

LES CHARMETTES AND ROUSSEAU.*

THERE is a religion in literature as well as in love,—both of a very Pagan description. They abound in superstitions. We gaze upon the portrait of a favourite mistress or a favourite author, worshipping the memory of her kisses and his pages, till it becomes downright idolatry. With what ardent devotion we perform many a pilgrimage to our Lady—not of Loretto!¹ and what a thrill in our bosoms, and how thankful are our hearts, when we approach, as towards some sainted shrine, the dwelling of “one who was great through mortal days, and died of fame unshorn!”² Are we not in a blessed state when we find ourselves in his own garden, his own bed-room, his own parlour? Then if, according to a good custom, everything or something remains the same as when he lived there, they are precious relics working miracles in our imagination. That antique chair in Shakespear’s house!¹³ A man cannot sit in it five minutes without fancying his modern dress is rapidly metamorphosing itself into ruff, jerkin, doublet, and hose; and in this visionary attire, how easy to persuade oneself that Shakespear “has just stepped out, and will be back again immediately!”⁴ As for his tomb, telling me in very plain prose that he is certainly dead and buried, I look upon it as an insolent piece of matter-of-fact. A poet can have no grave, except in the eyes of those he personally loved; and if they must rear him a monument, let it be an evergreen bower,—it will last their time, and is a more graceful and a more appropriate memorial than their

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cold marble. We know of Milton's⁵ living in too many places,⁶ and want to know which he liked best. One of his houses is in the hands of a man worthy to be its owner;—I wonder why I did no more than peep in at a window. A visit to Burns' cottage⁷ should not be missed. Go and be surrounded by the scenes of his youth, his joy, his hope, when his days were glorious as his imagination. And that part of Ayrshire⁸ is so beautiful! Go, I say, and be like one of his own poems, “with pleasance of the breathing fields yfed.”⁹ The worst is, the cottage is not in its original simple state, being altered and enlarged for the accommodation of visitors. Still there is a charm about it; for it was there, as Keats¹⁰ expresses it in one of his unpublished sonnets, written under the very roof,—

“Where thou didst dream alone on budded bays,
Happy, and thoughtless of thy day of doom!”¹¹

I was asked to go into his house at Dumfries,¹² the abode of his wretchedness, his despair. I do not exactly understand such a taste; it seems very Presbyterian.¹³ Owing to this want of taste for the miserable, I never went into Collins' house¹⁴ at the corner of the Cloisters of Chichester Cathedral.¹⁵ How melancholy it looks! There seems contagion in its very walls and window sashes. Often have I stood before it, and before Flaxman's monument to his memory,¹⁶ with as little desire to pass the threshold, as to enter his grave. The *statu quo* position of all sorts of furniture in Garrick's house at Hampton Court¹⁷ is too much for Garrick; besides, it is in obedience to his last Will and Testament. Dr. Johnson's¹⁸ bed-room in Thrale's villa at Streatham¹⁹ was worth seeing, till an auction spoiled it. The bow window looked into the garden; the paper and curtains, at his own request, were of a gay pattern, for the Doctor could not bear any addition to his own gloom; and there were the two desks, fixtures on each side of the

window, on which he wrote his "Lives of the Poets."²⁰ As extremes are sure to meet, it is quite a natural transition from the "great Moralist,"²¹ who left the world's morals as he found them, to the Visionary, as he is called, who really "did our state some service;"²² from the Court Pensioner,²³ who humbly wrote "The False Alarm,"²⁴ and "Taxation no Tyranny,"²⁵ to the independent Citizen of Geneva,²⁶ who chose rather to earn a hard livelihood as a copier of music, than receive a favour either from a Louis or a George.²⁷ Come with me, reader, to *Les Charmettes*.²⁸

There are many other houses where Rousseau lived, which his admirers may visit as they please, but give me this, and this alone, for here only was he happy. Among these grand mountains, in this beautiful valley, he passed that period of his life, when, generally speaking, the character is stamped for ever. This was his school. As for the extraordinary finish to his education, which Madame de Warens²⁹ was pleased to bestow, that is neither your affair nor mine; nor do I perceive the place is a jot the worse for it. But it was wrong! Grant it was so; yet are we to consider those six previous years he lived under her roof as nothing? "Then is Bohemia nothing!"³⁰ Let the praise that is justly her due be freely allowed, especially as, in her after life, neither sex can offer an apology for her conduct. Her previous history says much in her favour. She was young, handsome, and accomplished, beloved by a host of friends, and enjoying an ample fortune, which she used nobly. Yet friends, fortune, and country, she relinquished for conscience' sake, and retired to Savoy³¹ on a precarious stipend from the King of Sardinia.³² It was then that Rousseau, at the age of sixteen, destitute of every thing, came recommended to her protection. She received him into her house, clothed him, supplied him with all the means in her power to obtain masters for the cultivation of his

mind, constantly interested herself in his behalf, and this, for six years, before those familiarities commenced which have given so much offence. He calls her “the best of women.”³³ Truly she was so to him; and though we may smile at those passages in his *Confessions*, where he endeavours to persuade us she was never in the wrong, still we must confess they do honour to his heart.

