can be made to either, I can promise you a ready & chearful consent; but it is my Duty to oppose a Match, which deep Art only could render probable, & must in the end make wretched.

If it is possible that her behaviour may arise only from Vanity, or a wish of gaining the admiration of a Man whom she must imagine to be

particularly prejudiced against her; but it is more like:
:ly that she should aim at something further.
She is poor, & may naturally seek an alliance which
must be advantageous to herself. — You know your
own rights, & that it is out of my power to prevent your
inheriting the family Estate. Any Ability of distress:
:ing you during my Life, would be a Species of re:
:venge to which I should hardly stoop under any
circumstances. — I honestly tell you my Sentiments
& Intentions. I do not wish to work on your Fear,
but on your Sense & Affection. — It would destroy
every comfort of my Life, to know that you were
married to Lady Susan Vernon. It would be the
death of that honest Pride with which I have hi:
:therto considered my Son, I should blush to see
him, to hear of him, to think of him. —
I may perhaps do no good, but that of re:
:leiving my own mind, by this Letter; but I felt it

my Duty to tell you that your partiality for Lady Susan is no secret to your friends, & to warn you against her. — I should be glad to hear your reasons for disbelieving Mr. Smiths intelligence; — you had no doubt of its' authenticity a month ago. —

If you can give me your assurance of having no design beyond enjoying the conversation of a clever woman for a short period, & of yielding admiration only to her Beauty & Abilities without being blinded by them to her faults, you will restore one to happiness; but if you cannot do this, explain to me at least what has occasioned so great an alteration in your opinion of her.

Yours &c

Reg.d De Courcy.

Letter 13. —

Lady De Courcy to Mrs Vernon —

Parklands

My dear Catherine,

Unluckily I was confined to my room when your last Letter came, by a cold which affected my eyes so much as to prevent my reading it myself, so I could not refuse your Father when he offered to read it to me, by which means he became acquainted to my great vexation with all your fears about your Brother. I had intended to write to Reginald myself, as soon as my eyes would let me, to point out as well as I could the danger of an intimate acquaintance with so artful a woman as Lady Susan, to a young Man of his age & high expectations. I meant moreover to have reminded him of our being quite alone now, & very much in need of him to keep up our Spirits

these long winter evenings. Whether it would have done any good, can never be settled now; but I am excessively vexed that Sir Reginald should know anything of a matter which ever so remotely could make him so uneasy. — He caught all your fears the moment he had read your Letter, & I am sure has not had the business out of his head since; — he wrote by the same post to Reginald, a long letter full of it all, & particularly asking an explanation of what he may have heard from Lady Susan to contradict the late shocking reports.

His answer came this morning, which I shall enclose to you, as I think you will like to see it; I wish it was more satisfactory, but it seems written with such a determination to think well of Lady Susan, that his assurances as to Marriage &c, do not set my heart at ease. —

I say all I can however to satisfy your Father, & he is certainly less uneasy since Reginald's letter. How provoking it is my dear Catherine, that this unwelcome Guest of yours, should not only prevent our meeting this Christmas, but be the occasion of so much vexation & trouble. — Kiss the dear Child: dren for me. — Your affec: Mother

C. De Courcy. —

Letter 14.

Mr. De Courcy to Sir Reginald —

Churchill.

My dear Sir

I have this moment received your Letter, which has given me more astonishment than I ever felt before. I am to thank my Sister. I suppose, for having represented me in such a light as to injure me in your opinion, I give

you all this alarm. — I know not why she should chuse to make herself & her family uneasy by apprehending an Event, which no one but herself. I can affirm, would ever have thought possible. To impute such a design to Lady Susan would be talk: :ing from her every claim to that excellent under: :standing which her bitterest Enemies have never de: :nied her; & equally low must sink any pretensions to common sense, if I am suspected of matrimonial views in my behaviour to her. — One difference of age must be an insuperable objection, & I entreat you my dear Sir to quiet your mind, & no longer harbour a Suspicion which cannot be more injur: :ious to your own peace, than to our Understandings.

I can have no view in remaining with Lady Susan than to enjoy for a short time (as you have yourself expressed it) the conversation of a wo: :man

of high mental power. If Mrs Vernon would allow something to my affection for herself & her husband in the length of my visit, she would do more justice to us all; - but my sister is unhappily prejudiced be: yond the hope of conviction against Lady Susan. — From an attachment to her husband which in it: self does honour to both, she cannot forgive those endeavours at preventing their union, which have been attributed to selfishness in Lady Susan. But in this case, as well as in many others, the World has most grossly injured that Lady, by supposing the worst, where the motives of her conduct have been doubtful. —

Lady Susan had heard something so orate: cally to the disadvantage of my sister, as to persuade her that the happiness of Mr. Vernon, to whom she was always much attached, would be absolute: ly destroyed by the Marriage. And this circumstance

while it explains the true motives of Lady Susan's
conduct, & removes all the blame which has been
so lavished on her, may also convince us how little
the general report of any one ought to be credited,
since no Character however upright, can escape
the malevolence of slander. If any Victim in the
security of Retirement, with as little opportunity as
inclination to do Evil, could not avoid Censure,
we must not rashly condemn those who living
in the World & surrounded with temptation, should
be accused of Errors which they are known to have
the power of committing. —

I blame myself severely for having so
easily believed the scandalous tales invented by Charles
Smith to the prejudice of Lady Susan, as I am
now convinced how greatly they have traduced her.
As to Mrs Manwaring's jealousy, it was totally
her own invention; & his account of her attaching

Miss Manwaring's Love was scarcely better founded. Sir James Martin had been drawn in by that young Lady to pay her some attention; & as he is a Man of fortune, it was easy to see that her views ex: tended to Marriage. — It is well known that Miss Manwaring is absolutely on the catch for a husband, & no one therefore can pity her, for losing by the su: perior attractions of another Woman, the chance of being able to make a worthy Man completely mi: serable. — Lady Susan was far from intending such a conquest, & on finding how warmly Miss Manwaring resented her Lover's defection, determin: ed, in spite of Mr. & Mrs. Manwaring's most ear: nest entreaties to leave the family. — I have reason to imagine that she did receive various Proposals from Sir James, but her removing from Langford immediately on the discovery of his attachment, must

acquit her on that article, with the very Mind of common candour. — You will, I am sure, my dear Sir, feel the truth of this reasoning, & will hereby learn to do justice to the Character of a very injured woman. —

I know that Lady Susan in coming to Churchill was governed only by the most honorable & amiable intentions. — Her prudence & economy are exemplary, her regard for Mr. Vernon equal even to his deserts, & her wish of obtaining any sister's good opinion merits a better return than it has received. — As a Mother she is unexceptionable. Her solid affection for her Child is shewn by plac: :ing her in hands, where her Education will be properly attended to; but because she has not the blind & weak partiality of most Mothers, she is ac: :cused of wanting Maternal Tenderness. — Every person of Sense however will know how to value & commend.

her well directed affection, & will join me in wish:
:ing that Frederica Vernon may prove more worthy
than she has yet done, of her Mothers tender cares.

I have now my dear Sir, written my real
Sentiments of Lady Susan; you will know from
this Letter, how highly I admire her Abilities & ex:
:teem her Character, but if you are not equally
convinced by my full & solemn assurance that your
fears have been most idly excited, you will deeply
mortify & distress me. — Ever &c

R. DeCourcy. —

Letter 15. —

Mrs. Vernon to Lady DeCourcy.

Churchill.

My dear Mother

I return you Reginald's Letter, & rejoice
with all my heart that my Father is made easy by it.

Tell him so, with my congratulations; — but between ourselves, I must own it has only convinced me of my Brother's having no present intention of marrying Lady Susan — not that he will be in no danger of doing so three months hence. — He gives a very plausible account of her behaviour at Langford, & I wish it may be true, but his intelligence must come from herself, & I am less disposed to believe it, than to lament the degree of intimacy subsisting between them, implied by the discussion of such a subject.

I am sorry to have incurred his displeasure, but can expect nothing better while he is so very eager in Lady Susan's justification. — He is very severe against me indeed, & yet I hope I have not been hasty in my judgement of her. — Poor Woman! tho' I have reasons enough for my dislike, I cannot help pitying her at present as she is in real distress, & with too much cause. — She had this

morning a letter from the Lady with whom she has placed her daughter, to request that Miss Vernon might be immediately removed, as she had been detected in an attempt to run away. Why, or whither she intend: :ed to go, does not appear; but as her situation seems to have been unexceptionable, it is a sad thing & of course highly afflicting to Lady Susan. —

Frederica must be as much as sixteen, & ought to know better, but from what her Mother in: :sinuates I am afraid she is a perverse girl. She has been sadly neglected however, & her Mother ought to remember it. —

Mr. Vernon set off for Town as soon as she had determined what should be done. He is if possible to prevail on Miss Summers to let Frede: :rica continue with her, & if he cannot succeed, to bring her to Churchill for the present, till some other

situation can be found for her. — Her Ladyship is comforting herself meanwhile by strolling along the Shrubbery with Reginald, calling forth all his ten: :der feelings I suppose on this distressing occasion. She has been talking a great deal about it to me, she talks vastly well, I am afraid of being wrong: :nesses or I should say she talks too well to feel so very deeply. But I will not look for Faults. She may be Reginald's wife — Heaven forbid it! — but why should I be quicker sighted than any body else? — Mr. Vernon declares that he never saw deeper distress than hers, on the receipt of the Letter — & is his Judgement inferior to mine? —

She was very unwilling that Frederica should be allowed to come to Churchill, & justly enough, as it seems a sort of reward to Behaviour deserving very differently. But it was impossible to

take her any where else, for she is not to remain here long.—

"It will be absolutely necessary, said she, as you my dear Sister must be sensible, to treat my daughter with some severity while she is here; — a most painful necessity, but I will endeavour to submit to it. — I am afraid I have been often too indulgent, but my poor Frederica's temper could never bear opposition well. You must support & encourage me — you must urge the necessity of reproof, if you see me too lenient."

