From the Author.

With kind remembrances.

Nov. 16th, 1893.
THE LETTERS OF
A PORTUGUESE NUN
THE LETTERS OF A
PORTUGUESE NUN
(MARIANNA ALCOFORADO)
TRANSLATED BY
EDGAR PRESTAGE
BALLIOL COLLEGE
OXFORD

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TO THE AUTHOR OF

‘PORTUGAL CONTEMPORANEO’

J. P. DE OLIVEIRA MARTINS

I DEDICATE

THIS BOOK
ERRATA

Page 33, line 12, read Guilleragues for Guilleraque.

,, 37,,, 1 (heading), read Meu for Men.

,, 47, ,, 16, read appearances for proofs.

,, 49, ,, 6, read this beginning for this, beginning.

,, 54, ,, 20, omit ought to.

,, 57, ,, 18, read paufed for pafted.

,, 62, ,, 8, insert one after some.

,, 63, ,, 9, read at times I do not dare to think I could be jealous and yet not displease you.

,, 69, ,, 20, read your departure based on such cruel pretexsts.

,, 70, ,, 6, read I could never have been on my guard against all my weaknesses.

,, 71, ,, 16, read Can it be that you did not care to enjoy them?

,, 74, ,, 11, read Methinks, even, I am not at all content.

,, 77, ,, 3, read Would it not be very cruel indeed of you to make.

,, 82, ,, 3, read What! is all my desire then to be in vain?

,, 93, ,, 12, read the attachment you might have had for another woman could have caufed me.

,, 96, ,, 19, read never forgets what first awakened it to feelings.

,, 100, ,, 4, read who does not make them render an exact.

,, 102, ,, 5, read what confusion, what a false step, what depths.
MY attempt at an English rendering of the Letters is, I think, the first since the days of Bowles' 'Letters from a Portuguese Nun to an Officer in the French Army,' London, 1808. But during the two centuries which have elapsed since their

1 An American translation was published in 1890. Vide Bibliography.
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Preface

first publication quite a small literature has grown up around them, and they have been turned into several European tongues, the French editions alone amounting to more than thirty. If the numerous so-called 'Replies' and 'Imitations' were added to this reckoning the number would be nearly doubled, and this without taking into account the critiques and studies which have appeared about them. I do not propose here to enter into a comparison of the Letters with those of Heloïse, as many writers have done, but shall content myself with referring the curious to the excellent...
work of Senhor Cordeiro, 'Soror Marianna. A Freira Portugueza,' Lisbon, 1888; 2nd edition, 1891. It is from him that I have learnt nearly all that I know about Marianna, and in my Introduction I have made a liberal use of his book, as well as of M. Assé's preface to the edition of the 'Lettres Portugaises avec les Réponses,' Paris, 1889, upon which I have based my rendering.

If my translation should arouse any interest in things Portuguese, and lead others to read and make versions of such masterpieces of the world's literature as the 'Frei Luiz de Sousa' and the 'Folhas
Cahidas' of Garrett, or the poems of João de Deus, I should be more than rewarded for any trouble the present work may have cost me. But who can hope to succeed where Burton has apparently failed? The English public—and the critics too—will probably continue to believe that there is nothing worth reading in Portuguese literature with the exception of the Lusiads. Here too there is perhaps a lesson to be learnt from the Germans, especially from such as Storck, Reinhardstoettner, and Michaëlis de Vasconcellos.

I should like to thank Mr. York Powell of Christ Church
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for the kind help which he has given me in the difficult task of translation. My aim has been throughout to keep as close to the French text as possible—seeing that the original Portuguese is lost,—aided by the masterly re-translation of Senhor Cordeiro. L'Estrange's version—'Five Love Letters from a Nun to a Cavalier,' London, 1678,—is somewhat free at times, but it has aided me in the Third Letter. I have followed Cordeiro in his re-arrangement of the order of the Letters, the Second and Fourth changing places.

The historical facts which concern the hero and heroine
of these Letters I have given briefly in the Introduction, and a Bibliography and Appendix will be found at the end of the volume. The text of the first French edition of 1669 has been copied in Paris purposely for this work, and will, it is hoped, add much to its interest and value.

And so I deliver poor Marianna’s passionate Epistles to the consideration of those who can appreciate them and feel for her.

And weeping then she made her moan,
‘The night comes on that knows not morn,
When I shall cease to be all alone,
To live forgotten and love forlorn.’

EDGAR PRESTAGE.

BOWDON, 1892.
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INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION

Fuyd los deleytes, pues non da deleite
Perfecto, nin bueno, nin tan poco sano;
A todos engañá su falsso afeyte,
Sin sentir mata el su gozo vano.
A todos arriedran del bien soberano,
Jamás no aplazen que no den tristeza,
Aforjan cadenas del sotil Volcano,
Con que encarcelan a toda nobleza.

Cancioneiro de Resende.

N 1663,' says Sainte-Beuve, 'it became the policy of Louis XIV. to help Portugal against Spain, but the succour which he gave was indirect; subsidies were secretly furnished, the levying of troops was favoured, and a crowd of volunteers hastened there. Between this small army, commanded by Schomberg, and the feeble
Spanish troops which disputed the soil with it, there were each summer many marches and counter-marches with but few results, many skirmishes and small fights, and among the latter, perhaps, one victory. Who troubles himself about it now? The curious reader, however, who only looks to his own pleasure, cannot help saying that all this was good, since the "Letters of the Portuguese Nun" grew from it.'

As Sainte-Beuve indicates, the subject of the 'Letters' forms one of the episodes of the war between Spain and Portugal which followed as a consequence of the Restoration of 1640 and the achievement of the latter's independence under the House of Braganza. This war, which lasted for twenty-eight years, until the final peace in 1668, was intermittent, and carried on only at long intervals owing to the state of the two contending parties. Spain had now entered on the period of her decline, and Portugal was in a hardly better
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condition after her sixty years' captivity and the exhaustion of her forces which had taken place during the reign of Philip IV. Owing, however, to the aid of France, she had been enabled to hold her own up to 1659; but the news of the Peace of the Pyrenees seemed at first to take from her all hope of preserving her hardly won autonomy. Yet in spite of this, Mazarin, while signing the clause which bound France to abandon the Portuguese cause, determined, with his usual duplicity, that this should not prevent him from secretly aiding an ally whom he had found so useful in the past as a thorn in the side of Spain. Hardly, indeed, had the treaty been made than he began to occupy himself in recruiting for the Portuguese service a number of French officers whom the peace had left without employment. Among these the chief was Schomberg, who went to Lisbon in 1660 as commander-in-chief and to reorganise the Portuguese army. It was not, however,
until 1663 that the hero of the Letters, Noel Bouton, afterwards Marquis of Chamilly and St. Leger, arrived in the country, which he was to leave four years later with the betrayal of a poor nun as his title to fame. For at the time when Schomberg was already there, we see Chamilly (as he is generally called) assisting at the marriage of his brother to Catherine le Comte de Nonant, referred to in the text (Letter II.).

Three years afterwards, finding himself without military employment in France, he came to Portugal, attracted probably, like so many others, by the reputation of the great captain, with whom he had doubtless established friendly relations during the campaign in Flanders (1656-8).

Our hero, if hero he may be called, was the eleventh son of Nicholas Bouton, Lord of Chamilly, Charangeroux, and, later on, St. Leger, properties of modest size in Burgundy. His family was good, but its attachment to the Princes of
Condé during the Fronde had compromised its position and damaged its fortunes. Noel, the future marquis, was born in 1636, and as soon as his age allowed he entered on a military career. He served through the Flanders campaign under Turenne, and in 1658 was made captain, under the name of the Count of Chamilly, in Mazarin’s regiment of cavalry. Reaching Portugal at the end of 1663, or the commencement of 1664, he was given the same rank in a regiment commanded by a French officer of note, Briquemault. Although his name is not mentioned in any of the contemporary notices of the war, we know that he was present at the Siege of Valença de Alcantara (June 1664), at the battle of Castello Rodrigo (in the same month and year), at that of Montes Claros (June 1665), and at the principal sieges which occupied the next two years. In 1665, he was promoted to the rank of colonel, and two years later a diploma of Louis XIV., issued,
perhaps, at the instance of his brother, the Governor of Dijon, gave Chamilly a similar post in the French army, with the evident intention of enabling him to leave the Portuguese service when he liked, even though the war with Spain should not be ended. This, taken together with the fact that in the document the space for the month is left blank, is extremely significant, and, as will be seen later on, certainly connects itself with the episode of the 'Letters,' even if it does not enter into their actual history.\(^1\) The diploma of Louis XIV., it may be added, is dated 1667, and the sudden departure of Chamilly took place at the end of that year, so that it seems probable that the French captain, fearing future annoyance or even danger to himself from his liaison, had determined to secure a safe retreat.