About a mile from Chambery, up the side of the hill to the south of the town, and through a shady and winding lane, you arrive at Les Charmettes. The lane is delightful; with something like an English hedge on one side, and a small tumbling brook on the other; and you walk under the boughs of the walnut, the chesnut, the vine, the fig, and the acacia. A little, ragged, bright-eyed boy stared up full in my face, and cried out, “Ah, Monsieur, I know where you are going!—to Jean Jaques?” Then jumping before me to lead the way, suddenly he turned round and again accosted me with—“Was not that Jean Jaques a very famous man?” This was the only tribute I heard paid to the fame of the philosopher in Savoy. It was spoken by a poor and reckless urchin; others were too prudent to hint their opinions before a stranger. Possibly they were aware that Britain had produced a Castles,³⁴ an Oliver,³⁵ and an Edwards.³⁶ The house had not that ancient appearance I expected. It is at present uninhabited. There is an inscription on a stone placed in the wall, containing some very neat verses, saying just enough on both sides of the question.*

* This inscription, or rather three-fourths of it, is on his house in the *Île de St. Pierre*.³⁷ It is the complimentary part which is omitted; and, in lieu of it, we have a paltry common-place exclamation. The lines have been attributed to Madame de Franqueville.³⁸ In the garden of the Hermitage at Montmorency,³⁹ where he composed his *New Eloisa*,⁴⁰ are some verses in a complaining mood, and not good of their kind.

Réduit, par Jean Jaques⁴¹ habité,
Tu me rapelles son génie,
Sa solitude, sa fierté,
Et ses malheurs, et sa folie:
A⁴² la gloire, à la vérité,
Il osa consacrer sa vie,
Et fut toujours persécuté
Ou par lui-même, ou par l'envie.⁴³

“A la gloire, à la vérité!”⁴⁴ Is not this “truth” a libel? Why is not the seditious stone torn from its home, and sent to some House of Correction? No; there it stands by consent of the legitimate authorities; and our loving subjects con it by heart, and then run to catch a peep at the backs of his works through that glass case in the library at Chambéry, where they are so fearfully placed under lock and key: what an edifying contradiction for these our loving subjects! However, I hate politics when something better is at hand, and, thanks to the old woman with the key of the door, I can now enter the house. In the dining-room are the portraits of Rousseau and Madame de Warens, with their ages ludicrously reversed; she in the first bloom of youth, and he, an old man in a wig, with a face intended to express a staid maturity of thought. As you go up stairs, you see the little chapel with its altar, for which the poor Baroness paid so dearly. Both above and below some remnants of its former furniture are shewn, among which is a truckle-bed, said to have belonged to Jean Jaques. So it was here he passed his happiest days! Here he would lay his music aside to pursue his favourite study of botany upon the hills; or close his books, and ramble abroad to gaze upon the face of nature, in her loveliest and grandest aspect. Often have his young feet speeded across the lane to the green on the

other side,—there, in the orchard—to look upon the Alps. I would have given a Louis⁴⁵ for permission to read, on that very spot, ten pages of any one of his volumes. But my money could not buy that pleasure. Alas! it is too true,—any ten of his pages are worth more than any Louis.

It is certain that had not Rousseau given us his *Confessions*, his fame would have been greater, as his character would have been more respected. If we knew no more of him than of one of his contemporaries, how readily the apology of “we are however unacquainted with all the particulars,” would run at the heels of every imputed fault; and where there was a doubt, the most malignant biographer must have hesitated. In revealing the whole truth, he trusted to the sympathy of mankind, forgetting or not believing two truths respecting other men: 1st. That few would sympathise with those delinquencies, which they, either from circumstances or education, are never tempted to commit: and 2d. That others who had committed them, would be very apt to pretend they had not, and owe him a grudge for touching their consciences. He has destroyed the charm that hovers over genius by this stripping of his humanity; at least, to me: for he has, doubtless, admirers who think otherwise. We see him among the common crowd of mortals, sometimes better and sometimes worse, but always in the crowd. Were the secret workings of the hearts of all great men disclosed, the lesson might be useful; but our veneration would be decreased in proportion as we saw their nature descend to our level. We would willingly believe that astonishing minds cannot be connected with vulgar weaknesses. The *Confessions* ought to make us more fearful of ourselves, and more charitable to others. When they have a contrary effect, the reader alone is to

blame. Once allow them to be the true picture of a human being (which is rarely called in question) and it is folly or hypocrisy that exclaims—"I am contaminated!" On the other hand, there are many who contend he wrote with too great a severity against himself, and insist on twisting every thing into some crooked virtue. This, again, does injury, since it provokes the opposite party to dwell upon his vices, without a word of his remorse, and without balancing the good against the evil. Friends and enemies have had their best and worst of him. Unfortunately, either side may be taken without fear of being accused of wilful misrepresentation. Perhaps there never was an author whom it was so difficult to love or to hate by halves. My visit to Les Charmettes warmed my heart to his memory, and I would fain, if possible, steer clear between the two extremes; and the late work of M. de Musset, with its store of facts and anecdotes, comes aptly to my assistance.⁴⁶