All this sounds very reasonably. — Reginald is so incensed against the poor silly Girl! — surely it is not to Lady Susan's credit that he should be so bitter against her daughter; his idea of her must be drawn from the Mother's description. —

Well, whatever may be his fate, we have the comfort of knowing that we have done our utmost to

save him. We must command the event to an Hig-
: er Power. — Yours ever &c.

Cath. Vernon.

Letter 16.

Lady Susan to Mrs. Johnson

Churchill.

Never my dearest Alicia, was I so provoked
in my life as by a Letter this morning from
Mrs. Summers. That horrid girl of mine has
been trying to run away. — I had not a notion
of her being such a little Devil before; — she
seemed to have all the Vernon Sweetness; but
on receiving the Letter in which I declared my in-
: tentions about Sir James, she actually attempted
to elope; at least, I cannot otherwise account for
her doing it. — She meant I suppose to go to the
Clarkes in Staffordshire, for she has no other ac-
: quaintance.

But she shall be furnished, she shall have him.
I have sent Charles to Town to make matters up if
he can, for I do not by any means want her here.
If Miss Sumner will not keep her, you must find
her out another School, unless we can get her married
immediately. — Miss S. writes word that she could
not get the young Lady to assign any cause for her
extraordinary conduct, which confirms me in my own
private explanation of it. —

Frederica is too shy I think, & too much in
awe of me, to tell tales; but if the Orderliness of her
Uncle should get anything from her, I am not a-
fraid. I trust I shall be able to make my story
as good as hers. — If I am vain of any thing, it is of
my eloquence. Consideration & Esteem as surely follows
Command of Language, as Admiration waits on Beauty.
And here I have opportunity enough for the exercise
of any Talent, as the chief of my time is spent in

Conversation. Reginald is never easy unless we are by ourselves, & when the weather is tolerable we pace the shubbery for hours together. — I like him on the whole very well, he is clever & has a good deal to say, but he is sometimes impertinent & troublesome. — There is a sort of ridiculous delicacy about him which requires the fullest explanation of whatever he may have heard to my disadvantage, & is never satisfied till he thinks he has ascertained the beginning & end of every thing.

This is one sort of love — but I confess it does not particularly recommend itself to me. — I infinitely prefer the tender & liberal Spirit of Rambaring, which impressed with the deepest conviction of any Merit, is satisfied that whatever it do must be right; & look with a degree of Contempt on the inquisitive & doubting Fancies of that Heart which seems always debating on the reasonableness

of it' Emotions. Manwaring is indeed beyond Com-
-pare superior to Reginald — superior in every thing
but the power of being with me. — Poor fellow!
he is quite distracted by Jealousy, which I am not
sorry for, as I know no better support of Love. — He
has begging me to allow of his coming into the
Country & lodging somewhere near me, incog —
but I forbid every thing of the kind. — Those wo-
-men are unpardonable who forget what is due to
themselves & the opinion of the World. —

S. Vernon —

Letter 17.

Mrs Vernon to Lady De Courcy.

Churchill

My dear Mother

Mr Vernon returned on Thursday
night, bringing his niece with him. Lady Susan

had received a line from him by that Days post informing her that Miss Summers had absolutely re: fused to allow of Miss Vernon's continuance in her A: cademy. We were therefore prepared for her arrival, & expected them impatiently the whole evening. — They came while we were at Tea, & I never saw any crea: ture look so frightened in my life as Frederica when She entered the room. —

Lady Susan: who had been shedding tears before & shewing great agitation at the idea of the meeting, received her with perfect self-command, & without betraying the least tenderness of spirit. — She hardly spoke to her, & on Frederica's bursting into tears as soon we were seated, took her out of the room & did not return for some time; when she did, her eyes looked very red, & she was as much agitated as before. — We saw no more of her daughter. —

Poor Reginald was beyond one's conceive

to see his fair friend in such distress, & watched her with so much tender solicitude that I, who occasionally caught her observing his countenance with exultation, was quite out of patience. — This pathetic representation lasted the whole evening, & so ostentatious & artful a display has entirely convinced me that she did in fact feel nothing. —

I am more angry with her than ever since I have seen her daughter. — The poor girl looks so unhappy that my heart aches for her. — Lady Susan is surely too severe, because Frederica does not seem to have the sort of temper to make severity necessary. She looks perfectly timid, dejected & penitent. —

She is very pretty, tho' not so handsome as her Mother, nor at all like her. Her complexion is delicate, but neither so fair, nor so blooming as Lady Susan's — & she has quite the Vernon cast of countenance, the oval face & mild dark eyes, & there is peculiar sweetness in her look when she speaks

sitter to her Uncle or me, for as we behave kindly
to her, we have of course engaged her gratitude. —
Her Mother has insinuated that her temper is un-
tractable, but I never saw a face less indicative of
any evil disposition than hers; & from what I now
see of the behaviour of each to the other, the univer-
sable serenity of Lady Susan & the silent dejection
of Frederica, I am led to believe as heretofore that
the former has no real Love for her daughter & has
never done her justice, or treated her affectionately.

I have not yet been able to have any con-
versation with my Niece; she is shy, & I think
I can see that some pains are taken to prevent
her being much with me. — Nothing satisfactory
transpires as to her reason for running away. —
Her kind hearted Uncle ayre may be sure, was too
fearful of distressing her, to ask many questions
as they travelled. — I wish it had been forbidden

for me to fetch her instead of him; — I think I should have discovered the truth in the course of a thirty mile Journey. —

The small Piano forte has been removed within these few days at Lady Susan's request, into her Dressing room, & Frederica spends great part of the day there; — practising it is called, but I seldom hear any noise when I pass that way. — What she does with herself there I do not know, there are plenty of books in the room, but it is not every girl who has been running wild the first fifteen years of her life, that can or will read. — Poor Creature! the prospect from her window is not very instructive, for that room overlooks the Lawn you know with the Shrubbery on one side, where she may see two: three walking for an hour together, in earnest conversation with Reginald. — A girl of Frederica's age must be childish indeed, if such things do not strike

her. — Is it not inexcusable to give such an exam:
:ple to a daughter? — Yet Reginald still thinks
Lady Susan the best of Mothers — still condemns
Frederica as a worthless girl! — He is convinced that
her attempt to run away, proceeded from no justi:
:fiable cause, & had no provocation. — I am sure I
cannot say that it had, but while Mrs Vernon
declares that Mrs Vernon shewed no sign of ob:
:stinacy or Perverseness during her whole stay in
Wigmore St. till she was detected in this scheme,
I cannot so readily credit what Lady Susan has
made him & wants to make me believe, that it
was merely an impatience of restraint, & desire of
escaping from the tuition of Governesses which brought
on the plan of an elopement. — Oh! Reginald, how
is your judgement enslaved! — He scarcely dares even
allow her to be handsome, & when I speak of her

beauty, replies only that her eyes have no Brilliancy.

Sometimes he is sure that she is deficient in Understanding, & at others that her temper only is in fault. In short when a person is always to deceive, it is impossible to be consistent. Lady Susan finds it necessary for her own justification that Frederica should be to blame, & probably has sometimes judged it expedient to accuse her of ill-nature & sometimes to lament her want of sense. Reginald is only repeating after her Ladyship.

Yrs &c

Cath Vernon

Letter 18.

From the same to the same.

Churchill

My dear Madam

I am very glad to find that my description of Frederica Vernon has interested you

for. I do believe her truly deserving of our regard,
& when I have communicated a notion that have
recently struck me, your kind impression in her
favour will I am sure be heightened. I cannot
help fancying that she is growing partial to my
brother, I so very often see her eyes fixed on his
face with a remarkable expression of frenzied
admiration! — He is certainly very handsome — &
yet more — there is an openness in his manner
that must be highly prepossessing, & I am sure
she feels it so. — Thoughtful & pensive in general
her countenance always brightens with a smile
when Reginald says anything amusing; & let
the subject be ever so serious that he may be con-
versing on, I am much mistaken if a syllable
of his uttering, escape her. —

I want to make him sensible of all
this, for we know the power of gratitude on such

a heart as his; I could Frederica's artless affection detach him from her Mother, one might bless the day which brought her to Churchill. — I think my dear Madam, you would not disapprove of her as a Daughter. She is extremely young to be sure, has had a wretched Education I'm a dreadful example of Levity in her Mother; but yet I can pronounce her disposition to be excellent, & her natural abilities very good. —

Tho' totally without accomplishment, she is by no means so ignorant as one might expect to find her, being fond of books & spending the chief of her time in reading. Her Mother leaves her more to herself now than she did, & I have her with me as much as possible, & have taken great pains to overcome her timidity. We are very good friends & tho' she never opens her lips before her Mother, she talks enough when alone with me, to make it clear that if properly treated by Lady Susan she would always appear to much greater advan-

=tage. There cannot be a more gentle, affectionate heart, or more obliging manner, when acting without restraint. Her little Cousins are all ready fond of her. — Yr. affec: ly

Catht Vernon

Letter 19.

Lady Susan to Mrs Johnson

Churchill.