But let us look for a moment at the authoress of the famous 'Portuguese Letters.'

\(^1\) Cordeiro, *op. cit.*, p. 131, 1st ed.
Marianna Alcoforado was born of a good family in the city of Beja and province of Alemtejo in the year 1640. Her father appears to us in the first years of the Restoration as a man in an influential position, well related, and discharging important commissions both administrative and political. He possessed a large agricultural property, which he administered with attention and even zeal, and was a Cavalier of the Order of Christ, besides being intimate with some of the principal men of the time. He had six children, of whom Marianna, according to Cordeiro, was the second. Life in Beja at that time seems to have been sufficiently insecure, owing to the fact that the province of which it was one of the chief cities formed the theatre of the war, and Beja itself was the chief garrison town. Tumults were constantly arising from quarrels between the various parts of the heterogeneous mass which then composed the Portuguese army, and hence increased care would
be necessary on the part of Francisco Alcoforado in order that the education of his daughters might be conducted in such a manner as their position demanded. Hence, too, probably, the reason why Marianna and her sister Catherine entered the Convent of the Conception at an earlier age than was usual. Their father, occupied with administrative and military work on the frontier, would be unable to give them the oversight and attention which quieter times would have allowed.

The Convent of the Conception at Beja was founded in 1467 by the parents of King Emanuel the Fortunate, and, favoured successively by royal and private devotion, it had become one of the most important and wealthy institutions of its kind in Portugal. It was situated at the extreme south of the city, near to the ancient walls, and looked on to the gates still called 'of Mertola,' because they are on the side of the city towards Mertola, distant fifty-four kilometres to
the south-west on the right bank of the Guadiana. There is still to be seen the remains of the balcony or verandah from which Marianna first caught sight of Chamilly, probably during some military evolutions (cf. Letter II), and from it a good view may be obtained over the plains of Alemtejo as they stretch away to the south. Curiously enough, the tradition of Marianna and her fatal love has been perpetuated in the convent, in spite of the attempts, natural enough, on the part of monastic chroniclers and such like to hide all traces of it.

In this as in most other convents there were two kinds of cells—the dormitories, divided into cubicles, and rooms forming independent abodes dispersed throughout the edifice. These latter the nuns of the seventeenth century called their 'houses,'—as suas casas,—and it was one of these which Marianna possessed. The former were in accordance with the Constitutions, while the latter, though strictly forbidden, nevertheless existed.
These separate abodes were, it is true, often necessitated by the growth of the convent population, and generally appertained to nuns of a better position, while the dormitories served for those who were either poorer or of an inferior rank. Many of these casas, too, were built by private individuals who had some connection or other with the particular convent, and there are indications that the father of Marianna had caused some to be erected in that of the Conception.¹

From the year 1665 to 1667, then, Beja was, as we have said, the centre of the various military movements in which Chamilly took part under the leadership of Schomberg, and there is no doubt that he spent much of his time there. Marianna was twenty-five years old. She had been intrusted to the Cloister when a child,² as she herself tells us, and her

¹ Cf. Cordeiro, op. cit., pp. 147-8 and 300, 1st ed.
² This was partly owing to the ideas of the time, and partly for reasons already mentioned, and also because her father wished to build up an estate, to be entailed on heirs-male.
renunciation of the world must have been little more than a form. She had probably made her 'profession' too at the age of sixteen, that provided for by the Constitutions, if not at an earlier date.

The dull routine of her life was suddenly broken in upon by the sight of a man surrounded with all the prestige of military glory—one who was the first to awaken in her a consciousness of her own beauty—the first to tell her that he loved her, one, moreover, who was ready to throw all his greatness, his present and his future, at her feet.

'I was young; I was trustful. I had been shut up in this convent since my childhood. I had only seen people whom I did not care for. I had never heard the praises which you constantly gave me. Methought I owed you the charms and the beauty which you found in me, and which you were the first to make me perceive. I heard you well talked of; every one spoke in your favour. You did all that was necessary to awaken
love in me." Such is her simple confession, and, comments Cordeiro, nothing more natural.

Their first meeting was probably due to the relations which Chamilly, an officer of rank, had entered into with the Alcoforados, one of the chief families in Beja. There are indications, indeed, that Chamilly and Marianna's eldest brother had met, doubtless in the field, for the latter also followed the profession of arms; and this brother, named Balthazar Vaz Alcoforado, is probably the same as the 'brother' referred to in the Letters as the lovers' go-between. It was for his benefit that Marianna's father had striven for years to build up an estate which was to be entailed on his offspring. But in the year 1669, just at the very time of the great sensation caused by the publication of the Letters in Paris, Balthazar abandoned his military career and all his brilliant prospects in the world to enter the priesthood. It is im-

1 Letter v.
possible not to hazard a guess, although we know nothing for certain on the point, that his motive for so doing was connected in some way with the almost tragic ending of the *liaison* between his sister and the French captain. But to return:—The customs of the time, curiously enough, allowed a greater relative liberty to nuns as regards the visits which might be paid them than to married women, or, as the Bishop of Gram Pará puts it, 'the liberty of the grating was wide in those miserable times.'

We cannot of course be expected to give an account of the progress of this *liaison*, nor do we wish to indulge in romantic hypotheses.

Chamilly was thirty at the time when he first saw Marianna. Brought up as

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1 Asse, *op. cit.*, Preface, p. vi. For an account of the somewhat relaxed character of convent discipline at the time *vide* Cordeiro, pp. 156-164, 1st ed.

2 'Muita era a liberdade das grades naquelle miseravel tempo.'
had been to war as a trade, a man of small intelligence and few scruples, the intrigue would be a pleasant diversion, a means *pour passer le temps* which he would otherwise have found dull enough in a Portuguese provincial town after the Paris of 'Le Grand Monarque.' The seduction and desertion of a poor nun must have seemed all so perfectly natural to one brought up in contact with the loose morality of camp life and in the France of Louis XIV.

In June 1667 the authorities of Beja received an answer from the new King, Don Pedro, to the complaint which they had made of 'the oppression which the French cavalry continued to exercise on this people.' Already, on account of similar complaints, Schomberg had been ordered to move his cavalry from the town and district, but he had disobeyed these orders for strategic reasons. Now, we have already seen that it was between

1 Cordeiro, *op. cit.*, pp. 326-7, 1st ed.
1665 and 1667 that Chamilly carried on his intrigue with Marianna, and it is just in 1667 that the scandal must have attained greater proportions, coinciding with and ending, not in the withdrawal of the French cavalry, but in the sudden retirement of Chamilly to France. But what, it may be asked, was the reason for the King’s order, and what could those ‘oppressions’ have been in an important city where presumably there was a regular and well-appointed police administration? Has it not a relation, asks Cordeiro, with the incident in the ‘Letters,’ which would both afflict and irritate the influential family of the nun and the good burgesses of Beja? The special situation of the French captain, on the other hand—his interest in not aggravating the scandal, and the peril for the religious herself in the adoption of violent means, would all naturally counsel the withdrawal of Chamilly.¹

The danger of remaining longer in

¹ Cordeiro, op. cit., pp. 139-40, 1st. ed.
Beja was not in the nature of those which the French colonel could confront with his recognised courage. If he were surprised in the convent, if he were denounced as its violator and as the seducer of a nun, the daughter of a well-known family, and one, too, which was on excellent terms with the new sovereign, neither his own position nor the protection of Schomberg would avail him, since both the one and the other began to lose their importance with the approach of peace.¹

However this may be, certain it is that Chamilly's own excuses for departure, referred to in the 'Letters,' were merely empty pretexts, and a reference to the history of the time will show this. If Louis XIV. needed his presence so much for the invasion of Franche Comté, why not, it may be asked, for the important campaign in Flanders in 1667?

He seems to have left Portugal, too, a

¹ Cordeiro, op. cit., p. 182, 1st ed.
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little clandestinely, for no notice is to be met with, as in the case of other French officers, of his asking and obtaining leave from the Portuguese Government, and he probably did not even embark in Lisbon. Already, in the beginning of February 1668, we find him with Louis XIV. in Dijon, so that he must have quitted Beja and the seat of war quite at the end of the preceding year.