Rousseau describes himself, when a child, "timid and yielding in his general conduct, but fiery, proud, unconquerable in his passions;" and, when advanced in life, he said, "I am constitutionally bold and of a timid character."⁴⁷ His life is a running comment upon these two texts; with this exception, that sometimes he "could screw his courage to the sticking-place"⁴⁸ even to magnanimity. That timid and yielding disposition, together with his passions, were constantly leading him into errors, and, in his struggles to extricate himself, he would often plunge in the deeper. Nature intended him for a hero, but the world made him a coward. Thus, while he insisted that every man ought to earn his own livelihood, he was persuaded to accept a pension from the English Government. It is true he soon perceived his mistake. "What now?" said he, "Am I hushed to silence, or am I to be a flatterer?" Instantly he

threw aside the royal pension, and sat in a corner to eat his crust. At any rate he had the courage to recede. The arrears ran on, but no consideration could ever induce him to touch a penny of them. In the same way, while he contended that friends should be on the same footing, he rejected presents because he was too poor to make a return; yet received favours amounting in value to more than any direct present offered him. The fact is, they came accompanied with such kind expressions, and such benevolent countenances, that he had not the heart to refuse. But what was the consequence? No sooner was he left to his own reflections, than he perceived they were, no matter whether intentional or not, nothing less than cajoling him out of his former professions; and therefore these mistaken acts of friendship generally ended in a quarrel. Call it pride, or what you will, still it was acting up to his principles. It does not deserve the name of inconsistency; it is consistency at war with odds, and eventually obtaining the victory. That he was eccentric is undoubted, not only in his opinions but in his dress, which was thought the greater offence of the two, when a gold-laced coat was the acme of gentlemanly existence; though surely eccentricity is not a-kin to the deadly sins. Like all enthusiasts, when he attempted to put his theories into practice, he became ridiculous; and unlike most enthusiasts, there is a practical good to be found in all his theories. Had he never attempted to set an example, his doctrine might have been more followed. What had an Armenian cloak, and many other extravagances, to do with the preceptor of Emilius?⁴⁹ Unhappily at that time, in his latter days, his whole conduct betokened a derangement of intellect. Towards the conclusion of his *Confessions*, I think, there is evidence of this infirmity. If that is doubtful, read his last work.—

“The Walks of a Solitary Man,”⁵⁰—which more properly ought to be translated “The Wanderings.” Persecution had done little, for he was a stout sufferer; but the being betrayed by men on whom he relied as friends, was a shock from which he never recovered; acting, as it probably did, on some malformation or disorganisation of the brain, since it appears, by his own account, he was always subject to a mysterious affection of the head. From that time he suspected every one except Theresa,⁵¹ who was the only one to be suspected, till the discovery of her treachery drove him to desperation. In this manner was his old age haunted and tormented, even to death.

His worst actions, and the only bad ones of any magnitude, were the theft of the ribbon, followed by the accusation against his innocent fellow-servant, and the sending his children to the Foundling Hospital.⁵² For the first, some apology may be framed: there was certainly no premeditated cruelty against the girl, since it arose from his suddenly acting from the impulse of a timid disposition—a fault he was often guilty of in instances of less moment; nor has he nor any one sufficiently dwelt upon his extreme youth when it was committed. Nothing, however, can be said to palliate the crime of deserting his offspring. The excuses which passed through his mind at the time were precisely the same as are made use of by all unnatural fathers when they abandon their natural children. But there is this difference between him and many others: he bitterly wept over his error; his anguish of heart was never at rest; and if ever penitence could make mankind forgive, he ought to be forgiven. Let the crime be execrated as you will. It is an honest curse; but let it not touch Rousseau. Our Foundling Hospital, it is said, is stocked with the children of the rich. How many thousands are sent to the parish! In

some parishes, I have heard the frightful calculation is, that only one in eleven survives its infancy. There is no country in the world so infamous for this crime as England. Yes; let us curse it, and shut our hands and hearts against those who have been guilty of it, and who can dare to mention it, or hear it mentioned, without remorse. Rousseau was not one of those.

Now for a pleasanter task. We will talk of his virtues,—“close at the heels of his vices.”⁵³ As a literary man he had no envy. While attacked and abused on all sides, he never forgot his own honour and dignity. Voltaire,⁵⁴ his great rival, in his histories, his romances, and his poems, was ever aiming a blow at the Citizen of Geneva, either turning his opinions or his person into ridicule. Rousseau always spoke of his talents with respect, and would not be tempted to retaliate. On the contrary, when a subscription was on foot for a statue to Voltaire during his life, Rousseau cheerfully added his name; which unluckily threw “Philosophy’s Harlequin”⁵⁵ into violent antics and contortions; and there was no peace in Paris till the offensive name was erased from the list. In private life, he was never heard to speak ill of another behind his back. Deception of any kind was his utter abhorrence. When Madame D’Epinay⁵⁶ was in her angriest mood at him, she could not forbear paying the compliment of saying—“If he gives you his word, I believe he may be relied on.”⁵⁷ It is strange, if his writings were insincere, that nothing like insincerity could be discovered in his conversation. When he believed himself treated with duplicity, his indignation was indeed wild and inexorable; nothing offended him so much. In his general manners he was indulgent, gentle, and unassuming. No one quitted his company with a painful sense of inferiority. His smile is represented as having been expressive