You will be eager I know to hear something further of Frederica, & perhaps may think me negligent for not writing before. — She arrived with her Uncle last Thursday fortnight, when of course I lost no time in demanding the reason of her behaviour, & soon found myself to have been perfectly right in attributing it to my own letter. — The purport of it frightened her so thoroughly that with a mixture of true girlish heedlessness & folly, without

considering that she could not escape from any au:
:thority by running away from Wigmore Street, she re:
:solved on getting out of the house, & proceeding di:
:rectly by the Stage to her friends the Clarkes, & had
really got as far as the length of two Streets in her
journey, when she was fortunately miss'd, pursued,
& overtaken. —

Such was the first distinguished exploit of
Miss Frederica Susanna Vernon, & if we consider that
it was atchieved at the tender age of sixteen we shall
have room for the most flattering prognostics of her fu:
:ture renown. — I am excessively provoked however
at the parade of propriety which prevented Miss Sum:
:mers from keeping the girl; & it seems so extra:
:ordinary a piece of piety, considering what are
my daughter's family connections, that I can only
suppose the Lady to be governed by the fear of me:
:ver getting her money. — Be that as it may how:
:ever,

Frederica is returned on my hands, & having now nothing else to employ her, is busy in pursueing the plan of Romance begun at Langford. — She is actually falling in love with Reginald De Courcy. — To disobey her Mother by refusing an unexceptionable offer is not enough; her affections must likewise be given without her Mother's approbation. — I never saw a girl of her age, bid fair to be the sport of Mankind. Her feelings are tolerably lively, & she is so charmingly artless in their display, as to afford the most reasonable hope of her being ridiculed & despised by every Man who sees her. —

Artlessness will never do in Love Matters. — That girl is born a Simpleton who has it either by Nature or affectation. — I am not yet certain that Reginald sees what she is about; nor is it of much consequence; — She is now an object of indifference to him, she would be one of contempt were he to understand her Emotions. — Her beauty is much

admired by the Vernons, but it has no effect on him.
She is in high favour with her Aunt altogether —
because she is so little like myself of course. She is
exactly the companion for Mrs Vernon, who dearly
loves to be first, & to have all the sense & all the
wit of Conversation to herself; — Frederica will never
eclipse her. — When she first came, I was at some
pains to prevent her seeing much of her Aunt, but
I have since relaxed, as I believe I may depend on
her observing the rules I have laid down for their
Intercourse. —

But do not imagine that with all this
Family, I have for a moment given up my plan
of free Marriage; — no, I am unalterably fixed on
that point, tho' I have not yet quite resolved on
the manner of bringing it about. — I should not
chuse to have the business brought forward here, &
cancelled by the wise head of Mr & Mrs Vernon; &
I cannot just now afford to go to Town. — Miss

Frederica therefore must wait a little. —

Yours Ever.

S. Vernon. —

Letter 20.

Mrs. Vernon to Lady De Courcy.

Churchill.

We have a very unexpected Guest with us at present, my dear Mother. — He arrived yesterday. — I heard a Carriage at the door as I was sitting with my Children. While they dined, & supposing I should be wanted left the Nursery soon afterwards & was half way down stairs, when Frederica as pale as ashes came running up, & rushed by me into her own room. — I instantly followed, & asked her what was the matter. — "Oh! cried she, he is come, Sir James is come — & what am I to do?" — This was no explanation; I begged her to tell me what she meant. At that moment we were interrupted by a knock at the door; — it was Reginald, who came by Lady

Susan's direction to call Frederica down. — "It is Mr. De Lourey, said she colouring violently, Mama has sent for me, & I must go." —

We all three went down together, & I saw my Br. : then examining the terrified face of Frederica with sur: : prise. — In the breakfast room we found Lady Susan & a young Man of genteel appearance, whom she intro: : duced to me by the name of Sir James Martin, the very person, as you may remember, whom it was said she had been at pains to detach from Miss Manwaring. — But the conquest it seems was not designed for herself, or she has since transferred it to her daughter, for Sir James is now desperately in love with Frederica, & with full encouragement from Mama. — She proud, however I am sure dislikes him; & tho' his person & address are very well, he appears both to Mr. Vernon & me a very weak young Man. —

Frederica looked so shy, so confused, when

we entered the room, that I felt for her exceedingly. Lady Susan behaved with great attention to her Visitor, & yet I thought I could perceive that she had no particular pleasure in seeing him. — Sir James talked a good deal, & made many civil excuses to me for the liberty he had taken in coming to Churchhill, mixing more frequent laughter with his discourse than the subject required; — said many things over & over again, & told Lady Susan three times that he had seen Mrs Johnson a few evenings before. — He now & then addressed Frederica, but more frequently her Mother. — The poor girl sat all this time without opening her lips; — her eyes cast down, & her colour varying every instant, while Reginald observed all that passed, in perfect silence. —

At length Lady Susan, weary I believe of her situation, proposed walking, & we left the two Gentlemen together to put on our Pelisses. —

As we went upstairs Lady Susan begged permis-
:sion to attend me for a few moments in my Dressing
room, as she was anxious to speak with me in pri-
=vate. — I led her thither accordingly, & as soon as the
door was closed she said, "I was never more surprised
in my life than by Sir James's arrival, & the sud-
=denness of it requires some apology to You. my dear
Sister, tho' to me as a Mother, it is highly flatter-
:ing. — He is so warmly attached to my Daughter that
he could exist no longer without seeing her. — Sir
James is a young Man of an amiable disposition, &
excellent Character; a little too much of the Rattle
perhaps, but a year or two will rectify that, & he is
in other respects very eligible. a Match for Frederica
that I have always observed. his attachment with
the greatest pleasure, & am persuaded that You &
my Brother will give the alliance Your hearty ap-
:probation. — I have never before mentioned the like-
:lihood of it's taking place to any one, because I thought

that while Frederica continued at school, it had
better not be known to exist; — but now, as I am
convinced that Frederica is too old ever to submit
to school confinement, I have therefore begun to
consider her union with Sir James as not very dis-
: tant, & had intended within a few days to ac-
: quaint Yourself & Mrs. Vernon with the whole bu-
: siness. — I am sure my dear Sister, you will
excuse my remaining silent on it so long, I agree
with me that such circumstances, while they con-
: tinue from any cause in suspence, cannot be
too cautiously concealed. — When you have the hap-
: piness of bestowing your sweet little Catherine
some year hence on a Man, who in connection &
character is alike unexceptionable, you will know
what I feel now; — tho' Thank Heaven! you can-
: not have all my reasons for rejoicing in such
an event. — Catherine will be amply provided for,

& not like my Frederica indebted to a fortunate Establishment for the comforts of life." —

She concluded by demanding my congratulations. — I gave them somewhat awkwardly I believe; — for in fact the sudden disclosure of so important a matter took from me the power of speaking with any clear: ness. — She thanked me however most affectionately for my kind concern in the welfare of herself & her daughter, & then said,

"I am not apt to deal in professions, my dear Mr Vernon, & I never had the convenient talent of af: fecting sensations foreign to my heart; & therefore I trust you will believe me when I declare that much as I had heard in your praise before I knew you, I had no idea that I should ever love you as I now do; — And I must further say that your friend: ship towards me is more particularly gratifying because I have reason to believe that some attempts were made to prejudice you against me. — I only

with that They — whoever they are — to whom I
am indebted for such kind intentions, could see
the terms on which we are together, & under-
:stand the real affections we feel for each other! —
But I will not detain you any longer. — God bless
you, for your goodness to me & my girls, & continue
to you all your present happiness.

What can one say of such a woman, my dear
Matter? — Such earnestness, such solemnity of ex-
:pression! — And yet I cannot help suspecting
the truth of everything she said. —

As for Reginald, I believe he does not know
what to make of the matter. — When Sir James
first came, he appeared all astonishment & per-
:plexity. The folly of the young Man, & the con-
:fusion of Frederica entirely engrossed him; &
tho' a little private discourse with Lady Susan
has since had its effect, he is still puzzled. I am
sure at her allowing of such a Man's attentions

to her daughter. —

Sir James invited himself with great compo:
:sure to remain here a few days; — hoped we would
not think it odd, was aware of it's being very im:
:pertinent, but he took the liberty of a Relation, &
concluded by wishing with a Laugh, that he might
be really one soon. — Even Lady Susan seemed a
little disconcerted by this forwardness; — in her heart
I am persuaded, she sincerely wishes him gone. —

But something must be done for this poor Girl,
if her feelings are such as both her Aunt & I
believe them to be. She must not be sacrificed
to Policy or Ambition, she must not be even
left to suffer from the dread of it. — The Girl
whose heart can distinguish Reginald De Courcy,
deserves, however he may slight her, a better fate
than to be Sir James Martin's wife. — As soon
as I can get her alone, I will discover the real
Truth.

but she seems to wish to avoid me. — I hope this does not proceed from any thing wrong, & that I shall not find out I have thought too well of her. — Her behaviour before Sir James certainly speaks the quiet: : st conscious ness & Embarrassment, but I see no: : thing in it more like Encouragement. —

Adieu my dear Madam,

Ever Yrs Catt: Vernon. —

Letter 21. —

Miss Vernon to Mr. De. Courcy —

Sir,

I hope you will excuse this liberty, I am forced upon it by the greatest distress, or I should be ashamed to trouble you. — I am very miser: : ble about Sir James Martin, & have no other way in the world of helping myself, but by writ: : ing to you, for I am forbidden ever speaking to

my Uncle or Aunt on the subject; and their seeing the
case, I am afraid my applying to you will appear
no better than equivocation, & as if I attended only to
the Letter & not the spirit of Mama's commands;
but if you do not take my part, & persuade her
to break it off, I shall be half distracted, for I can
bear him.
not. — No human Being but you could have any
chance of prevailing with her. — If you will there-
fore have the unspeakable great kindness of taking
my part with her, & persuading her to send Sir James
away, I shall be once obliged to you than it is
possible for me to express. — I always disliked
him from the first, it is not a sudden fancy
I assure you Sir, I always thought him silly
& impertinent & disagreeable, & now he is grown
worse than ever. — I would rather work for my
bread than marry him. — I do not know how to
apologize enough for this Letter, I know it is taking

so great a liberty, I am aware how dreadfully angry it will make Mama, but I must run the risk. — I am Sir, Your most Humble Servt.

F. S. V. —

Letter 22.

Lady Susan to Mrs. Johnson

Churchill.