It is now that the 'Letters' enter into the history of the lives of Marianna and Noel Bouton de Chamilly. As is well known, they were all written after the latter's retirement from Portugal, and probably between the December of 1667 and the June of 1668, and they express better than any remarks which we could make the stages of faith, doubt, and despair through which poor Marianna passed. As a piece of unconscious, though self-made, psychological analysis they are unsurpassed; as a product of the Peninsular heart they are unrivalled. If they are not, as Theophilo Braga calls
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them, the only beautiful work produced by his countrymen in the seventeenth century, they are, at any rate, by far the most beautiful. To compare them, as regards literary form, with those of Heloïse would be manifestly unfair, the situation of the two women was so different.¹ Think of the Abbess of the Paraclete, mistress of all the learning of the time, and surrounded by things to console her, or at least to divert her attention, and then regard poor Marianna, persecuted by her family, and liable to the tender mercies of the Inquisition, with none of the comforts, none of the consolations of the former. But if the 'Letters' of Heloïse are superior to those of Marianna from the point of view of correctness of expression and style, they are inferior in all else. The nun's are far more natural, and

¹ For a good comparison of the Letters of Marianna and Heloïse see an article entitled 'La Eloísa Portuguesa' in the June number of the review España Moderna, 1889, written by Emilio Pardo Bazán.
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therefore more beautiful, and the very confusion of feelings and ideas which we should expect from one in her position rather adds to their charm. Finally, the moral character of Heloïse as displayed in her epistles cannot certainly be placed beside that of the Portuguese nun with any advantage.

Henceforth, we only meet with the name of Marianna at intervals—once in 1668, again in 1676 and 1709, and lastly in an obituary notice in 1723.

She, at any rate, is not an example of the well-known saying of Cervantes—'the Portuguese die of love.' It is true that some words at the end of the Fifth Letter seem to suggest suicide, but there is, on the other hand, throughout the whole of these _ultima verba_ an expression of energy and of her determination to tread under foot, if she cannot extinguish, the flames of her passion. Marianna came of a vigorous race, and, in spite of the great infirmities of which her obituary speaks, she lived, as we...
shall see, to the age of fourscore years and three.

She was made Portress, as mentioned in the Letters, at the beginning of 1668, no doubt to distract her mind by giving her some definite occupation and a sense of responsibility. It is, however, significant, as Cordeiro remarks, that we do not find the name of Marianna, a daughter of one of the principal and most influential families in Beja, filling any more elevated post, whereas her younger sister Peregrina Maria appears in the conventual register as both Amanuensis and Abbess. This sister, before professing in the same convent in 1676, made her will, 'being more than twelve years of age,' and there she spoke of the many obligations which she owed Marianna for having brought her up 'from the age of three years.'\(^1\) Her entering the Conception at such an early age is explained by the fact of the death of her mother, which took place at the end

\(^{1}\) Cordeiro, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 299, 1st ed.
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of 1663 or the beginning of 1664. Again, in 1709, Marianna is mentioned as beaten by only ten votes in an election for the office of Abbess by a certain nun of the name of Joanna de Bulhão, of whom nothing is known.

The next time we hear of her is in 1723, the date of her death. The obituary notice speaks for itself and for her life, since the episode which the 'Letters' contain, and needs no comment. 'On the 28th day of the month of July, in the year 1723, died, in this Royal Convent of Our Lady of the Conception, Mother D. Marianna Alcanforada, at the age of eighty-seven years, all of which she spent in the service of God. She was always very regular in the choir and at the confraternities, and withal fulfilled her (other) obligations. She was very

1 This syntactical extension of the sex to the patronymic was general in the seventeenth century. Vide Cordeiro, op. cit., p. 91, 1st ed.
2 This should be 83. Cf. the extract from the Baptismal Register in Cordeiro, p. 285, 1st ed.
exemplary, and none had fault to find with her, for she was very kind to all. For thirty years she did rigid penance and suffered great infirmities with much conformity, desiring to have more to suffer. When she knew that her last hour was come, she asked for all the sacraments, which she received in a state of perfect consciousness, giving many thanks to God for having received them. Thus she ended her life with all the signs of predestination, speaking up to the last hour, in proof of which I, D. Ania Sophia Baptsa de Almeida, Amanuensis of the Convent, wrote this, which I signed on the same day, month and year as above.¹

D. ANIA SOPHIA BAP^TA DE ALM^DA, Amanuensis.'

No such obscurity as that which hangs over the life of Marianna hides the

¹ This document was found and transcribed by Cordeiro on pp. 328-9 of his oft-referred-to work, 1st ed.
doings of Chamilly after his return to France. Acts like the famous defence of Grave in 1674 against the Prince of Orange, and that of Oudenarde two years later, marked him out for future distinction. But if he knew how to defend towns he no less could attack and take them. He distinguished himself greatly at the sieges of Gand, Condé, Yprés and Heidelberg, and in 1703 received the recompense of his great services, being made a Marshal of France.

M. Asse tells several anecdotes about him, which seem to show that he was a generous man as well as a brave soldier.¹ United in 1671 by a mariage de convenance to a lady who, according to S. Simon, was far from being gifted with personal beauty, he was always a most exemplary husband. S. Simon, who knew him well, also tells us that Chamilly was 'the best man in the world, the bravest, and the most honourable.' He says, too, that no one after seeing him


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or hearing him speak, could understand how he had inspired such an unmeasured love as that revealed in the famous 'Letters.'

How, then, are we to reconcile the Chamilly of the 'Letters' with the man of whom his contemporaries and friends speak so highly? The publication of the Epistles of Marianna was doubtless due to vanity, a fault which we may certainly credit Chamilly with possessing. It was, too, the custom in seventeenth-century France to hand round copies of letters, either received or written, for the admiration of friends, and thus, what now appears to us a brutal and cynical want of confidence, was then the most natural thing in the world.² It is not, however, so easy, even if it is possible, to excuse the conduct of the French captain in the betrayal and desertion of poor Marianna. Posterity, as M. Asse says, especially the

¹ Memoires, vol. iii. pp. 372-3; Paris, 1873.
² Observation of Senhor Cordeiro, op. cit., p. 6, 1st ed.
feminine portion, has condemned him, and there seems to be no reason why we should seek to reverse the verdict.

It was in 1669 that the first edition of what we know as the 'Portuguese Letters' was published by Claude Barbin, the well-known Parisian bookseller. The translation seems to have been made towards the middle of the year preceding, and shortly after the return of Chamilly to France. The Letters were evidently shown by their possessor as one of those trophies, or at least souvenirs, which persons are accustomed to bring back with them from a foreign country. The incognito, however, was complete, and neither the name of their recipient nor that of their translator was inscribed on this editio princeps. That of Marianna, indeed, the authoress, was not known until early in this present century, when in 1810 Boissonade discovered her name written in a copy of

1 Observation of M. Asse.
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The edition of 1669 by a contemporary hand. The veracity of this note has since been placed beyond doubt by the recent researches of Senhor Cordeiro, who has shown the persistence of a tradition in Beja connecting the French captain and the Portuguese nun.

The success of the first edition was rapid and complete. A second by Barbin, and two in foreign countries, one in Amsterdam, the other in Cologne, all in the same year, attest this. The success, indeed, took such proportions, that from the mutual rivalry of authors and publishers there sprung up a new kind of literature, that of 'les Portugaises.' The Five Letters of the nun had followers like most successful romances, and the title of 'Portuguese Letters' became a generic name applying not only to the imitations which amplified subsequent editions, but also to every kind of correspondence where passion was shown toute nue.¹


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'Brancas,' says Mme. de Sévigné, 'has written me a letter so excessively tender as to make up for all his past neglect. He speaks to me from his heart in every line; if I were to reply to him in the same tone, ce seroit une Portugaise.'

In the same year, 1669, Barbin issued a 'second part' of the Portuguese Letters, which was counterfeited shortly afterwards at Cologne, as the real ones had been. This was written, we are told in the preface, by a femme du monde, and its publication was suggested by the favour with which the letters of the nun had been received.

The publisher counted, as he said, on the difference of style which distinguished these fresh letters from the original ones, to assure a success as great as the first five had obtained.

After the second part came the so-called 'Replies,' all in the same year,

1 Letter to Mme. de Grignan in vol. ii., page 284, of the edition of Paris 1862.
and their publisher tells us in the preface that 'he is assured that the gentleman who wrote them has returned to Portugal.' Shortly afterwards appeared the 'New Replies,' but this time they were given for what they were, 'a jeu d'esprit for which the example of Aulus Salinus writing replies to the Heroides of Ovid, and, above all, the beauty of the first Portuguese Letters, should serve as an excuse.'