of great sweetness. While he toiled hard to earn a subsistence, observing the strictest economy down to the minutest articles, dividing his daily modicum of small wine into equal portions for dinner and supper, and compelled to forego the pleasure of a friend at his table because it was too scantily supplied, this man—this calumniated Rousseau—was supporting an aged aunt in Switzerland. Year after year, for a long series of years, the remittances never failed. A gentleman, travelling in her neighbourhood, heard of the circumstance and called upon her. “What, Sir,”—these were her words,—“and have you seen my Nephew? Is it indeed true that he has no religion? Our Clergymen tell me he is an impious man. But how can that be? It is through his kindness that I am now alive. Poor old woman as I am, above eighty years old, without him I should die, alone and not a soul near me, in a garret, of cold and hunger.” When this was repeated to Rousseau,—“It is a debt,” said he; “she took charge of me when an orphan.” Thanks, M. de Musset, for this anecdote! You have planted an imperishable flower in his laurel. It is a glorious burst of sunshine after all the thunder we have heard against his name.

I sat down to write of Rousseau in his character as a man, not as an author. Yet as some of his opinions, the moral more than the religious, so startling to the prejudices of the world, have brought much odium upon his memory, I am willing to step forward in their defence. Nor can I, as a man myself, omit saying something of his greatest work, to which we are all so much indebted.

Had he not deserted his children, in all probability we should never have seen his *“Emile.”* It appears as if, not able to endure the pain of brooding over his fault, he had appealed to his imagination for relief; and there, once more a father, he cherished and tutored these his “dream-children”

so differently from others, that, shocked at the dissimilarity, he addressed his system to parents, calling upon them to act as nature not as fashion bade them. At the commencement of *Emilius* is a passage in allusion to his own case, which is extremely pathetic. After exhorting fathers to their duty, he says—"Neither poverty, nor labour, nor respect for the world, can excuse us from maintaining our children, and bringing them up ourselves. *You may believe me, reader, that what I say is true.* Should a person of real sensibility neglect this duty, *I may venture to predict he will long bewail his mistake, and nothing can ever console him.*"⁵⁸ He has been laughed at for inculcating a duty where he himself was the greatest delinquent. How blind! Can any of these laughers imagine a more heroic action than a man proclaiming his crime, not idly, but to warn his fellow-creatures against so miserable an error? Let this production, together with his sorrows, be received as an expiation. Its utility is practically acknowledged by all parties, however the "Confessions of the Curate of Savoy,"⁵⁹ and some other parts, may be hated by those who insist on being of a contrary creed. As soon as it appeared, a host of theologians started up, denouncing vengeance against its author, hunting him from place to place; and at Geneva, his own Geneva, it was burnt by the common hangman.⁶⁰ In this persecution the women added no small share of irritation; for they would read the volumes, extolled Rousseau, took their infants to their bosoms, stripped off the horrid swathing clothes, treated them like reasoning beings till they became reasonable, and taught them love instead of fear. After a foolish struggle the women triumphed, as they always do, over the dogmatisms of men,—not to mention priests, who are the first to yield to such an opposition. What individuals under thirty or forty can say they may not be beholden to Rous-

seau? Those who have straight backs, straight limbs, unpinched heads, health, and sound minds, ought in gratitude, next to God and the care of their parents, to thank Jean Jacques. Here in Italy (as far as I have seen, where the light heath yet shows) swathes and a score of barbarous customs are still in use; and the consequence is, there are many dwarfs and a wretched crowd of deformed and helpless creatures. On the contrary, in France and in England these instances are rare. That Rousseau in his education of Emilius puts forth many untenable paradoxes is certain; the wonder is there are no more. At the time he wrote, Nature was quite a theory, and a very puzzling one. How difficult it must have been to give a tolerable guess at what kind of an animal a little boy might turn out, when released from his cumbersome and ridiculous dress, and in the hands of a sensible tutor. Imagine him with bag-wig and sword, embroidered coat and waistcoat, knee-breeches and a cocked-hat; and pursued all day long by a coaxing and cursing nurse, with a rattle in one hand and a rod in the other. Look at Hogarth's⁶¹ prints, or, if you suspect his full-dressed puppets of caricature, look at the family pictures of the last century. Yet it was out of one of these monstrous abortions of folly and finery that he produced that beautiful picture of Emilius at the end of the second book. No one was more aware of the imperfections in his system than himself. He was content to be right in the main. When a gentleman told him he was bringing up his son like another Emilius, the answer he received was—"Then, Sir, you do wrong." One of the most distinguishing features between Voltaire and Rousseau is, that the former was a destroyer and nothing else; while the latter, though he pulled down also, was still careful to build up. We may regard this work as a goodly and graceful piece of architecture, though some of the minor

parts are a little out of proportion. To run this old metaphor out of breath, I would say it is silly to condemn the whole fabric because a window may have a false position, and a chimney-pot a false conclusion; or that the cornice does not run in a true syllogism; or that the pilasters may cry out with King Lear, "Ha! here's three of us are sophisticated!"⁶² The man who can point out these defects can amend them. Let him do so, and be thankful.