This is insufferable! — My dearest friend, I was never so enraged before, & must relieve myself by writing to you, who I know will enter into all my feelings. — Who should come on Tuesday but Sir James Martin? — Guess my astonishment & vexation — for as you well know, I never wished him to be seen at Churchill. What a pity that you should not have known his intentions! — Not content with coming, he actually invited himself to remain here a few days. I could have poisoned him. —

I made the best of it however, & told my story with great success to Mrs Vernon who, whatever might be her real sentiments, said nothing in opposition to mine. I made a point also of Frederica's behaving civilly to Sir James, & gave her to understand that I was absolutely determined on her marrying him. — She said something of her Misery, but that was all. — I have for some time been more particularly resolved on the Match, from seeing the rapid increase of her affection for Reginald, & from not feeling perfectly secure that a Knowledge of that affection might not in the end awaken a return. — Contemptible as a Regard founded only on Compassion, must make them both, in any eyes, I felt by no means assured that such might not be the Consequence. — If it true that Reginald had not in any degree grown cool towards me; — but yet he had lately mentioned Frederica spontaneously & unnecessarily, & once had said something in praise of

her person. —

Ste. was all astonishment at the appearance of my sister, & at first observed Sir James with an attention which I was pleased to see not unmixed with jealousy; — but unluckily it was impossible for me really to torment him, as Sir James flirted with gallant to me, they soon made the whole party understand that his heart was devoted to my daughter. —

I had no great difficulty in convincing Dr. Courcy when we were alone, that I was perfectly justified, all things considered, in deceiving the watch; & the whole business seemed most comfortably arranged. — They could none of them help perceiving that Sir James was no Solomon, but I had proved truly forbidden Frederica's complaining to Charles Vernon or his wife, & they had therefore no pretence for interference, tho' my misfortunes & sister

I believe wanted only opportunity for doing so. —

Everything however was going on calmly & equi: ably; & tho' I counted the hours of his Journey's stay, my mind was entirely satisfied with the posture of affairs. — Guess then what I must feel at the sudden disturbance of all my schemes, & that too from a quarter, whence I had least reason to apprehend it. — Reginald came this morning into my Dressing room, with as very unusual solemnity of countenance, & after some preface informed me, in so many words, that he wished to converse with me on the Impropriety & Unkindness of allowing his Sisters Station to address any Daughter, contrary to her inclination. — I was all amaze: ment. — When I found that he was not to be laughed out of his design, I calmly required an explanation, & begged to know by what he was im: pelled & by whom commissioned to reprimand me.

He then told, me, mixing in his speech a few vio:
: lent Compliments & ill termed expressions of Ten:
: derness to which I listened with perfect indiffe:
: rence, that my Daughter had acquainted him with
some circumstances concerning herself, & Mine,
before, which gave him great uneasiness. —

In short, I found that she had in the first
place actually written to him, to request his in:
: terference, & that on receiving her Letter he had
conversed with her on the subject of it, in order
to understand the particulars & assure himself of
her real wishes! —

I have not a doubt but that the guile
less & unsuspecting Girl, took this opportunity of making downright
Love to him; I am convinced of it, from the man:
: ner in which he spoke of her. Much good, may
such Love do him! — I shall ever despise the
Man who can be gratified by the Passion, which

he never wished to inspire, nor solicited the avow:
:al of. — I shall always detest them both. — He
can have no true regard for me, or he would not
have listened to her; — And she, with her little ar:
:tfulness heart & undelicate feelings to throw her:
:self into the protection of a young Man with whom
she had scarcely ever exchanged two words before.
I am equally confounded at her Impudence &
his Credulity. — How dared he believe what she
told him in my disfavour! — Ought he not to
have felt assured that I must have unanswer:
:able Motives for all that I had done! — Where
was his Reliance on my Sense or Goodness then,
Where the Resentment which true Love would
have dictated against the person defaming me,
that person too, a Girl, a Child, without Talent
or Education, whom he had been always taught
to despise? —

I was calm for some time, but the greatest degree of Forbearance may be overcome; & I hope I was afterwards sufficiently Keen — He endeavoured, long endeavoured to soften my resentment, but that woman is a fool indeed who while insulted by Accusations, can be worked on by compliments. — At length he left me as deeply provoked as myself, & he shewed his anger more — I was quite cool, but he gave way to the most violent indignation — I may therefore expect it will the sooner subside, & perhaps he may be vanished for ever, while mine will be found still fresh & implacable —

He is now shut up in his apartment, which I heard him go, on leaving me — How unpleasant, one would think, must his reflections be! — But some people's feelings are incomprehensible. — I have not yet tranquillized.

myself enough to see Frederica.. She shall not soon forget the occurrences of this day. — She shall find that she has proved faith her tender Tale of Love in vain, & exposed herself forever to the contempt of the whole world, & the severest Resentment of her injured Mother. — Yrs affec: &c

S Vernon

Letter 23. —

Mrs Vernon to Lady De Courcy

Churchill

Let me congratulate you, my dearest Mother. The affair which has given us so much anxiety is drawing to a happy conclusion. Our prospect is most delightful; — and since Matters have now taken so favourable a turn, I am quite sorry that I ever imparted my apprehensions to you; for the pleasure of learning that the Danger is over, is perhaps dearly purchased by all that you have

previously suffered. —

I am so much agitated by Delight that I can scarcely hold a pen, but am determined to send you a few lines by James, that you may have some explanation of what Ornet so greatly asto: with you, as that Reginald should be returning to Parkland. —

I was sitting about half an hour ago with Sir James in the Breakfast parlour, when my Brother called me out of the room. — I instantly saw that something was the matter; — his Complexion was raised, & he spoke with great emotion. — You know his eager manner, my dear Madam, when his Mind is interested. —

"Catherine, said he, I am going home to day. I am sorry to leave you, but I must go. — It is a great while since I have seen my Father & Mother. — I am going to send James forward with

my Hunter immediately, if you have any Letter
therefore he can take it. — I shall not be at home
myself till Wednesday or Thursday, as I shall go
through London, where I have business. — But
before I leave you, he continued, speaking in a
lower voice & with still greater energy, I must
warn you of one thing. — Do not let Frederica
Vernon be made unhappy by that Hunter. —
He wants to marry her — her Mother promotes
the Match — but she cannot endure the idea
of it. — Be assured that I speak from the fullest
conviction of the Truth of what I say. — I know
that Frederica is made wretched by Sir James'
continuing here. — She is a sweet girl, & deserves
a better fate. — Send him away immediately.
He is only a fool — but what her Mother can
mean, Heaven only knows! — Good bye, he add-
ed shaking my hand with earnestness — I do

not know when ayou will see me again. But- remember what I tell you of Frederica; — you must — make it ayour business to see justice done her. — She is an amiable girl, & has a very due: Friend
: prior to what we have ever given her credit " "
for. —

He then left me & ran upstairs. — I would not try to stop him, for I knew what his feelings must be; the nature of mine as I listened to him, I need not attempt to describe. — For a minute or two I remained in the same spot, overpowered by wonder — of a most agreable sort indeed; yet it required some consideration to be tranquilly happy. —

For about ten minutes after my return to the parlour, Lady Susan entered the room. — I concluded of course that she & Reginald had been quarrelling, & looked with anxious curiosity for a confirmation of my belief in her face. —

Mistress of Deceit — however she appeared perfectly unconcerned, & after chatting on indifferent subjects for a short time, said to me,

"I find from Wilson that we are going to lose Mr. De Courcy. — Is it true that he leaves Churchill this morning?"

I replied that it was. —

"He told us nothing of all this last night, said she laughing, or even this morning at Breakfast. But perhaps he did not know it himself. — Young Men are often hasty in their Resolutions — & not more sudden in forming, than unsteady in keeping them. — I should not be surprised if he were to change his mind at last & not go. —

She soon afterwards left the room. — I trust however. My dear Mother, that we have no reason to fear an alteration of his present plan; things have gone too far. — They must have quarrelled, & about Frederica too. — How calmness astonishes

me. — What delight will be yours in seeing her again, in seeing him still worthy your Esteem, still capable of forming your Happiness!

When I next write, I shall be able I hope to tell you that Sir James is gone, Lady Susan vanquished, & Frederica at peace. — We have much to do, but it shall be done. — I am all impatience to know how this astonishing change was effected. — I finish as I began, with the warmest Congratulations. — Yrs. &c.

Cath: Vernon.

Letter 24.

From the Same to the Same.

Churchill.

Little did I imagine my dear Mother, when I sent off my last Letter, that the delightful perturbation of Spirits I was then in, would undergo so speedy, so melancholy a change! — Forever

can sufficiently regret that I wrote to you at all. — Yet who could have foreseen what has happened? My dear Mother, every hope which but two hours ago made me so happy, is vanished. The Quarrel between Lady Susan & Reginald is made up, & we are all as we were before. One point only is gained; Sir James's Interest is diminished. — What are we now to look forward to? — I am indeed disappointed. Reginald was all but gone; his horse was ordered, & almost brought to the door! — Who would not have felt safe? —

For half an hour I was in momentary expectation of his departure. — After I had sent off my Letter to you, I went to Mr. Vernon & sat with him in his Room, talking over the whole matter. — I then determined to look for Frederica, whom I had not seen since breakfast. — I met her on the Stairs & saw that she was crying.

"My dear Aunt, said she, he is going, Mr. De

Courcy is going, & it is all my fault. I am afraid
you will be angry, but indeed I had no idea it
would end so. —

"My dear, replied I, do not think it necessary
to apologize to me on that account. I shall feel
myself under an obligation to any one who is the
means of sending my brother home; — because,
recollecting myself, I know my Father against every
wish to see him. But what is it that you have
done to occasion all this?" —

She blushed deeply at the answer, "I was so
unhappy about Sir James that I could not help —
I have done something very wrong I know — but
you have not an idea of the misery I have been in,
& Shanna had ordered me never to speak to you or
my Uncle about it, — and —

"You therefore spoke to my Brother, to engage
his interference;" — said I wishing to save her the
explanation. —

"No — but I wrote to him. — I did indeed. — I got up this morning before it was light — I was two hours about it — & when my letter was done, I thought I never should have courage to give it. — After wards fast however, as I was going to my own room I met him in the passage, & then as I knew that every thing must depend on that moment, I forced myself to give it. — He was so good as to take it immediately; — I dared not look at him — & ran away directly. — I was in such a fright that I could hardly breathe. — My dear Aunt, you do not know how miserable I have been.

"Frederica, said I, you ought to have told me all your distresses. — You would have found in me a friend always ready to assist you. — Do you think that you & I should not have espoused each your cause as warmly as my Brother?"

"Indeed I did not doubt your goodness, said she.

colouring again, but I thought that Mr. De Courcy could do anything with my Mother; — but I was mistaken; — they have had a dreadful quarrel about it, & she is going. — Mama will never forgive me, & I shall be worse off than ever. —

"No, you shall not, replied I. — In such a point as this, your Mother's prohibition ought not to have prevented your speaking to me on the subject. She has no right to make you unhappy, & she shall not do it. — Your applying however to Reginald of all persons can be productive only to Good to all parties. I believe it is best as it is. Depend upon it that you shall not be made unhappy any longer."