The motive, then, for the production of the second part of the 'Portuguese Letters' as for that of the 'New Replies' is satisfactorily explained, but how about the 'Replies' themselves? Can we not account for them by supposing that it was felt necessary on the part of the friends of Chamilly to attenuate the sympathy expressed on all sides for the unfortunate nun, and the censure which must naturally have followed such a base betrayal? Hence, proceeds Senhor Cordeiro, the author of this suggestion,

1 Asse, op. cit., Preface, p. xv.
the publication of these Replies, whose capital idea is to show us the seducer of Marianna under a perfectly different aspect and character from that which readers of the Letters would naturally attribute to him. However this may be, it was not long before the name of their hero came to be printed in editions of the Letters, though, curiously enough, it was first divulged in an edition printed abroad—in Cologne—in 1669, a copy of which is to be found in the British Museum, marked 1085 b. 5 (2), containing the following:—

' The name of him to whom they (the Letters) were written is the Chevalier de Chamilly, and the name of him who made the translation is Cuilleraque.'

More strange still, the French editions of the Letters preserved a discreet

1 Director for a time of the Gazette de France, and a friend of Mme. de Sévigné and Racine. Boileau described him as

'Esprit né pour la cour et maître en l'art de plaire
Guilleragues qui sais et parler et se taire.'
sence as to the name of the recipient with the exception of the 1671 edition of the Replies, until the year 1690, when a similar notice to that above referred to as being in the Cologne edition was made public; so that even in Chamilly's lifetime his name was appended to editions of the Letters as their recipient, and as far as we know he never denied the authenticity of the ascription.

The question as to whether the Letters were originally written in French, or whether they are a translation, hardly needs discussion here, for the principal critics, both French and Portuguese—Dorat, Malherbe, Filinto Elysio and Sousa Botelho—have unanimously decided from the text itself that they are a translation, and a bad one. The last-named says:—'A Portuguese, or indeed any one knowing that language, cannot doubt but that the Five Letters of the Nun have been translated almost literally from a Portuguese original. The con-
struction of many of the phrases is such that, if re-translated word for word, they are found to be entirely in harmony with the genius and character of that language. ¹

But it is just this baldness for which we should all be truly thankful, because we are thus enabled to listen to what Marianna said, and hear how she said it. Had the translation been what the seventeenth century would have called a good one, we should have known M. Guilleraque well enough, it is true, but only seen the nun 'darkly as through a glass.'

As to the present version, the author can only add to what he has already said in the Preface, by confessing that he feels its inadequacy as much as any of his critics will doubtless do. At the same time, however, if its result be to excite competition, and call forth a better one, his labour will not, he thinks, have been in vain.

¹ Quoted by Cordeiro, op. cit., p. 21, 1st ed.
She only said, 'My life is dreary,
He cometh not,' she said;
She said, 'I am aweary, aweary,
I would that I were dead!'

Mariana.—Tennyson.
FIRST LETTER

Men amigo verdadeiro, quem me vos levou tão longe?
   . . . Como vós vos fostes, tudo se tornou tristeza;
   nem parece ainda, senão que estava esperitando já
   que vos fosses.

BERNARDIM RIBEIRO, Saudades, cap. i.

O but think, my love, how much thou wert wanting in fore-
fight. Ah! unfortunate, thou wert betrayed, and thou
didst betray me with illusive hopes. A passion on which thou
didst rest so many prospects of pleasure now only causes thee a deadly despair,
which is like nothing else but the

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cruelty of the absence which occasions it. What! must this absence, to which my sorrow, all ingenious though it be, cannot give a sad enough name, deprive me for ever of a sight of those eyes in which I was wont to see so much love, which made me feel so full of joy, which took the place of all else to me, and which, in a word, were all that I desired? Mine eyes, alas! have lost the only light that gave them life, tears alone are left them, and ceaseless weeping is the sole employment I have given them since I learned that you were bent upon a separation so unbearable to me that it must soon bring about my death. But yet it seems to me that I cling in some sort to the sorrows of
which you are the sole cause. I confecrated my life to you from the moment when I first saw you, and I feel a certain pleasure in sacrificing it to you. I send you my sighs a thousand times each day, they seek you everywhere, and as sole recompense of so much disquietude they bring me back a warning too true, alas, of my unhappiness: an unhappiness which is cruel enough to prevent me from flattering myself with hope, and which is ever calling to me—Cease, cease to wear thyself out in vain, ill-fated Marianna, cease looking for a lover whom thou wilt never see again, who has crossed the seas to fly from thee, who is now in France in the midst of pleasures, who is not
for one moment on thy sorrows, who would not thank thee for these pangs for which he feels no gratitude. But no, I cannot make up my mind to think so ill of you, and I am too much concerned that you should right yourself. I do not even wish to think that you have forgotten me. Am I not unhappy enough already without torturing myself with false suspicions? And why should I try so hard to forget all the care you took to prove your love for me? I was so enchanted with it all that I should be ungrateful indeed were I not still to love you with the same transports that my passion lent me when I enjoyed the pledges of your love. How
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can the memory of moments so sweet have become so bitter? And, contrary to their nature, must they serve only to tyrannise over my heart? Alas, poor heart! your last letter brought it into a strange state; it endured such strong pangs that it seemed to be trying to tear itself from me to go and seek for you. I was so overcome by all these violent emotions that I was beside myself for more than three hours.¹ It was as though I refused to come back to a life which I feel bound to lose for you since I cannot preserve it for you. In spite of myself, however, I became myself again; I flattered myself with

¹ One of those ecstasies so common in conventual annals is here meant.
the feeling that I was dying of love, and besides, I was well pleased at the thought of being no longer obliged to see my heart torn by grief at your absence. Ever since those first symptoms I have suffered much from ill-health, but can I ever be well again until I see you? And yet I am bearing it without a murmur since it comes from you. What! is this the reward you give me for loving you so tenderly? But it matters not; I am resolved to adore you all my life and to care for no one else, and I tell you that you too will do well to love no other. Could you ever content yourself with a love colder than mine? You will perhaps find more beauty elsewhere (yet you
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told me once that I was very beautiful, but you will never find so much love: and all the rest is nothing. Do not fill any more of your letters with trifles: and do not write and tell me again to remember you. I cannot forget you, and as little do I forget the hope you gave me that you would come and spend some time with me. Alas! why are you not willing to pass your whole life at my side? Could I leave this unhappy cloister I should not await in Portugal the fulfilment of your promises. I should go fearlessly over the whole world seeking you, following you, and loving you. I dare not flatter myself that this can be. I do not care to feed a hope.
THE LETTERS OF A

FIRST LETTER

that would certainly give me some pleasure, while I wish to feel nothing but sorrow. Yet I confess the chance of writing to you which my brother gave me suddenly aroused in me a certain feeling of joy, and checked for a time the despair in which I live. I conjure you to tell me why you set yourself to bewitch me as you did, when you well knew that you would have to forsake me. Why were you so bent on making me unhappy? Why did you not leave me at peace in my cloister? Had I done you any wrong? But I ask your pardon. I am not accusing you. I am not in a state to think on vengeance, and I only blame the harshness of my fate. It seems to me that in
separating us it has done us all the harm that we could fear from it. It will not succeed in separating our hearts,—for love, more powerful than it, has united them for ever. If you take any interest in my lot write to me often. I well deserve your taking some pains to let me know the state of your heart and fortune. Above all, come and see me. Good-bye. I cannot make up my mind to part from this letter. It will fall into your hands: would I might have the same happiness! Ah, how foolish I am! I know so well that this is impossible. Good-bye. I can no more. Good-bye. Love me always and make me suffer still more.
SECOND LETTER

Das tristezas, não se pôde contar nada ordenadamente, porque desordenadamente acontecem elhas.

BERNARDIM RIBEIRO, Saudades, cap. i.