The heaviest charge against Rousseau's writings is, that they contain such descriptions as none but the most gross mind could suggest. This word *gross* is often most irreverently misapplied. A Bishop, who bids us fix our affections solely on the world to come, will call all sublunary things *gross*, except the emoluments of his See and his belly. *Grossness* is too comprehensive, and must be reduced to its simple signification,—pleasure without sentiment. Rousseau is never guilty of inculcating that in any of his works. He inveighs with more than pulpit eloquence against it. I grant he was voluptuous, in the best sense, which means no more than a desire to be loved by all that is good and beautiful. And this desire was so sublimated in his breast, that every woman became a cruel disappointment to him. From youth to age he went sighing through the world, outdoing the jest of Diogenes and his lanthorn,⁶³ seeking some unattainable creature—a Julia, a Clara, or a Sophia⁶⁴—and meeting with none but D'Epinays and D'Houpetots.⁶⁵ Madame D'Houpetot indeed was something; but then M. Saint-Lambert⁶⁶ was her St. Preux,⁶⁷ and in full possession. Rousseau could not be satisfied with thinking a woman was an angel, —no, she must needs be an angel while he thought her a woman. Like his own Pygmalion,⁶⁸ he was always forming faultless Galateas,⁶⁹ while his imagination, like a deity, animated them to his wishes. Then his enjoyment was to

describe their charms, with all the voluptuousness and all the delicacy of a lover.* "The only actual difference between the fabulous solitary and the real one was, unfortunately, that Pygmalion seems to have been willing enough to be contented, had he found a mistress that deserved him; whereas Rousseau, when he was really beloved, and even thought himself so, was sure to be made the ruin of his own comfort, partly by a distrustful morbidity of temperament, and partly perhaps by a fastidious metaphysical subtlety, which turned his eye with a painful sharpness upon the defects instead of humanities of his fellow creatures, and made the individual answer for the whole mass."⁷⁰ We may laugh at such a man, or we may pity him, but it is impossible to call him a libertine,⁷¹ Surely he has been confounded with his namesake Jean Baptiste Rousseau,⁷² the writer of the best French lyrics, the most licentious epigrams, and the most pious psalms. Had our Rousseau been the most gallant of rovers, yet had Theresa been his true and lawful wife, he would have passed for a moderate sort of a man and the best of husbands. The world is a spoiled child, will have its own way, and likes those who dandle and cocker it better than its benefactors. But his writings! His "Julie, ou la nouvelle Heloise!" what are we to say to that?

Truly, our grave-heads tell us this same novel of the New Eloisa is of so immoral a tendency, that it ought never to be put into the hands of any one younger than themselves. "Tis not good;" quoth Dame Quickly,⁷³ "that children should know any wickedness: old folks, you know, have discretion, as they say, and know the world."⁷⁴ On the other hand, Anna Seward,⁷⁵ like a sensible maiden, recommends it should

* This passage ought to have been mine. "Plague take those who anticipate our articles!"⁷⁶—See *Indicators*, 31st and 32nd.⁷⁷

be read by all young men. The reason she gives is to this effect, for I have forgotten the precise words: that, beyond any other work, it proves that the most ardent love, far from being diminished or chilled by the union of sentiment, is the more glowing as well as the more exalted; and therefore it may be the means of weaning the gay men of the town from heartless pleasures. This is good; and I am glad a woman, as times and opinions go, had the courage to write it. Quarrel not with voluptuousness, for he who has none of it will have something infinitely worse. But here I see a whole bench of grave-heads shake fearfully at this doctrine, thinking themselves in no degree the worse for having, in their day, been guilty of a little heartlessness. There is much vulgar talk against this novel, much cant, like a distillation from the last Ultra review; and it may be divided (Quarterly) into short-sightedness, misrepresentation, impudence, and hypocrisy. St. Preux is not, in the ordinary sense of the word, the seducer of his pupil. Truth is, he and Julia very unintentionally seduce one another. Rather than blame them, you must blame Nature for having formed two congenial souls that could not be happy apart. The fault then must lie in the factitious modes of society, which form what is mistermed "its well being," and which forbade the marriage of these two loving hearts; as if it were preposterous for a man of no family to wed the daughter of a Baron, however enormous his perriwig, or however extraordinary his gold-headed cane. Rousseau was deeply impressed with the cruelty exercised against those who "love not wisely but too well."⁷⁸ He would not let virtue die, as we kill horses, because she had unluckily made a false step, and broken her leg. He dared to assert,—which was much in his time, and nearly as much in ours,—that what is always stigmatized as impure, is sometimes pure, and that nothing