At that moment, how great was my astonishment at seeing Reginald come out of Lady Susan's Dressing room. My heart misgave me instantly. His confusion on seeing me was very evident. — Frederica immediately disappeared.

"Are you going?" said I. "You will find Mr. Ver:
:non in her own room."

"No Catherine, replied she. "I am not going.-
Will you let me speak to you a moment?" ~~I spoke~~
into my room.
~~Ver went Hitten dirin~~. "I said, continued she,
her confusion increasing as she spoke, that I have
been acting with my usual foolish Impetuosity.-
I have entirely misunderstood Lady Susan, & was
in the point of leaving the house under a false
impression of her conduct.- There has been some
very great mistake.- We have been all mista:
:ken I fancy.- Frederica does not know her Mo:
:ther.- Lady Susan means nothing but her Good-
but Frederica will not make a friend of her.-
Lady Susan therefore does not always know
what will make her daughter happy.- Besides
I could have no right to interfere.- Mrs Vernon
was mistaken in applying to me.- In short

Catherine, every thing has gone wrong — but it is now all happily settled. — Lady Susan I believe wishes to speak to you about it, if you are at lei: sure. —

"Certainly, replied I, deeply sighing at the recital of so base a story. — I made no remarks however, for words would have been vain. Regi: nald was glad to get away, & I went to Lady Su: san; curious indeed to hear her account of it. —

"Did not I tell you, said she with a smile, that your Brother would not leave us after all?

"You did indeed, replied I very gravely, but I flattered myself that you would be mistaken.

"I should not have hazarded such an opinion, returned she, if it had not at that moment occurred to me, that his resolution of going might be occasioned by a Conversation in which we had been this morning engaged, & which had ended very much to his Dissatisfaction from our not —

rightly understanding each other's meaning. — This
idea struck me at the moment, & instantly detec-
: mined that an accidental dispute in which I might
probably be as much to blame as himself, should not
deprive you of your Brother. — If you remember, I
left the room almost immediately. — I was resolved
to lose no time in clearing up these mistakes as
far as I could. — The case was this. — Frederica had
set herself violently against engaging Sir James —
— "And can you Lady Isabella wonder that she should"
cried I with some warmth. — Frederica has an ex-
: cellent Understanding, & Sir James has none."

"I am at least very far from regretting it, my
dear Sister, said she; on the contrary, I am grate-
: ful for so favourable a sign of my Daughter's want
Sir James is certainly under par — Her boyish man-
: ner may give him a appear the worse — & had Fre-
: derica professed the penetration, the abilities, which

I could have wished in any Daughter, or had I
ever known her to profess so much as she does,
I should not have been anxious for the event."

"It is odd that You alone should be ignorant
of your Daughter's sense."

"Frederica never does justice to herself; – her
manners are shy & childish. – She is besides afraid
of me; she scarcely loves me. – During her poor
Father's life she was a spoilt child; the novelty
which it has since been necessary for me to
shew, has entirely alienated her affections; – Neither
has she any of that Brilliancy of Intellect, that
Genius, or Vivacity of Mind, which will force it-
self forward."

"Say rather that she has been unfortunate in
her Education."

"Heaven knows my dear Mrs Vernon, how
fully I am aware of that; but I would wish to

to forget every circumstance that might throw blame
on the memory of one, whose name is sacred with me."

Here she pretended to cry. — I was out of patience
with her. — "But what, said I was your Ladyship
going to tell me about your disagreement with my
Brother?"

"It originated in an action of my Daughter's,
which equally marks her want of Judgement &
the unfortunate Bread of one. I have been oneti:
=oning. — She wrote to Mr. De Courcy. —

"I know she did. — You had forbidden her speak:
:ing to Mr. Vernon or to me on the cause of her
dislike: — What could she do therefore but apply
to my Brother?"

"Good God! — She exclaimed, what an opinion must
you have of me! — Can you possibly suppose that
I was aware of her unhappiness? that it was my
object to make my own Child miserable, if that
I had forbidden her speaking to you on the subject

from a fear of your interrupting the Diabolical
scheme? — Do you think one destitute of every
honest, every natural feeling? — Am I capable of
consigning her to everlasting Misery, whose wel:
:fare it is my first Earthly Duty to promote? —

"The idea is horible. — What then was your
intention when you insisted on her silence? —

"Of what use my dear Sister, could be any
application to you, however the affair might stand.
Why should I subject you to entreaties, which I
refused to attend to myself? — Neither for your
sake, for hers, nor for my own, could such a thing
be desirable. — Where my own resolution was
taken, I could not wish for the interference, how:
:ever friendly, of another person. — I was mistaken,
it is true, but I believed myself to be right." —

"But what was this mistake, to which your
Ladyship so often alludes? From whence arose

so astonishing a misapprehension of your Daughters' feelings? — Did not you know that she disliked Sir James?"

"I knew that he was not absolutely the Man whom she would have chosen. — But I was persuaded that her objections to him did not arise from any perception of his Deficiency. — You must not question me however. My dear Sister, too much absolutely on this point — continued she, taking me affectionately by the hand. — I honestly own that there is something to conceal. — Frederica has been very unhappy. — Her applying to Mr. De Courcy hurt me particularly.

"What is it that you mean to infer, said I, by this appearance of mystery? — If you think your Daughter at all attached to Reginald, her objecting to Sir James could not less deserve to be attended to, than if the cause of her objecting had

been a consciousness of his folly. — And why should you Ladyship at any rate quarrel with my brother for an interference which you must know, it was not in his nature to refuse, when urged in such a manner?"

"His disposition you know is warm, he came to expostulate with me, his compassion all alive for the ill-used Girl, this Heroine in distress! — We reminded: stood eachother. He believed one more to blame than I really was; I considered his interference as less ex: cusable than I now find it. I have a real re: gard for him, & was beyond expression mortified to find it as I thought so ill bestowed. We were both warm, & of course both to blame. — His re: solution of leaving Churchill is consistent with his general eagerness; — when I understood his intention however, & at the same time began to think that we had perhaps been equally mistaken in each

other meaning. I resolved to have an explanation before it were too late. — For any Member of your Family I must always feel a degree of affection, & I own it would have sensibly hurt one, if any acquaintance with Mr. De Courcy had ended so gloomily. I have now only to say further, that as I am convinced of Frederica's having a reasonable dislike to Sir James, I shall instantly inform him that he must give up all hope of her. — I reproach myself for having ever, tho' so innocently, made her unhappy on that score. — She shall have all the retribution in my power to make; — if she value her own happiness as much as I do, if she judge wisely & command herself as she ought, she may soon be at peace. easy. — Excuse my precipitate style, for this distressing on your time, but I owed it to my own Character; after this explanation I trust I am in no danger of writing to your opinion.

I could have said "Not much indeed"; — but I left her almost in silence. — It was the greatest stretch of forbearance I could practise. I could not have stopped myself, had I begun. — Her assurance, her Deceit — but I will not allow myself to dwell on them; — they will strike you sufficiently. My heart sickens within me. —

As soon as I was tolerably composed, &c: I turned to the Parlour. Sir James's carriage was at the door, & he, as usual, soon afterwards took his leave. — How easily does her Ladyship encourage, or dismiss a Lover. —

In spite of this release, Frederica still looks unhappy, still fearful perhaps of her Brother's anger, & tho' dreading any Brother's departure, jealous, it may be, of his staying. — I see how closely she observes him & Lady Susan. — Poor Girl, I have now no hope for her. She is not

a chance of her affection being returned. — He thinks every difference of her, from what he used to do, he does her some justice, but his reconciliation with Mrs Hatton precludes every dearer hope. —

Prepare my dear Madam, for the worst. — The probability of their marrying is surely heightened. He is more recently her's than ever. — When that accident must take place, I dread to think of being wholly to us. —

I am thankful that my last Letter will precede this by so little, as every moment that you can be saved from feeling a Joy which leads only to disappointment is of consequence. —

Ever, Cath. Vernon.

Letter 25.

Lady Susan to Mrs Johnson

Churchill.

I call on you dear Alicia, for congratulations. I am again myself; — gay & triumphant. —

When I wrote to you the other day, I was in truth
in high irritation, & with ample cause. — Nay,
I know not whether I ought to be quite tranquil
now, for I have had more trouble in restoring peace
than I ever intended to submit to. — Sir Reginald has a proud spirit of his own! — A spirit
too, resulting from a fancied sense of superior Integrity which it peculiarly insolent. — I shall
not easily forgive him I assure you. He was actually on the point of leaving Cheverhill! — I had
scarcely concluded my Last, when Wilson brought
me word of it. — I found therefore that something
must be done, for I did not chuse to have my
Character at the mercy of a man whose passions
were so violent & resentful. — It would
To have been trifling
with my reputation, to allow of his departing with
such an impression in my disfavour; — in this
light, condescension was necessary. —

I sent Wilson to say that I desired to

speak with him before he went. – He came immedi:
:ately. The angry emotions which had marked every
feature when we last parted, were partially sub:
:duced. He seemed astonished at the summons, & looked
as if half wishing & half fearing to be softened by
what I might say. —

If any countenance expressed what I aimed at,
it was composed & dignified – & yet with a de:
:gree of penitence which might reconcile him
that I was not quite happy. —

"I beg your pardon sir, for the liberty I have ta:
:ken in sending to you, said I, but as I have just
learnt your intention of leaving this place to day, I
feel it my duty to entreat that you will not on
any account shorten your visit here, even one
hour. – I am perfectly aware that after what has
passed between us, it would ill suit the feelings
of either
to remain longer in the same house. —

So very great, so total a change from the visits: of Friendship, must render any future in: tercourse the severest punishment; — If you re: solution of quitting Churchill is undoubtedly in unison with our situation. I with I have likely feelings which I know you to possess. — But at the same time, it is not for me to suggest a sacrifice, as it must be, to leave Relations to whom you are so much attached. I are so dear. My remaining here cannot give that pleasure to Mr. & Mrs Vernon which your society must; — & my visit has already perhaps been too long. My removal therefore, which must at any rate take place soon, may with perfect convenience be hastened; — & I make it my particular request that I may not in any way be instrumental in separating a family so affectionately attached to each other. — Where I go, it of no

consequence to any one; of very little to myself;
but you are of importance to all your connection.