OUR lieutenant has just told me that a storm has forced you to put into port in the Algarve. I am afraid you have suffered much on the sea, and so much has this fear absorbed me that I have thought no more on all my troubles. Do you think, perchance,

1 No. 4 in all editions and translations except that of Cordeiro.
2 A province in the extreme south of Portugal.
that your lieutenant takes more interest in what happens to you than I do? If not, why then is he better informed of it? And then, why have you not written to me? I am unlucky indeed if you have found no time for writing since you left, and still more so if you could have written and would not. Your injustice and ingratitude are too great; but I should be in despair if they were to cause you any harm. I had rather you should remain unpunished than that they should avenge me. I withstand all the proofs which ought to persuade me that you do not love me at all, and I feel much more disposed to yield myself blindly to my passion than to the reasons you give me to
complain of your neglect. What mortification you would have spared me, if, in the days when I first saw you, your conduct had been as cold as it has seemed to me for some time now! But who would not have been deceived by such ardour as you then showed, and who would not have thought it sincere? How hard it is to make up one's mind to doubt for any time the sincerity of those one loves! I see clearly that the least excuse is good enough for you; and, without your troubling to make it to me, my love for you serves you so faithfully that I cannot consent to find you guilty, except for the sake of enjoying the infinite pleasure of declaring you guiltless myself. You overcame
me by your assiduities, you kindled my passions with your transports, your tendernesses fascinated me, your vows persuaded me, but it was the violence of my own love which led me away; and this, beginning at once so sweet and so happy, has left nothing behind it but tears, sighs, and a wretched death, without the possibility of my ministering any relief to myself. It is true that in loving you I enjoyed a pleasure unthought of before, but this very pleasure is now costing me a sorrow, which once I knew nothing of. All the emotions which you cause me run to extremes. If I had shown obstinacy in resisting your love, if I had given you any motive for anger or jealousy in order to draw you on
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SECOND LETTER

the more, if you had detected any artifice in my conduct, if, in a word, I had wished to oppose my reason to the natural inclination I felt for you, and which you soon made me perceive (though doubtless my efforts would have been uselefs), you might then have punished me severely and used your power over me with some show of justice. But you seemed to me worthy of my love before you had told me that you loved me: you gave evidence of a great passion for me. I was overjoyed at it, and I gave myself up to love you to distraction. You were not blinded as I was. Why then did you let me fall into the state in which I now am? What did you want with all my raptures,
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which must have been very troublesome to you? You well knew that you would not stay in Portugal for ever. Then why did you single me out to make me so unhappy? Doubtless you might, in this country, have found some woman more beautiful than I am, one with whom you could have enjoyed as much pleasure, since in this you only sought the groser kind, one who would have loved you faithfully as long as you were with her, whom time would have consoled for your absence, and whom you might have left without either treachery or cruelty. You act more like a tyrant bent on persecution than a lover whose only thought should be how to please. Alas! why do
you treat so harshly a heart which is yours? I can see very well that you let yourself be turned against me as easily as I let myself be convinced in your favour. Without needing to call on all my love, and without imagining that I had done anything out of the way, I should have resifted much stronger arguments than those can be which have moved you to leave me. They would have seemed to me very weak, and none could have been strong enough to tear me from your side. But you were ready to make use of the first pretexts that you found in order to get back to France. A vessel was failing. Why did you not let it fail? Your family had written to you. Surely
you know all the persecutions which I have suffered from mine? Your honour obliged you to abandon me. Did I take any care of mine? You were forced to go and serve your king. If all they say of him is true he has no need of your help, and would have excused you. I should have been only too happy if we could have passed our whole lives together, but since it was fated that a cruel absence should separate us, I think I ought to be glad indeed at the thought of not having been faithless, and I would not wish to have committed such a base act for anything in the world. What! you who have known the depths of my heart and affection, could you make up your mind to leave me for ever
and expose me to the dread of feeling that you only remember me in order to sacrifice me to some new passion?

I well know that I love you as one distracted. Withal I do not complain of all the violence of my heart's emotions; I am accustoming myself to its tortures, and I could not live without the pleasure which I find and enjoy in loving you in the midst of a thousand sorrows. But a disgust and hatred for everything torments me constantly; I feel my family, my friends, and this convent unbearable. All I am forced to see and everything I am obliged to do is hateful to me. I have grown so jealous of my passion that methinks all my actions and all my duties ought to have regard to you.
I have scruples in not employing every moment of my life for you. Ah! what should I do without the extremities of hate and love which fill my heart? Could I survive that which incessantly fills my thoughts, and lead a quiet cold life? Such a void, and such a lack of feeling, could never suit me. All have noticed how completely I am changed in my humour, my manners, and my person. My mother spoke to me about it, sharply at first, but afterwards more kindly. I know not what I said in reply. I think I confessed all to her. Even the strictest religious pity my condition, and are moved by a certain consideration and regard for me. Every

1 The Mother Superior of the convent.
one, in fact, is touched by my love: and you alone remain profoundly indifferent. You write me letters at once cold and full of repetitions; the paper is not half filled, and you make it quite clear that you are dying to finish them.

Dona Brites has been importuning me for several days to get me to leave my room, and thinking to divert me she took me for a walk upon the balcony, from which one sees the gates of Mertola.¹ I went with her, but at once cruel memories assailed me, and these made me weep for the rest of the day. She brought me back to my room, and there I

¹ Gates in the city of Beja: so called because they are on the side which looks toward Mertola, 54 kilometres distant. Both Beja and Mertola are in the province of the Alemtejo.
threw myself on the bed and thought a thousand times on the little hope I have of ever being well again. What is done to alleviate only embitters my grief, and I find in the very remedies themselves particular reasons for fresh sorrows. It was from that spot that I often saw you pass by with that air which charmed me so, and I was up on that balcony on the fatal day when I began to feel the first effects of my unhappy passion. Methought you were wishing to please me, although as yet you did not know me. I persuaded myself that you singled me out among all my companions. When you passed I thought you were pleased for me to see you better and admire your skill.
and grace whilst you caracoled your horse. A sudden fright came over me when you made it go over some difficult place. In a word, I interested myself secretly in every act of yours. I felt quite sure you were not indifferent to me, and I took as meant for me all that you did. You know too well what came of all this; and although I have nothing to hide, I ought not to write to you so much about it, lest I make you more guilty than you are already, if that be possible, and lest I have to reproach myself with so many useless efforts to oblige you to be faithful. This you will never be. Can I ever hope that my letters and reproaches will have an effect on your ingratitude that my love...
for you and your desertion of me have not had? I know my sad fate too well: your injustice leaves me not the slightest reason to doubt of it, and I am bound to fear the worst, since you have cast me off. Have you a charm only for me, and do not other eyes find you pleasing? I should not be annoyed, I think, were the feelings of others in some sort to justify mine, and I would wish all the women in France to find you agreeable, but none to love you, none please you. This idea is ridiculous and impossible I well know. I have already, however, found by experience that you are incapable of a great affection, and that you could easily forget me without any help, and without a
THE LETTERS OF A

SECOND LETTER

fresh love obliging you to it. I would, perhaps, wish you to have some reasonable pretext for your desertion of me. It is true that I should then be more unhappy, but you would not be so guilty. You mean to stay in France, I perceive, without great enjoyments, may be, but in the possession of full liberty. The fatigue of a long voyage, some punctilios of good manners, and the fear of not being able to correspond to my ardent passion, keep you there. Oh do not be afraid of me; I will be content with seeing you from time to time, and knowing only that we are in the same country; but perhaps I flatter myself, and may be you will be more touched by the rigour and hardness
of another woman than you have been by all my favours. Can it be that cruelty will inflame you more?

But before engaging yourself in any great passion, think well on the excess of my sorrows, on the uncertainty of my purposes, on the contradictions in my emotions, on the extravagance of my letters, on my trustfulness, my despair, my desires, and my jealousy. Oh! you are on the way to make yourself unhappy. I conjure you to profit by my example, that at least what I am suffering for you may not be useless to you. Five or six months ago you told me a secret which troubled me, and acknowledged, only too frankly, that you had once loved a lady in your own country. If it
is she who prevents you from returning here, do not scruple to tell me, that I may fret no more. I am borne up by some remnants of hope still, but I should be well pleased, if it can have no good result, to lose it at a blow, and myself with it. Send me her likeness and some of her letters, and write me all she says. Perchance I shall find reasons wherewith to console myself, or it may be to afflict myself still more. I cannot remain any longer in my present state, and any change whatsoever must be to my advantage. I should also like to have the portrait of your brother and of your sister-in-law.¹ All that concerns

¹ Hérard Bouton and Catherine Lecomte de Nonant.
you is very dear to me, and I am wholly given up to what touches you in any way: I have no inclination of my own left. Sometimes, methinks, I could even submit to wait upon her whom you love. Your bad treatment and disdain have broken me down so far that at times I do not dare to think of being jealous of you for fear of displeasing you, and I go so far as to think that I should be doing the greatest wrong in the world were I to upbraid you. I am often convinced that I ought not to let you see, so madly as I do, feelings which you disown. An officer has now been waiting long for this letter. I had resolved to write it in such a way that you might re-
receive it without annoyance, but as it is, it is too extravagant, and I must close it. Alas! I cannot bring myself to this. I seem to be speaking to you whilst I write, and you seem to be more present to me. The next letter shall neither be so long nor so troublesome; you may open and read it assured of this. It is true that I ought not to speak of a passion which displeases you, and I will not speak of it again. In a few days it will be a year since I gave myself up to you without reserve. Your love seemed to me very warm and sincere, and I should never have thought that my favours would so annoy you as to oblige

1 Both Cordeiro and the French texts read 'first,' which does not make sense.
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you to voyage five hundred leagues and expose yourself to the risk of shipwreck to escape from them. I have not deserved such treatment as this at any man's hands. You may remember my modesty, my shame, and my confusion, but you do not remember what would make you love me in spite of yourself. The officer who is to carry you this letter sends to me for the fourth time to say that he wishes to be gone. How pressing he is! doubtless he is leaving some unhappy lady in this country.