but depravity could be the ruin of any one. Julia's affection for St. Preux was perhaps as holy (with reverence be it spoken) as any matrimony could make it; and it is scarcely possible to read their history without imagining she was divorced, not from a lover, but from a first husband. This however cannot be said to furnish a bad example, for both of them are unhappy enough, if that will make our virtuous critics happy. She, amidst the cherishing fondness of a crowd of friends, and beloved by her husband, still looks tearfully back to the first hour of her love, and that without a wish it should return; and he is for ever wretched. Be it observed, and this I think very moral, that the man is here more severely punished than the woman, which still remains a novelty, though it ought to be otherwise. And I must notice another point of morality: we are here taught how a Christian and an Atheist may live in harmony and peace together, aye, even as man and wife;—surely this is doing the bitter world some service. Besides, in Clara and Julia, we meet with a fine generous compliment to the women, which doubtless they deserve, though it is not often paid them,—that they can love the same man and love one another at the same time. But the greatest charm in the work is the constant endeavour of the author to discover “a soul of goodness in things evil;”⁷⁹ as if taught this lesson by his favourites the bees, that can extract honey from poisonous flowers. A few more such books, and the race of misanthropes would be at end. Nor has he any faith in such romantic villains as Lovelace,⁸⁰ Blifl,⁸¹ young Thornhill,⁸² Count Fathom,⁸³ and the rest of those bugbears of iniquity, who are every now and then called upon to perform a little gratuitous villainy, for the sake of heightening the interest. The only thing I dislike is, that St. Preux, towards the end, becomes a mere puppet; and that Julia arrives at too high a

pitch of female excellence. She is too wonderful, too upright, too buckramed, too theatrical. I get weary of her, and fall in love with Clara. The hussey grows saucy about her acquirements and household economy. I long to hear she has committed another slip; or that one of her servants has given her warning for speaking crossly before breakfast. Why does not she tear her best gown, or tread her shoes down at heel? Is it possible she never fails in metaphysics and the best of rice puddings? Give me something, some little circumstance to her discredit, that I may get rid of her cloying perfections. Quick—hurry over the leaves, and let us come in at the death. Julia's death! Ah! there we love her once more. We fear to rustle the page as we read of all the minute circumstances attending the last hours of one so young, so beautiful, so beloved. "See!" says the story of Addison,⁸⁴ "in what peace a Christian can die!"⁸⁵ And how? Even no more than our criminals on the scaffold. But the Christian Julia not only has peace; she has so pure a sense of gratitude to God, that she can be cheerful to the last. "Death," she says, "is of itself sufficiently painful! Why must it be rendered hideous? The care which others throw away in endeavouring to prolong their lives, I will employ in enjoying mine to the last moment. Shall I make a hospital of my apartment, a scene of disgust and trouble, when my last care ought to be to assemble in it all those who are most dear to me?"⁸⁶ So the curtains are gracefully looped back; she orders fresh flowers to be placed on the chimney-piece; her friends and children dine and sup at her bed-side; while she, "just as in full health, calm and resigned, talked with the same good-sense and the same spirit; putting on, now and then, an air of serenity approaching even to sprightliness."⁸⁷

Orthodox people,—I mean people of all sorts of orthodoxies (except mine) are fond of attributing bad exits to the heterodox,—nay, even of throwing their death-beds at the heads of one another. I wish they would be content with copying the smooth decency of departures like this, and let their animosities die as well.

CARLONE.⁸⁸

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EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Loreto, town in central Italy, on the Musone River near the Adriatic coast. This place is renowned for the Santa Casa (Holy House of the Virgin), an important pilgrimage site.

² John Keats, "Lines Written in the Highland's after a Visit to Burns's Country" (1818), l. 12.

³ Reference to the courting chair belonging to William Shakespeare (1564-1616) and Anne Hathaway, according to an account by the English engraver Samuel Ireland.

⁴ Unidentified quotation.

⁵ John Milton (1608-74), English poet, pamphleteer, and historian. Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1688) is often seen as one of the greatest epic poems in English Literature.

⁶ Milton lived in several different places throughout his life, including London, Cambridge, Paris, Florence, Rome.

⁷ Robert Burns (1759-96), British poet, remembered for his songs and lyrics in English and Scots and also for his amours and his overt rebellion against orthodox religion and morality. The reference is to his first home in Alloway.

⁸ Ayrshire, historic county, southwestern Scotland. The county is named after Ayr, its historic county town.

⁹ Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene* (1590), Canto III, Stanza 38, l. 2.

¹⁰ John Keats (1795-1821), one of the most representative poets of the English Romantic movement. In his works, Keats tried to merge a vivid imagery, the sensuous appeal and elements of Classicism.

¹¹ John Keats, "This Mortal Body of a Thousand Days" (1818), ll. 3-4.

¹² Robert Burns's house in Dumfries, Scotland. Here, the author lived the last three years of his life until his death in 1796. Over the years it has attracted many famous visitors including the poets Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats.

¹³ Presbyterian, form of church government which originated during the seventeenth-century Protestant Reformation. Plain in style and historically referred to as the "meeting house", it reflects its function of a place where people meet to worship.

¹⁴ House of William Collins (1721-59), pre-Romantic English poet, in Chichester.

¹⁵ Chichester Cathedral in the city of Chichester, Sussex, southern England.

¹⁶ Monument to the memory of William Collins in Chichester Cathedral by sculptor and designer John Flaxman (1755-1826).

¹⁷ David Garrick (1717-79), English actor, theatre manager and poet. The reference is to his country house in Hampton Court Road, Hampton.