Here I concluded, & I hope you will be
satisfied with my speech. — It's effect on Peggi:
: ould's justified some portion of vanity, for it was no
less favourable than instantaneous. — Ah! how de:
: lightful it was, to watch the variations of their
countenance while I spoke, to see the struggle
between returning tenderness & the remains of
displeasure. — There is something agreeable in feel:
: ing so easily worked on. But that Fanny has
their profession, nor would for the world have
used. ourselves, but they are very convenient to
one another to influence the profession of another.
And yet their Bigwiald, whom a very few words
from one offended at once into the utmost sub:
: mission, I rendered more tractable, more attached,
more devoted than ever, would have left me in

the first angry swelling of her proud heart, without beginning to seek an explanation! —

Humbled as he now is, I cannot forgive him such an instance of Pride; I am doubtful at stuttle I ought not to punish him, by dismissing him at once after this our reconciliation, or by marrying & keeping him for ever. — But these measures are each too violent to be adopted without some deliberation. At present my Thoughts are fluctuating between various schemes. — I have many things to compass. — I must free with Frederica, & pretty severely too for her application to Reginald; — I must punish him for receiving it so favourably, & for the rest of his conduct. I must torment my Sister-in-law for the insolent triumph of her Look & Manner since Sir James has been dismissed — for in reconciling Reginald to me, I was not able to save that

ill fated young Man; — & I must make myself a-
: mends for the humiliations to which I have stooped
within these few days. — To effect all this I have
various plans. — I have also an idea of being soon
in Town, & whatever may be my determination as
to the rest, I shall probably first start for Paris
execution — for London will be always the fair-
: est field of action, however any career may be dis-
: certed, & at any rate, I shall there be rewarded
by your society & a little Dissipation for a fen
weeks by fermance at Churchill. —

I believe I owe it to my own Character, to
complete the match between my Daughter & this
Sonner, after having so long intended it. — Let me
know your opinion on this point. — ~~Weakness~~ Flexibility of
Mind, a Disposition easily traced by others, is
an attribute which you know I am not very de-
: sirous of obtaining; — you has Frederica any

claim to the indulgence of her whims, at the ex:
:pence of her Mother's inclination. — Her idle Love
for Reginald too; — it is surely my Duty to dis:
:courage such Romantic nonsense. — All things con:
:sidered therefore, it seems incumbent on me to take
her to Town, & marry her immediately to Sir James.

When my own will is effected, contrary
to his, I shall have some credit in being on
good terms with Reginald, which at present in
fact I have not, for tho' he is still in my power,
I have given up the very Article by which our
Quarrel was produced, & at best the honour
of victory is doubtful. —

Send me your opinion on all these
Matters, my dear Alicia, & let me know whether
you can get Lodgings to quit me within a
short distance of you. — Ys most attached

S. Vernon.

Letter 26.

Mrs Johnson to Lady Swan.

Edward St. —

I am gratified by your reference, & their to my advice; that you come to Town yourself with: =out loss of time, but that you leave Frederica be: =hind. It would surely be much more to the purpo: =pose to get yourself well established by marrying Mrs. De Courcy, than to visitate them & the rest of her family, by making free many die James. — You should think more of yourself, & less of your Daughter. — She is not of a disposition to do you credit in the World, & seems precisely in her pro: =per place, at Churchill with the Vernons; — but you are fitted for society, & it is shameful to have you exiled from it. — Leave Frederica there: =for to furnish herself for the plague she has gi: =ven you, by indulging that romantic tender- =heartedness which will always endear her Mummy

enough; & come yourself to Town, as soon as you can. —

I have another reason for urging this. — Mar: waring came to Town last week, & has continued, in spite of Mr. Johnson, to make opportunities of seeing me. — He is absolutely miserable about you, & jealous to such a degree of Dr Courcy, that it would be highly inadvisable for them to meet at present; & yet if you do not allow him to see you here, I cannot answer for his not committing some great imprudence — such as going to Churchill for instance, which would be dread: ful. — Besides, if you take any advice & receive me for many Dr. Courcy, it will be indispensably ne: cessary for you to get Manwaring out of the way, & you only can have influence enough to send him back to his wife. —

I have still another motive for your com: ing. —

Mr. Johnson leaves London next Tuesday. He is going for his health to Bath, where if the waters are favourable to his constitution & my wishes, he will be laid up with the Gout many weeks. — During his absence we shall be able to observe one another society & have free correspondence. — I would ask you to Edward St. but that he once forced from me a kind of promise never to invite you to my house. Nothing but my being in the utmost distress for Money, could have extorted it from me. — I can get you however a very nice Drawing room - apartment in Upper Seymour St., & there may be always together, there or here, for I consider my promise to Mr. Johnson as comprehending only (at least in his absence) your not sleeping in the House. —

Poor Marianne gives me such histories of her unfortunate jealousy! — Silly woman, to expect Constancy from so charming a Man! — But the

was always silly; intolerably so, in managing him at all. She, the Hero of a large Fortune, has not a Shilling.' — But Silly & Knave she might have had, besides Baronet. — How folly in forming the Connection was so great, that tho' Mr. Johnson was her Guardian & I do not in general share his feelings, I never can forgive her.

Adieu. Yours, Alicia.

Letter 27.

Mrs Vernon to Lady De Crespigny.

Churchill

This Letter my dear Mother, will be brought you by Reginald. His long visit is about to be concluded at last, but I fear the separation takes place too late to do us any good. — She is going to Town, to see her particular friend Mrs Johnson. It was at first her intention that Lu-

:dovica

should accompany her for the benefit of Masters, but
we overruled her there. Frederica was wretched in the
idea of going, & I could not bear to have her at the
mercy of her Mother. Not all the Masters in London
could compensate for the pain of her comfort. I should
have feared too for her health, & for every thing in
short but her Principles; these I believe she is not
to be injured, even by her Mother, or all her Mo:
:thers friends; but with those friends (a very bad
set I doubt not) she must have mixed, or have
been left in total solitude, & I can hardly tell which
would have been worse for her. If she is with
her Mother however, she must also in all proba:
:bility be with Reginald — and that would be the
greatest evil of all. —

Here we shall in time be at peace. — Our
regular employments, our Books & conversation,
with Exercise, the Children, & every domestic plea:
: sure

in my power to procure her, will, I trust, gradually overcome their youthful attachment. I should not have a doubt of it, were she slighted for any other woman in the world, than her own Mother. —

How long Lady Susan will be in Town, or whether she returns here again, I know not. — I could not be cordial in my invitation; but if she chuses to come, no want of cordiality on my part will keep her away. —

I could not help asking Reginald if he intended being in Town this winter, as soon as I found that her Ladyship's steps would be bent thither; & tho' he professed himself quite undetermined, there was a something in his Look & Voice as he spoke, which contradicted his words. — I have done with Lamentation. — I look upon the Event as so far decided, that I resign myself to it in despair. If he leaves you soon for London, every thing

will be concluded. — Yours affec: by

Catt Vernon.

Letter 28.

Mrs Johnson to Lady Susan.

Edward St. —

My dearest Friend,

I write in the greatest distress; the most unfortunate event has just taken place. Mr. Johnson has hit on the most effectual manner of plaguing us all. — He had heard I imagine by some dreams or other, that you were soon to be in London, & immediately contrived to have such an attack of the Gout, as must at least delay his journey to Bath, if not wholly prevent it. — I am persuaded the Gout is brought on, or kept off at pleasure; — it was the same, when I wanted to join the Hamiltons to the Lakes; &

three years ago when I had a fancy for Bath,
nothing could induce him to have a Gouty symptom.

I have received yours, & have engaged
the Lodgings in consequence. — I am pleased to
find that my Letter had so much effect on you,
& that De Courcy is certainly your own. — Let me
hear from you as soon as you receive, & in par-
: ticular tell me what you mean to do with Sam-
: uel. — It is impossible to say when I shall be
able to see you. My confinement must be great. —
It is such an abominable trick to be ill here, in-
: stead of at Bath, that I can scarcely command
myself at all. — At Bath, his old Aunts would
have nursed him, but here it all falls upon
pair
one — & he bears with such patience that I have
"
not the common excuse for losing my Temper.

Yrs. Dear, Alicia.

Letter 29.

Lady Susan to Mrs. Johnson

Upton Seymour &c.

My dear Alicia

There needed not this last fit of the Gout to make one detest Mr. Johnson; but now there exists not a spot of any excuse is not to be extenuated. — To have you confined, a Nurse, in his apartment! — My dear Alicia, of what a mistaken course you guilty in managing a Man of his age! — just old enough to be formal, ungovernable & to have the Gout — too old to be agreable, & too young to die.

I arrived last night about five, & had scarcely swallowed my dinner when Manwaring made his appearance. — I will not dissemble that real pleasure his sight afforded me, nor how strongly I felt the contrast between his person & manners, & those of Reginald, to the infinite disadvantage

of the Cattle. — For an hour or two, I was even stag-
:ger'd in my resolution of marrying him — & tho'
this was too idle & nonsensical an idea to remain
long on my mind, I do not feel any vague for the
conclusion of my Marriage, or look forward with
much impatience to the time when Reginald accord-
:ing to our agreement is to be in Town. — I shall pro-
:bably put off his arrival, under some pretence or
other. He must not come till Mannering is gone.

I am still doubtful at times, as to Mar-
:riage. — If the old Man would die, I might not
hesitate, but a state of dependance on the ca-
:price of Sir Reginald, will not suit the free-
:dom of my spirit; — and if I resolve to wait for
that event, I shall have excuse enough to absent
it having been scarcely ten months a Widow.

I have not given Mannering any hint of
my intention — or allowed him to consider my

acquaintance with Reginald as more than the com:
:monest flirtation; — I have totally separated. —
Miss Lille was sweet. — I am enchanted with my
Lodgings. — Yrs. Ever,
C. Vernon. —

Letter 30.

Lady Susan to Mrs. De Courcy.

Upton Seymour &c.