Good-bye. It costs me more to finish this letter than it cost you to quit me, perhaps for ever. Good-bye. I do not dare give you a
thousand names of love, nor abandon myself to all my feelings without restraint. I love you a thousand times more than my life, and a thousand times more than I think for. How dear you are to me, and yet how cruel! You do not write to me. I could not help saying this to you again. But I am beginning afresh, and the officer will be gone. What matters it? Let him go. 'Tis not so much for your sake that I write as for my own. I only seek some solace. Besides, the very length of my letter will frighten you, and you will not read it. What have I done to be so unhappy? And why have you poisoned my life? Why was I not born in some other country? Good-
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bye, and forgive me. I dare not now pray you to love me. See to what my fate has brought me. Good-bye!
THIRD LETTER

... Que este pequeno penhor de meus longos sufpiros vá ante os feus olhos. Muitas outras coufas desfejo, mas efta me seria afaz.'—BERNARDIM RIBEIRO, Saudades, cap. i.

WHAT will become of me, and what would you have me do? How far I am now from all that I had looked forward to!

I hoped that you would write me from every place you passed through, and that your letters would be very long ones,—that
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you would feed my love by the hope of seeing you again, that full trust in your fidelity would give me some sort of rest, and that I should then remain in a state bearable enough, and without the extremes of sorrow. I had even thought of some poor plans of endeavouring, as far as possible, my own cure, in case I could but once assure myself that you had entirely forgotten me. The distance which you are at, certain impulses of devotion, the fear of entirely destroying the remainder of my health by so many wakeful nights and so many cares, the improbability of your return, the coldness of your love, and your last good-byes, your unkind pretexts
for departure, and a thousand other reasons which are only too good and too useless, seemed to offer me a safe refuge if I needed one. Having indeed only myself to reckon with, I was never able to imagine myself so weak, nor foresee all that I now suffer. Ah! how pitiful it is for me,—I that am not able to share with you my sorrows, and must be all alone in my grief! This thought is killing me, and I almost die of horror when I think that you were never really affected by all the bliss that we shared. Yes, I understand now the untruth of all your transports. You betrayed me every time you told me that your supreme delight was to be alone with me. It is to my
importunities alone that I owe your warmth and passion. Deliberately and in cold blood you formed a design to kindle my love; you only regarded my passion as your triumph, and your heart was never deeply touched. Are you not very wretched? and have you so little delicacy that you made no other use of my love but this?

How then can it be that with such love I have not been able to make you entirely happy? It is solely for love of you that I regret the infinite pleasures you have lost. Why would you not enjoy them? Ah! if you only knew them you would doubtless find them much greater than that of having deceived me, and you would have experienced
how much happier it is, and how much more poignant it is to love violently than to be loved. I know not what I am, or what I do, or what I wish for. I am torn asunder by a thousand contrary emotions. Can a more deplorable state be imagined? I love you to distraction, and therefore I spare you sufficiently not to dare to wish that the same emotions should trouble you. I should kill myself or die of grief without were I to be assured that you were never having any rest, that your life was as anxious and disturbed as mine, that you were weeping ceaselessly, and that everything was hateful to you. I cannot bear my own sufferings, how then could I support the for-
row a thousand times more grievous which yours would give me? I cannot, on the other hand, make up my mind to wish that you should think no more of me; and to speak frankly, I am furiously jealous of all that gives you pleasure, and comes near to your heart and fancy in France. I know not why I write to you. I perceive that you will only pity me, and I wish for none of your pity. I hate myself when I look back on all that I have sacrificed for you. I have lost my honour. I have exposed myself to the anger of my parents, to all the severity of the laws of this country against religious, and finally to your ingratitude, which has seemed to me the greatest of all my evils.
Withal, I feel that my remorse is not real, and that I would willingly, with all my heart, have run the greatest risks for the love of you, and that I experience a sad pleasure in having risked my life and honour in your service. Ought not all that I hold most dear to be at your disposal? Ought I not to be satisfied at having employed it as I have done? Methinks I am scarcely content with my sorrows, or the excess of my love, although I cannot, alas! flatter myself sufficiently to be content with you. I live, unfaithful that I am; I do as much to preserve my life as to lose it. Ah! I am dying of shame. Is my despair then only in my letters? If I loved you, as I have told you
a thousand times, should I not have been dead long ago? I have deceived you, and you may rightly complain of me. Alas! why do you not complain of me? I saw you leave, I can never hope to see you come back, and in spite of all I yet breathe! I have deluded you. I ask your pardon, but do not grant it me. Treat me harshly—say my love for you is too weak; be more hard to please; tell me that you would have me die of love for your sake. Help me thus, I conjure you, to overcome the weakness of my sex, and to put an end to all my wavering in real despair. Doubtless a tragic end would force you to think of me often, my memory would become dear to you,
and perhaps you would be really touched by so uncommon a death. Would not death be better than the state to which you have brought me? Good-bye. How I wish that I had never seen you. Ah! I feel how false this phrase is, and I know at the very moment in which I write it that I had far rather be unhappy in my love for you than never have seen you. Willingly, and without a murmur, I consent to my evil fate, since it has not been your wish to make it happier. Good-bye; promise me a few tender regrets if I die of grief, or at least that you will let the violence of my love give you a disgust and repulsion for everything else. This consolation will suffice me, and if
I must leave you for ever, I would wish not to leave you to another woman. You surely would not be so cruel as to make use of my despair to render yourself more agreeable, and to let it be seen that you have inspired the greatest passion in the world? Good-bye once again. My letters are too long, and I do not regard you sufficiently. I ask your pardon, and dare hope that you will show some indulgence to a poor mad woman who was not so, as you know, before she loved you. Good-bye. Methinks I too often speak to you of the insufferable state in which I am, yet I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the despair which you cause me, and
I hate the peace which I lived in before I knew you.

Good-bye! My love grows stronger each moment. Oh what a world of things I have to tell you of!
FOURTH LETTER

Ai goftos fugitivos!
Ai gloria já acabada e consumida!
Ai males tão esquivos!
Qual me deixais a vida!
Quão cheia de pezar! quão destruida!

Camões, Ode iii.

ETHINKS I do the greatest possible wrong to the feelings of my heart in trying to make them known to you in writing. How happy should I be could you judge of my passion by the violence of

1 No. 2 in all editions and translations except that of Cordeiro.
yours! But I must not compare my feelings with yours, though I cannot help telling you, much less strongly than I feel it, it is true, that you ought not to maltreat me as you do by a forgetfulness which thrusts me into despair, and which even for you is dishonourable. It is but fair that you should allow me to complain of the evils which I clearly foreflew when I perceived that you were resolved to forfake me. I well know now that I deluded myself, thinking as I did that you would deal with me in better faith than is usually the case, because the excess of my love put me, it seemed, above all kind of suspicion, and merited more fidelity than is ordinarily met with. But your
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wish to deceive me overruled the justice you owe me for all that I have done for you. I should still be unhappy even if you only loved me because I love you, and I would wish to owe it all to your inclination alone. But so far is this from being the case that I have not received a single letter from you for the last six months. I put down all my misfortunes to the blindness with which I gave myself up to love of you. Should I not have foreseen that the end of my pleasure would come before that of my love? Could I expect you to stay all your life in Portugal and give up both country and career and think only of me? Nothing can lighten my sorrow,
and the remembrance of all that I enjoyed fills me with despair. What! are all my hopes to be utterly futile? and shall I never see you again in my room with all the ardour and passion which you once showed? But, alas! I am deceiving myself, and I know too well that all the feelings that filled my head and heart were only excited in you by a few pleasures, and that they both ended at the same time. I ought then in those moments of supreme happiness to have called reason to my aid to moderate the deadly excess of my delight, and to foretell to me all that I am now suffering. But I gave myself up to you entirely, and I was not in a state to think of anything which
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would have poisoned my pleasure and prevented me from fully enjoying the pledges of your ardent love. I was too much delighted to feel that I was with you to think that you would one day be far from me. I remember, however, having told you sometimes that you would make me unhappy, but these fears were soon dissipated, and I took pleasure in sacrificing them to you, and in giving myself up to the enchantment and the faithfulness of your protests. I see clearly the remedy for all the evils which I suffer, and I should be soon rid of them if I loved you no more. But alas! what a remedy! I had rather suffer still more than forget you. Does that, alas! depend on me? I
cannot reproach myself with having for a single moment wished to cease to love you. You are more to be pitied than I am, and all my sufferings are better than the cold pleasures which your French mistresses give you. I do not envy you your indifference, and you make me pity you. I defy you to forget me entirely. I flatter myself that I have put you in a state in which you can enjoy but imperfect pleasures without me, and I am happier than you because I am more occupied. Some little time ago I was made portrefs of this convent. All who speak to me think that I am mad. I know not what I answer them. The religious must be as mad as myself to have
thought me capable of taking care of anything. Oh how I envy the good fortune of Manoel and Francisco! Why am I not always with you, as they are? I would have followed you and waited upon you with more goodwill, it is certain. To see you is all that I desire in this world. At least remember me; for you to remember me will content me, but I dare not make sure even of this. I used not to limit my hopes to your remembrance of me when I saw you daily, but you have taught me the necessity of submitting to all that you wish. Withal I do not repent of having adored you; I am glad that you betrayed me, and your absence,