¹⁸ Samuel Johnson (1709-84), English critic, biographer, essayist, poet, and lexicographer. He is considered as one of the greatest figures of eighteenth-century life and letters and one of the first Shakespearean critics and editors.

¹⁹ Thrale's House, belonging to the British politician and entrepreneur Henry Thrale (1724/1730?-81), located south of Tooting Bec Road in Streatham Park. Made famous by the writings of Samuel Johnson, himself a frequent visitor.

²⁰ Samuel Johnson, *The Lives of the Poets* (1779), also known as *Prefaces, Biographical and Critical, to the Works of the English Poets*.

²¹ Samuel Johnson's literary reputation was largely built upon his work as a moralist. William Mudford, *A Critical Enquiry Into the Moral Writings of Dr. Samuel Johnson* (1802) further consolidated this reputation.

²² William Shakespeare, *Othello*, V.ii.337. All references from Shakespeare are taken from the Arden Edition, third series.

²³ Samuel Johnson received a royal pension of 300 pounds a year in recognition of his literary achievements.

²⁴ *The False Alarm* (1770), political pamphlet by Samuel Johnson in which the author expresses his endorsement for the House of Commons' resolution not to readmit John Wilkes, previous member of Parliament found guilty of libel. The pamphlet aimed at ridiculing those who believed this case would lead to a constitutional crisis.

EDITORIAL NOTES

²⁵ *Taxation No Tyranny* (1775), Samuel Johnson's longest tract. The title reflects his stance against the American Continental Congress, which, in 1774, adopted resolutions opposing what they viewed as oppressive taxation by England, particularly given that the colonies lacked representation in Parliament. According to Johnson, the colonists were not denied representation but had rather decided to leave the country in which they had the right to vote. The author also observes that colonists are supposed to support their mother country.

²⁶ Reference to Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78), Swiss-born philosopher, writer, and political theorist, who was born in Geneva. His treatises and other literary works served as source of inspiration both for those fighting for the French Revolution and for the Romantic generation. Among his most significant works: *A Discourse on the Origins of Inequality* (*Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes*) (1755), *The New Eloise* (*Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse*) (1761), *The Social Contract* (*Du Contrat Social*) (1762), *Emile; or, On Education* (*Emile; ou, de l'éducation*) (1762), and *The Confessions* (*Les Confessions*) (1782-89).

²⁷ Unlike Samuel Johnson, Rousseau never received a royal pension. Louis and George were the French and English sovereigns at the time: Louis XIV (1638-1715, reigned 1643-1715) and George III (1738-1820, reigned 1760-1820).

²⁸ Les Charmettes, country house near Chambéry, southeastern France, was Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Madame de Warens's house.

²⁹ Louise-Éléanore de la Tour du Pil, baroness de Warens (1700-62), aristocrat who had a romantic liaison with Rousseau between 1728 and 1742.

³⁰ William Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, I.ii.292.

³¹ Savoy, historical region in southeastern France.

³² Victor Amadeus II (1666-1732), duke of Savoy (1675-1713). Thanks to his diplomatic skills, he managed to become the first king of Sardinia-Piedmont (1720-30) and king of Sicily (1713-20).

³³ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Confessions* (1782-89), bk. 7:374.

³⁴ John Castle, also known as Castles, *agent provocateur* and government spy, acquitted on a charge of treason in 1817.

³⁵ William J. Oliver (1774?-1827), police informer and *agent provocateur* after the Napoleonic Wars.

³⁶ George Edwards, supposed government spy and *agent provocateur*.

³⁷ Peninsula in Lake Biel, Bern, Switzerland.

³⁸ Madame de Franqueville, French noblewoman.

³⁹ Hermitage, house in Montmorency, Île-de-France. The years Rousseau spent here were his most productive ones from a literary point of view.

⁴⁰ *The New Eloise* (1761), novel by Rousseau.

⁴¹ Misspelling of *Jacques*.

⁴² Misspelling of *À*.

⁴³ Trans. "Place inhabited by Jean Jacques, | You remind me of his genius, | His loneliness, his pride, | And his misfortunes, and his madness: | To glory, to truth, | He dared to devote his life, | and was always persecuted | Or by himself, or by desire."

⁴⁴ French for "To glory, to truth!"

⁴⁵ Louis, gold coin circulating in France before the French Revolution (1789).

⁴⁶ *Anecdotes inédites, pour faire suite aux Mémoires de Mme d'Épinay, précédées de l'examen de ces mémoires* (1818) by Victor Donatien de Musset-Pathay. De Musset (1768-1832), French writer and bureaucrat.

⁴⁷ "timid and... timid character." : Both quotations are from Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Confessions* (1782-89).

⁴⁸ William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, I.vii.61.

⁴⁹ One of the characters in Rousseau's *Emile, or on Education* (1762).

⁵⁰ *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker* (1782) is the last and unfinished work by Rousseau. The book combines autobiographical anecdotes, descriptions of sights, and other insights regarding education and political philosophy.

⁵¹ Thérèse Levasseur, partner and then wife of Rousseau.

EDITORIAL NOTES

⁵² The five children of Rousseau and Thérèse were left to the Paris Foundling Hospital, an institution meant for the reception of abandoned or exposed children.

⁵³ William Shakespeare, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, III.i.314.