I have received your Letter; tho' I do not
attempt to conceal that I am gratified by your
impatience for the hour of meeting, I yet feel
myself under the necessity of delaying that hour
beyond the time originally fixed. — Do not think
me unfeeling for such an exercise of my power,
or accuse me of Instability, without first hear:
:ing my reasons. — In the course of my journey
from Churchill, I had ample leisure for reflection

State

on the present posture of our affairs, I deem it
has served to convince me that they require a de-
:licacy & cautiousness of conduct, to which we have
hitherto been too little attentive. — We have been
hurried on by our feelings to a degree of Precipi-
:tance which ill accords with the claims of our
Friends or the opinion of the world. — We have
been unguarded in forming this hasty Engage-
:ment; but we must not complete the imprudence
by satisfying it, while there is so much reason to
fear the Connection would be opposed by those
Friends on whom you depend.

It is not for us to blame any expecta-
:tion on your Father's side of your marrying to
advantage; where professions are so extensive
as those of your Family, the wish of increasing
them, if not strictly reasonable, is too common to
excite Surprise or resentment. — He has a right

to require a woman of fortune in her daughter in law;
& I am sometimes quarreling with myself for sug-
:fering you to form a connection so imprudent. —
But the influence of reason is often acknowledged
too late by those who feel like me. —

I have now been but a few months a widow;
& however little indebted to my Husband's memory
for any happiness derived from him during our
Union of some years, I cannot forget that he in-
:dulgence of so early a second Marriage, must sub-
:ject me to the censure of the World, & incur what
would be still more unsupportable, the displea-
:sure of Mr. Vernon. — I might perhaps harden my-
:self in time against the injustice of general re-
:proach, but the loss of her valued Esteem, I am
as you well know, ill fitted to endure, — and when
to this, may be added the consciousness of having
injured you with your Family, how am I to sup-
:port

myself. — With feelings so poignant as mine, the conviction of having divided the Son from his Parents, would make one, even with Ayes, the most miserable of Beings. —

It will surely therefore be desirable to delay our Union, to delay it till appearances are more promising, till affairs have taken a more favourable turn. — To absist us in such a Resolution, I feel that absence will be necessary. We must not meet. — Cruel as this Sentence may appear, the necessity of pronouncing it, which can alone reconcile it to myself, will be evident to you when you have considered our situations in the light in which I have found myself impressively obliged to place it. — You may be, you must be sure assured that nothing but the strongest conviction of Duty, could induce me to surround my self with feelings by urging a lengthened Separation; to

of Insensibility to Yours, & you will hardly suspect me. — Again therefore I say that we ought not, we cannot not yet meet. — By a removal for some Months from each other, we shall tranquillize the Vicinity & fears of Mt. Vernon, who, accustomed herself to the enjoyment of Riches, considers Fortune as necessary every where, & whose ~~feelings~~ Sensibilities are not of a nature to comprehend ours. —

Let me hear from you soon, very soon. Tell me that you submit to my Arguments, & do not reproach me for using such. — I cannot bear Reproaches. My spirits are not so high as to need being depressed. — I must endeavour to seek amusement abroad, & fortunately many of my Friends are in Town. — Among them, the Man: of warnings. — You know how sincerely I regard both Husband & Wife. — I am ever, Faithfully Yours

S. Vernon —

Letter 31.

Lady Susan to Mrs Johnson

Upper Seymour St.

My dear Friend,

That tormenting Creature Reginald is
here. My Letter which was intended to keep him
here. My Letter which was intended to keep him
longer in the Country, has hastened him to Town.
Such as I wish him away however, I cannot help
being pleased with such a proof of attachment. He
is devoted to me, heart & soul. — He will carry
this note himself, which is to serve as an Introduc-
-duction to you, with whom he longs to be ac-
-quainted. Allow him to spend the Evening with
you, that I may be in no danger of his return-
-ing here. — I have told him that I am not quite
well, & must be alone — & should he call again
there ought be confusion, for it is impossible to
be sure of Servants. — Keep him therefore

I entreat you in Edward's. — You will not find him a heavy companion, & I allow you to flirt with him as much as you like. At the same time do not forget my real interest; — say all that you can to convince him that I shall be quite unable if he remains here; — you know my reasons — Pro: priety & so forth. — I would urge them more myself but that I am impatient to be rid of him, as Manwaring comes within half an hour.

Adieu. S.V. —

Letter 32.

Mrs Johnson to Lady Susan —

Edward St.

My dear Creature,

I am in agonies, & know not what to do, nor what you can do. — Mr. De Courcy arrived first when he should not. Mrs. Manwaring had that instant entered the House, & forced herself

into her Guardian's presence, tho' I did not know a syllable of it till afterwards, for I was out when both she & Reginald came, or I would have sent him away at all events; but she was shut up with Mr. Johnson, while he waited in the Drawing Room for me. —

She owned yesterday in pursuit of her Husband; — but perhaps you know this already from himself. — She came to this house to en: treat my Husband's interference, & before I could be aware of it, everything that you could wish to be concealed, was known to him; & unluckily she had wormed out of Stanwaring's Steward that he had visited you every day since you being in Town, & had just watched him to your door herself! — What could I do? — Such an such horrid things! — All is by this time known to De Courcy, who is now alone with

Mr. Johnson. — Do not accuse me; — indeed it was impossible to prevent it. — Mr. Johnson has for some time suspected De Courcy of intending to betray you, & would speak with him alone, as soon as he knew him to be in the House. —

That detestable Mrs Manwaring, who for your comfort, has fretted herself thinner & uglier than ever, is still here, & they have been all closeted together. What can be done? If Manwaring is now with you, he had better be gone. — At any rate I hope he will plague his wife more than ever. — With anxious wishes, Ay. faithfully

Alicia.

Letter 33.

Lady Susan to Mrs Johnson

Upper Seymour St.

Your Explanation is rather provoking. — How unlucky that you should have been from

home! — I thought myself sure of a you at 7. —
I am undismayed however. Do not torment your-
self with fears on my account. — Depend upon it,
I can make my own story good with Reginald.
Manwaring is just gone; he brought me the news
of his wife's arrival. Silly Woman! what does
she expect by such manœuvres? — Yet I wish
she had staid quietly at Langford. —

Reginald will be a little enraged at first,
but by Tomorrow's Dinner, every thing will be
well again. — Adieu. S V.

Letter 34. —

Mr. De Courcy to Lady Susan.

Hotel

I write only to bid you Farewell. — The
Spell is removed. I see you as you are. — Sin-

we parted yesterday, I have received from indispu:
:table authority, such an history of you, as must
bring the most mortifying conviction of the Im:
:propriety I have been under, & the absolute necef:
:sity of an immediate & eternal separation from
you. — You cannot doubt to what I allude: —
Langford — Langford — that word will be fuffici:
:ent. — I received my information in Mr. Johnson's
house, from Mrs Shanwaring herself. —

You know how I have loved you, you
can intimately judge of my present feelings;
but I am not so weak or so fond in indulgence in
describing them to a woman who will glory in
having excited their anguish, but whose affec:
:tion they have never been able to gain.

H. DeCourcy.

Letter 35.

Lady Susan to Mrs. De Courcy.

Upper Seymour St.

I will not attempt to describe my asto=
=nishment on reading the note, this moment re=
=ceived from you. — I am bewilder'd in my endeavours
to form some rational conjecture of what Mrs. Man:
:waring can have told you, to occasion so extraordi=
=nary a change in your sentiments. — Have I not
explained everything to you with respect to myself
which could bear a doubtful meaning, & which the
illnature of the world had interpreted to my dis:
:credit? — What can you now have heard to
stagger your Esteem for me? — Have I ever had
a concealment from you? — Ungenerous, you age:
:tate me beyond expression. — I cannot suspect
that the old story of Mrs. Manwaring's jealousy
can be revived again, or at least, be listened to a:
:gain. —

come to me immediately, & explain what is at pre:
:sent absolutely incomprehensible. — Believe me, the
single word of Langford is not of such potent intel:
:ligence, as to supersede the necessity of more. — If
we are to part, it will at least be handsome to
take your personal Leave. — But I have little heart
to jest; in truth, I am serious enough — for to be
sure, tho' but an hour, in your opinion, is an hu:
:miliation to which I know not how to submit.
I shall count every moment till your arrival.

S. V.

Letter 36.

Mr. De Courcy to Lady Susan

Hotel

Why would you write to me? — Why do you re:
:quire particulars? — But since it must be so, I
am obliged to declare that all the accounts of your
misconduct during the life & since the death of

Mt. Vernon which had reached me in common with the World in general, & gained my entire belief before I saw you, but which you by the exertion of your perverted Abilities had made me resolve to disallow, have been unanswerable proofs to me. — Nay, more I am assured that a Connection, of which I had never before entertained a thought, has for some time existed, & still continues to exist between you & the Man, whose family you robbed of its Peace, in return for the hospitality with which you were received into it! — That you have corresponded with him ever since your leaving Langford — not with his wife — but with him — & that he now visits you every day. — Can you, dare you deny it? — And all this at the time when I was an encouraged, an accepted Lover! — From what have I not escaped! — I have only to be grateful. — Far from one be all Complaint, &

every sigh of regret. My own folly had endangered me,
my Preservation I owe to the kindness, the Integrity
of another. — But the unfortunate Mrs Mancuan:
who, whose agonies while she related the past, seem
to threaten her Reason — how is She to be consoled?

After such a discovery as this, you will scarce
ly affect farther wonder at my meaning in bidding
you Adieu. — My Understanding is at length re-
stored, & teaches me no less to abhor the Artifices
which had subdued me, than to despise myself
for the weakness, on which their Strength was
founded. —

R. Delcourcy. —

Letter 37.

Lady Susan to Mrs. De Courcy

Upper Seymour St.

I am satisfied — & will trouble you no
more, when these few lines are dismissed. — The

Engagement - which you were eager to form a fortnight ago, is no longer compatible with your views, & I rejoice to find that the prudent advice of your Parents has not been given in vain. - Your restoration to Peace will, I doubt not, speedily follow this act of filial Obedience, & I flatter myself with the hope of surviving my share in their disappointment.

S V.

Letter 38.