1 Two of Chamilly's servants.
cruel though it is, and perhaps eternal, diminishes in no way the violence of my love. I wish everybody to know it; I make no mystery of it; and I pride myself on having done for you all that I did against every kind of decorum. My honour and religion consist but in loving you to distraction all my life through, since I have begun to love you. I am not telling you all this to oblige you to write to me. Oh do not force yourself; I only wish from you what comes spontaneously, and I reject all the testimonies of your love which you can control. I shall find pleasure in excusing you, because you will perhaps be glad not to have the trouble of writing to me, and I feel deeply
disposed to pardon you all your faults. A French officer had the charity to talk to me of you for three hours this morning; he told me that peace was made with France.\(^1\) If this is so could you not come and see me, and take me to France? But I do not deserve it. Do as you please, for my love no longer depends on the way in which you may treat me. I have not been well for a single moment since you left, and my only pleasure has been that of repeating your name a thousand times each day. Some religious who know the deplorable state into which you have plunged me often speak to me of

\(^1\) The treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, which was signed May 2nd, 1668, ratified this peace and put an end to the war called ‘of Devolution.’
LETTERS OF A NUN

FOURTH LETTER

you. I leave my room, where you so often used to come to see me, as little as possible, and I constantly look at your likeness, which is to me a thousand times dearer than life itself. It gives me some pleasure, but also much sorrow, when I consider that I shall perchance never see you again.

Why must it be that I shall possibly never see you again? Have you then left me for ever? I am in despair. Your poor Marianna can no more; she is almost fainting while she finishes this letter. Good-bye, Good-bye. Have pity on me.
FIFTH LETTER

Estou pôsito sem medo
A tudo o que o fatal destino ordene:
Pôde ser que cansado,
Ou seja tarde, ou cedo,
Com pena de penar-me, me despene.
CAMÓES, Canção ix.

AM writing to you for the last time, and I hope to let you see by the difference in the terms and manner of this letter that you have at last persuaded me that you no longer love me, and that therefore I ought no longer to love you. I will send you on the
first opportunity all that I still have of yours. Do not be afraid that I shall write to you; I will not even put your name on the packet. With all these details I have charged Dona Brites,¹ whom I have accustomed to confidences very different from this. Her care will be less suspected than mine. She will take all the necessary precautions, that I may be assured that you have received the portrait and bracelets which you gave me. I wish you to know, however, that for some days I have felt as if I could burn and tear up these tokens of your love, once so dear to me. But I have revealed such weakness to

¹ D. Brites de Noronha was a professed nun and a companion of Marianna in the convent of the Conception at Beja.
your eyes that you would perhaps never have believed me capable of going to a like extremity. I wish, however, to enjoy all the pain I have experienced in separating from them, and cause you some vexation at least. I confess, to your shame and mine, that I found myself more attached to these trifles than I should like to tell you, and I felt that I had again need of all my reasoning powers to enable me to get rid of each object in spite of my flattering myself that I cared no more for you. But, provided with such good reasons as mine, one always achieves the end one seeks. I have placed them in the hands of Dona Brites. What tears this resolution cost me! After
a thousand different emotions and doubts which you know not of, and of which I shall certainly not give you an account, I have conjured her to speak no more to me of these baubles, and never to give them back to me even though I should beg to see them once again, and, in a word, to send them you without letting me know.

It is only since I have been employing all my efforts to heal myself that I have come to know the excess of my love, and I fear that I should not have dared to take it in hand had I foreseen so many difficulties and such violence. I am persuaded that I should have experienced less disagreeable emotions in loving you, ungrateful though you
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are, than in quitting you for ever. I have found out that you were less dear to me than my passion; and I have had hard work to fight against it even after your insulting behaviour made you hateful to me. The pride natural to my sex has not helped me to resolve aught against you. Alas! I suffered your scorn, and I could have supported your hate and all the jealousy which your attachment for another woman has given me. I should have had at least some passion to combat, but your indifference is insupportable to me. Your impertinent protestations of friendship, and the ridiculous civilities of your last letter, convince me that you have received all those which I have written to
you, that they have stirred no emotions in your heart, and yet that you have read them. O ungrateful man! I am still foolish enough to be in despair at not being able to flatter myself that they have not reached you or been given into your hands. I detest your frankness. Did I ever ask you to tell me the truth sincerely? Why did you not leave me my love? You had only not to write; I did not seek to be enlightened. Am I not unhappy enough with all my inability to make the task of deceiving me difficult to you, and now at not being able to exculpate you. Know that I am convinced that you are unworthy of all my love, and that I understand all your base qualities.
If, however, all that I have done for you deserves that you should pay some slight regard to the favours I ask of you, write no more to me, I beg you, and help me to forget you entirely. If you were to show, even slightly, that you had felt some grief at the reading of this letter, perchance I should believe you. Perchance, also, your acknowledgment and assent would vex and anger me, and all that would inflame my love afresh. Do not then take any account of my life, or you would doubtless overthrow all my plans, however you entered into them. I care not to know the result of this letter, and I beg of you not to disturb the peace which I am preparing for myself. Methinks you
may content yourself with the harm which you have already caused me, whatever be the intention you formed to make me miserable. Do not tear me from my state of uncertainty; I hope in time to combine with it something like peace of heart. I promise not to hate you; indeed I distrust any violent feelings too much to adventure that. I am persuaded that I should find, it may be in this country, another lover more faithful and handsomer; but, alas! who could make me feel love? Would a passion for another man fill my thoughts? Has mine had any power over you? Have I not experienced that a tender heart never forgets him who first made it know feelings it knew not that it
PORTUGUESE NUN was capable of? I have found that all the feelings of such a heart are bound up with the idol it has created for itself—that its first impressions, its first wounds, can neither be healed nor effaced—that all the passions which offer their help and attempt to fill and content it promise it but vainly an emotion which it never feels again—that all the pleasures which it seeks, without any desire of finding them, serve only to convince it that nothing is so dear as the remembrance of its sorrows? Why have you made me feel the imperfection and bitterness of an attachment which cannot endure for ever, and all the evils that result from a violent love, when it is not mutual? Why is it that blind
inclination and cruel fate agree as a rule in determining us in favour of those who could only love others? Even if I could hope for some diversion in a new engagement, and could find a man of good faith, I pity myself so much that I should have great scruples in putting the worst man in the world in the condition to which you have brought me; and although I may not be obliged to spare you I could not make up my mind to avenge myself so cruelly, even though it were to depend on me, by a change which I certainly do not foresee. At this very moment I am seeking excuses for you, and I understand that a religious is not as a rule loveable. Methinks, however, if reason guided one's choice
one ought to be more attached to them than to other women. Nothing prevents their thinking constantly of their passion, and they are not turned aside by a thousand things which divert and occupy the mind in the world. Surely it cannot be very pleasing to see those whom one loves ever distracted by a thousand trifles, and one must needs have but little delicacy to suffer them (without being in despair at it) to talk of nothing but assemblies, drefs, and promenades. One is constantly exposed to fresh jealousies, for they are tied down to attentions, politenesses, and conversations with all. Who can be assured that they find no pleasure in all these occasions, and that they always endure
their husbands with extreme disgust and never of their freewill? Ah, how they ought to distrust a lover who does not render them an exact account of all, who believes easily and without disquiet what they tell him, who in unruffled trust sees them bound to all these society duties. But I do not seek to prove to you by good reasons that you ought to love me; these are very ill means, and I have made use of much better, without success. Too well do I know my fate to try to rise above it. I shall be miserable all my life. Was I not so even when I saw you daily? I was dying for fear that you would not be faithful. I wished to see you every moment, and I could not.
PORTUGUESE NUN

The danger you ran in entering the convent troubled me. I almost died when you were with the army. I was in despair at not being more beautiful and more worthy of you. I used to murmur against my modest rank,¹ and I often thought that the attachment you appeared to cherish for me would be hurtful to you in some way. Methought I did not love you enough. I feared the anger of my parents against you, and I was, in a word, in as lamentable a state then as now. If you had shown me any signs of affection since you left Portugal I should have made every effort to leave it, and I would have disguised myself

¹ Marianna refers to her condition as a Franciscan nun in a small provincial town, not to the rank of her family, which was as good as that of her lover.
THE LETTERS OF A FIFTH LETTER

to go and find you. Ah, what would have became of me if you had troubled no more about me after I had arrived in France?—what scandal, what trouble, what depths of shame for my family which is so dear to me since I have ceased to love you! I quite understand, you see, that I might have been even more wretched than I am. At least for once in my life I am speaking reasonably to you. How delighted you will doubtless be at my moderation, and how pleased with me? But I wish not to know it. I have already prayed you not to write to me again, and I repeat it now. Have you never reflected on the way in which you have treated me? Have you never
PORTUGUESE NUN

considered that you owe me more than any one else in the world? I have loved you as a mad woman might. How I despised everything else!