⁵⁴ Voltaire (1694-1778), French writer, famous for his writings against tyranny, bigotry and cruelty. His most important works include the fictitious *Philosophical Letters* (*Lettres philosophiques*) (1734) and the novel *Candide* (1759).

⁵⁵ According to Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, “Essai sur J. J. Rousseau”, *Oeuvres complètes de Jacques-Henri-Bernardin de Saint-Pierre* (1818), bk. 12:95, Rousseau defined Voltaire as “Philosophy’s Harlequin”.

⁵⁶ Louise d’Épinay (1726-83), prominent figure in eighteenth-century French literary circles. Despite her extensive literary production, she is renowned for her connection to some important French intellectuals of her age, including Denis Diderot.

⁵⁷ Louise d’Épinay, *Mémoires de Madame d’Epinay* (1876), 2:491.

⁵⁸ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile* (1762), bk. I.

⁵⁹ Fourth chapter of Rousseau’s *Emile*.

⁶⁰ The fourth chapter of *Emile* was condemned by the Sorbonne. The book was therefore banned in Paris and Geneva and was burned in public in 1762.

⁶¹ William Hogarth (1697-1764), one of the most prominent English artists of the eighteenth century, well-known for his satirical engravings and paintings.

⁶² William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, III.iv.103-04.

⁶³ Diogenes Laërtius, Greek philosopher of the third century BCE. It was said that he wandered with a lantern in his hands, and whenever he was asked the reason why, he replied that he was searching for a man that could live a happy and authentic life but could not find him anywhere.

⁶⁴ Julia (Julie) and Clara (Claire) are two characters in Rousseau’s *The New Eloise*. Sophie is a character in *Emile*.

⁶⁵ Possible reference to Sophie d’Houdetot (1730-1813), noblewoman with whom Rousseau had a passionate and platonic relationship.

⁶⁶ Jean François de Saint-Lambert (1716-1803), French poet, philosopher and military officer that Sophie d’Houdetot chose over Rousseau.

⁶⁷ Saint-Preux, central character in Rousseau’s *The New Eloise*.

⁶⁸ In Greek mythology, Pygmalion was the sculptor who fell in love with a female statue he himself had shaped.

⁶⁹ Galatea, in some versions of the Pygmalion story, is the name of Pygmalion’s ivory statue.

⁷⁰ Leigh Hunt, *The Indicator*, No. XXXI (1820), 241-42.

⁷¹ Mispunctuation: comma erroneously placed instead of full stop.

⁷² Jean-Baptiste Rousseau (1671-1741), French dramatist and poet, gained great popularity within the Parisian society of his age.

⁷³ Mistress Quickly is a character who appears in four Shakespeare’s plays: *I Henry IV*, *II Henry IV*, *Henry V* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

⁷⁴ William Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, II.ii.120-23.

⁷⁵ Anna Seward (1742-1809), English poet, literary critic, and writer, had connections with many intellectuals of her age, including Samuel Johnson, Erasmus Darwin, George Romney, Helen Maria Williams, Hester Lynch Piozzi, Robert Southey and Walter Scott. Her poems “Elegy on Captain Cook” (1780) and “Monody on Major André” (1781) made her well-known both in Europe and America.

⁷⁶ Leigh Hunt, *The Indicator*, No. XXXII (1820), 249. Hunt is reporting the Latin saying “Pereant qui ante nos nostra dixerunt”, often attributed to the Roman grammarian Aelius Donatus (4th century CE).

⁷⁷ *The Indicator*, periodical launched by Leigh Hunt on 13 October 1819. It would be published every Wednesday morning in the Strand by Joseph Appleyard (who worked for *The Examiner*). Each issue contained 8 pages dealing with different topics and mainly occupied by Hunt’s writing. Keats, Shelley, and Lamb partly contributed to *The Indicator*, until Hunt gave it up on 21 March 1821, after the publication of the seventy-sixth issue.

EDITORIAL NOTES

⁷⁸ William Shakespeare, *Othello*, V.ii.342.

⁷⁹ William Shakespeare, *King Henry V*, IV.i.4.

⁸⁰ Robert Lovelace, character in Samuel Richardson's novel *Clarissa* (1747-48).

⁸¹ Mr. Blifil, character in Henry Fielding's novel *Tom Jones* (1749).

⁸² Squire Thornhill, character in Oliver Goldsmith's novel *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766).

⁸³ Count Fathom, character in Tobias Smollett's novel *The Adventures of Ferdinand, Count Fathom* (1753).

⁸⁴ Joseph Addison (1672-1719), English essayist, poet, and dramatist, was one of the main contributors to the periodicals *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* along with Richard Steele. His writing skills granted him important roles in the Whig government.

⁸⁵ These are supposedly Addison's dying words to his stepson, Lord Warwick. See Edward Young, *Conjectures on Original Composition*, (1759), 102.

⁸⁶ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The New Eloise*, (1761), vol. 2.

⁸⁷ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The New Eloise*, (1761), vol. 2.

⁸⁸ Leigh Hunt and Charles Brown wanted "Les Charmettes" to be published under the pseudonym "Carluccio", but the signature in the final version was "Caralone".