Mrs Johnson to Lady Susan

Edward St

I am grieved, tho' I cannot be astonished at your Rupture with Mr De Courcy; he has just informed Mr Johnson of it by Letter. He leaves London he says today. - Be assured that I partake in all your feelings, & do not

be angry if I say that our intercourse even by Let-
ter must soon be given up. - It makes one mi-
serable - but M^r. Johnson vows that if I prevail
in the Connection, he will settle in the Country
for the rest of his life - & you know it is impos-
sible to submit to such an extremity while any
other alternative remains. -

You have heard of course that the Mar-
riages are to part; I am afraid M^rs M. will
come home to us again. But she is a little so fond
of her Husband & flirts so much about him that
perhaps she may not live long. -

Miss Thrale is just come to Town
to be with her Aunt, & they say, that she de-
clares she will have Sir James Shaston before
she leaves London again. - If I were you, I would
certainly get him myself. - I had almost forgot
to give you my opinion of Dr Lowry, I can-

really delightful with him, he is full as hand-
: some I think as Handwriting, & with such an
open, good humoured Countenance that one cannot
help loving him at first sight. — Mr. Johnson
& he are the greatest friends in the World.
Adieu, my dearest Alicia. — I wish matters did
not go so heavenly. That unlucky visit to
Langford! — But I dare say you did all for the
best, & there is no defying Destiny. —

Yr. sincerely attached
Alicia.

Letter 39.

Lady Swan to Mrs. Johnson

Aspen Terrace Sr.

My dear Alicia

I yield to the necessity which parts
us. Under such circumstances you could not-

act of tenderness. Our friendships cannot be impaired by it; & in happier times, when your situation is as independant as mine, it will unite us again in the same Intimacy as ever. — For this I shall impatiently wait; & meanwhile can safely assure you that I never was more at ease, or better satisfied with myself & every thing a- bout me, than at the present hour. — Your bro- ther I abhor — Reginald I despise — & I am secure of never seeing either again. Have I not reason to rejoice? — Mannering is more devoted to me than ever; & were he at liberty, I doubt if I could resist even Matrimony offered by him. This Event, if his wife live with you, it may be in your power to hasten. The violence of her feelings, which must wear her out, may be ea- sily kept in agitation. — I rely on your friendship for this. — I am ever satisfied that I never

could have brought myself to marry Reginald,
& am equally determined that Frederica never
shall. . Tomorrow I shall fetch her from Churchill
& let Maria Manwaring tremble for the conse-
:quence. Frederica shall be Sir James's wife
before she quits my house. She may threaten
& the Vernons may storm; — I regard them not.
I am tired of submitting my will to the Caprices
of others — of resigning my own Judgement in
deference to those, to whom I owe no Duty, & for
whom I feel no respect. — I have given up too
much — have been too easily worked on; but
Frederica shall now find the difference. —
Adieu, dearest of Friends. Pray the next Gouty
Attack be more favourable. — & may you always
regard me as unalterably yours

C. Vernon. —

Letter 40.

Lady De Courcy to Mrs. Vernon.

Portland

My dear Catherine

I have charming news for you, & if I had not sent off my Letter this morning, you ought have been spared the vexation of knowing of Reginald's being gone to Town, for he is returned, Reginald is returned, not to ask our consent to his marrying Lady Susan, but to tell us that they are married forever! — He has been only an hour in the House, & I have not been able to learn particulars, for he is so very low, that I have not the heart to ask questions; but I hope we shall soon know all. — This is the most joyful hour he has ever given us, since the day of his birth. Nothing is wanting but to have you here, & it

& our particular wish & entreaty that you would
come to us as soon as you can. You have owed
us a visit many long weeks. — I hope nothing
will make it inconvenient to Mt. Vernon, & pray
bring all my Grand Children, & your dear Niece
& is included of course; I long to see her. — It has
been a sad heavy winter hitherto, without Reg:
:nald, & seeing nobody from Churchill; I never
found the season so dreary before, but this hap:
:py meeting will make us young again. —
Frederica runs much in my thoughts, & when
Reginald has recovered his usual good spirits
(as I trust he soon will) we will try to rob
him of his heart once more, & I am full of hopes
of seeing their hands joined at no great distance.

Ys. affec: Mother

C. De Courcy.

Letter 41

Mrs Vernon to Lady De Courcy.

Churchill

My dear Madam

Your Letter has surprised me beyond measure. Can it be true that they are really se: parated — & for ever? — I should be overjoyed if I dared depend on it, but after all that I have seen, how can one be secure? — And Reginald really with you! — My surprise is the greater, because on Wednesday, the very day of his coming to Park: land, we had a most unexpected & unwelcome visit from Lady Susan, looking all cheerfulness & good humour, & seeming more as if she were to marry him when she got back to Town, than as if parted from him forever. — She staid nearly two hours, was as affectionate & agreable as ever, &

not a syllable, not a hint was dropped of any Disagreement or Coolness between them. I asked her whether she had seen my Brother since his arrival in Town — not as you may suppose with any doubt of the fact — but merely to see how she looked. — She immediately answered without any embarrassment that he had been kind enough to call on her on Monday, but she believed he had already returned home — which I was very far from crediting. —

Your kind invitation is accepted by us with pleasure, & on Thursday next, we & our little ones will be with you. — Pray Heaven! Reginald may not be in Town again by that time! —

I wish we could bring dear Frederica too, but I am sorry to add that her Mother's errand hither was to fetch her away; & miserable as it made the poor Girl, it was impossible to detain her

I was thoroughly unwilling to let him go, & so was her Uncle; & all that could be urged, was urged. But Lady Susan declared that as she was now about to fix herself in Town for several Months she could not be easy if her Daughter were not with her, for Masters &c. — Her Manner, to be sure, was very kind & proper — & Mr. Vernon believes that Frederica will now be treated with affection. I wish I could think so too! —

The poor Girl's heart was almost broke at taking leave of us. I charged her to write to me very often, & to remember that if she were in any difficulty, we should be always her friends. — I took care to see her alone, that I might say all this, & I hope made her a little more comfortable. — But I shall not be easy till I can go to Town & judge of her Situation myself. —

I wish there were a better prospect than

now appears, of the Scotch, which the conclusion
of your Letter declares your expectation of. At
present it is not very likely. —

Yrs &c
Cath Vernon.

Conclusion.

This Correspondence, by a meeting be:
:tween some of the Parties & a separation be:
:tween the others, could not, to the great Delei:
:ment of the Post office Revenue, be continued
longer. — Very little assistance to the Stale
could be derived from the Epistolary Intercourse
of Mrs Vernon & her Niece, for the former
soon perceived by the stile of Frederica's Letters
that they were written under her Mother's in:
:spection,

& therefore deferring all particulars enquiry till she could make it personally in Town, ceased awaiting minutely or often.—

Having learnt enough in the meanwhile from her open-hearted Brother, of what had passed between him & Lady Susan to suit the latter low: er than ever in her opinion, she was proportion: ably more anxious to get Frederica removed from such a Mother, & placed under her own care; & tho' with little hope of success, was resolved to leave nothing unattempted, that might offer a chance of obtaining her Sister in Law's con: = sent to it.— Her anxiety on the subject made her press for an early visit to London; & Mr. Vernon who, as it must have already appeared, lived only to do whatever he was desired, soon found some accommodating Business to call him

thether. — With a heart full of the Matter, Mrs Vernon waited on Lady Susan, shortly after her arrival in Town; & was met with such an easy & cheerful affectation as made her almost turn from her with horror. — Not a remembrance of Reginald, no consciousness of Guilt gave one look of embarrassment. — She was in excellent spirits & seemed eager to shew at once, by every possible attention to her Brother & Sister, her sense of their kindness, & her pleasure in their society.

Frederica was no more altered than Lady Susan; — the same restrained Manners, the same timid Look in the presence of her Mother as heretofore, assured her Aunt of her situation's being uncomfortable, & confirmed her in the plan of altering it. — No unkindness however on the part of Lady Susan appeared.

proposed her Niece's returning with them into the Country. Lady Susan was unable to express her sense of such Kindness; yet knew not from a variety of reasons how to part with her Daughter; for, tho' her own plans were not yet wholly fixed, she trusted it would ere long be in her power to take Frederica into the Country herself, concluded by declining entirely to profit by such unexampled attention. — Mrs Vernon however persevered in the offer of it; & tho' Lady Susan continued to resist, her resistance in the course of a few days seemed somewhat less formidable.

The lucky alarm of an Influenza decided what might not have been decided quite so soon. — Lady Susan's maternal fears were then too much awakened for her to think of anything but Frederica's removal from the risk of infection. Above all Disorders in the World she most dreaded the Influenza for her daughter's

Constitution. Frederica returned to Churchill with her Uncle & Aunt, & three weeks afterwards Lady Susan announced her being married to Sir James Martin. —

Mrs Vernon was then convinced of what she had only suspected before, that she might have spared herself all the trouble of urging a Removal, which Lady Susan had doubtless resolved on from the first. — Frederica's visit was nominally for six weeks; — but her Mother, tho' inviting her to return in one or two affectionate Letters, was re: : ry ready to oblige the whole Party by consent: : ing to a prolongation of her Stay, & in the course of two months ceased to write of her absence, & in the course of two more, to write to her at all.

Frederica was therefore fixed in the fa: : mily of her Uncle & Aunt, till such time as Re: : ginald De Courcy could be talked, flattered &

finished into an affection for her — which allowing leisure for the concealment of her attachment to her Mother, for her abjuring all future attachments & detesting the Sex, might be reasonably looked for in the course of a Twelve-month. Three Months might have done it in general, but Reginald's feelings were not less lasting than lively. —

Whether Lady Susan was, or was not happy in her second Choice — I do not see how it can ever be ascertained — for who would take her assurance of it on either side of the question? — The World must judge from Probability. — She had nothing against her, but her Husband & her Conscience.

Sir James may seem to have drawn an harder Lot than mere Folly merited. — I leave him therefore to all the Pity that anybody

can giue him. For my self, I confess that I can
pity only Miss Manwaring, who coming to Town
& putting herself to an expence in Cloathes,
which impouerished her for two yeares, on pur-
:pose to secure him, was defrauded of her due
by a Woman ten yeares older than herself.

Finis