Besides, you have not acted like an honourable man. You must have had a natural aversion for me, since you have not loved me to distraction. I allowed myself to be enchanted by very mediocre qualities. What have you ever done to please me? What sacrifice have you made for me? Did you not always seek a thousand other pleasures? Did you ever give up gaming or the chase? Were you not ever the first to leave for the army, and did you not always come back the last? You exposed your-
fifth rashly, although I had begged you to spare yourself for my sake. You never sought the means of settling down in Portugal, where you were esteemed. A single letter from your brother made you leave without a moment’s hesitation. Do I not know that during the voyage you were in the best of humours? It must be confessed that I ought to hate you with a deadly hatred. Ah, I have brought down all these misfortunes on myself. I accustomed you from the first to a boundless love, and that with too much ingenuousness, while one needs to employ artifice to make one’s self loved. One should seek the means of skilfully exciting it, for love of itself does not engender love. You
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wished me to love you, and since you had formed this design there is nothing that you would not have done to accomplish it. You would even have made up your mind to love me had that been necessary, but you knew that you could succeed in your enterprise without passion, and that you had no need of it. What treachery! did you think that you could deceive me with impunity? If any chance brings you again to this country, I declare that I will hand you over to the vengeance of my kinsfolk. I have lived too long, in an abandonment and idolatry which strikes me with horror, and feelings of remorse persecute me with unbearable severity. I feel a lively shame for
the crimes which you have made me commit, and I have no more, alas! the love which prevented me from comprehending their enormity. When will this heart of mine cease to be torn? When shall I be freed from these cruel trammels?

In spite of all, methinks I do not wish you harm, and could resolve to consent to your being happy. But how could you be so, if you had a true heart? I mean to write you another letter, to show you that I shall perchance be more at peace some day. What pleasure I shall find in being able to reproach you for your injustice when I am no longer so vividly touched by it, in letting you know that I despise you, and that I can speak with
indifference of your deceit, that I have forgotten all my pleasures and all my sorrows, and that I only remember you when I wish to do so! I recognise that you have a great advantage over me, and that you have inspired in me a love which has upset my reason; but at the same time you should take little credit to yourself for it. I was young, I was trustful, I had been shut up in this convent since my childhood,¹ I had only seen people whom I did not care for. I had never heard the praises which you constantly gave me. Methought

¹Marianna was about twenty-six years of age when she first met Chamilly. She had naturally made her profession at sixteen and had been confided to the care of the convent at twelve, or even much earlier, like her sister.
I owed you the charms and the beauty which you found in me, and which you were the first to make me perceive: I heard you well talked of; every one spoke in your favour: you did all that was necessary to awake love in me. But I have at last returned to myself from this enchantment. You yourself helped me greatly, and I confess that I had much need of it. When I return you your letters I shall take care to keep the last two which you wrote me; and I shall re-read them more often than I have the previous ones, in order that I may not relapse into my former weakness. Ah! how dear they cost me, and how happy I should have been if you had allowed
me to love you always. I well know that I am still a little too much taken up with my reproaches and your faithlessness, but remember that I have promised myself a state of greater peace, and that I shall reach it, or take some desperate resolve against myself, which you will learn, without great displeasure. But I wish no more of you, and I am foolish to repeat the same things so often. I must leave you, and think no more on you. I even think that I shall not write to you again. Am I under any obligation to render you an exact account of all I do?
LETTRES PORTUGAISES
TRADUITES EN FRANÇOIS
LETTRES PORTUGAISES TRADUITES EN FRANÇOIS

A PARIS,
Chez Clavde Barbin, au Palais, sur le second Perron de la sainte Chapelle.

M. DC. LXIX
Avec Privilège du Roy
AY trouvé les moyens avec beaucoup de soin & de peine, de recouvrer une copie correcte de la traduction de cinq Lettres Portugaises, qui ont esté écrites a un Gentilhomme de qualité, qui servoit en Portugal. J'ay veu tous ceux qui se connoisissent en sentiments, ou les louer, ou les chercher avec tant d'empressement, que j'ay crû que ie leur ferois un singulier plaisir de les imprimer. Je ne faisant point le nom de celuy auquel on les à écrites, ny de celuy qui en a fait la traduction, mais il n'a semblé que ie ne devois pas leur déplaire en les rendant publiques. Il est difficile quelles n'eussent, enfin, par prudence, auc des fautes d'impression qui les eussent défigurées.
CONSIDERE, mon amour,
jusqu'à quel exces tu as
manqué de prouoyance. Ah
mal-heureux! tu as esté
trahy, & tu m'as trahie
par des esperances trompeuses. Vne
passion sur laquelle tu auois fait tant
de projets de plaisirs, ne te cause
presentement qu'vn mortel desespoir,
qui ne peut estre comparé qu'à la
cruauté de l'absence, qui le cause.
Quoy? cette absence, à laquelle ma
douleur, toute ingenieuse qu'elle est, ne
peut donner vn nom assez funeste, me
priuera donc pour toujours de regarder
ces yeux, dans lesquels je voyois tât
d'amour, & qui me faisoient connoitre
des mouuemës, qui me combloient de
joye, qui me tenoient lieu de toutes
chofes, & qui enfin me suffisoient? Helas! les miens font priuez de la seule lumiere, qui les animoit, il ne leur reste que des larmes & je ne les ay employez à aucun vantage, qu'à pleurer sans cesse, depuis que j'appris que vous estiez enfin resolu à vn éloignement, qui m'est si insupportable, qu'il me fera mourir en peu de temps. Cependant il me semble que j'ay quelque attachement pour des malheurs, dont vous estes la seule cause : Je vous ay destine ma vie aussi-toft que je vous ay veu; & je sens quelque plaisir en vous la sacrifiant. J'envoie mille fois le jour mes soupirs vers vous, ils vous cherchent en tous lieux, & ils ne me rapportent pour toute recompense de tant d'inquietudes, qu'un advertissement trop sincere, que me done ma mauuaise fortune, qui a la cruauté de ne souffrir pas, que je me flatte, & qui me dit à tous momens; Cesse, cesse Mariane infortunée de te consumer vainement: & de chercher vn Amant que tu ne verras iamais; qui a passe les Mers pour te fuir, qui est en France au milieu des plaisirs, qui ne pense pas vn seul moment à tes douleurs, & qui te dispense
EN FRANÇOIS

de tous ces transports, desquels il ne te fçait aucun gré? mais non, je ne puis me refoudre à juger si injurieusement de vous, & je suis trop intéressée à vous justifier: Je ne veux point m'imaginer que vous m'avez oubliée. Ne fuis-je pas assez malheureuse sans me tourmenter par de faux soupçons? Et pourquoi serois-je des efforts pour ne me plus souvenir de tous les soins, que vous auez pris de me temoigner de l'amour? L'ay esté si charmée de tous ces soins, que je serois bien ingrate, si je ne vous aymois avec les mêmes emportemens, que ma Passion me donnoit, quand je jouissois des témoignages de la vostre. Comment se peut-il faire que les souvenirs des momens si agréables, soient devenus si cruels? & faut-il que contre leur nature, ils ne seruent qu'à tyranniser mon cœur? Helas! vostre derniere lettre le reduisit en vn estrange état: il eut des mouvements si sensibles qu'il fit, ce semble, des efforts, pour se separer de moy, & pour vous aller trouver: Je fus si accablée de toutes ces émotions violentes, que je demeuray plus de trois heures abandonnée de tous mes sens: je me
défendis de reuener à vne vie que je dois perdre pour vous : puis que je ne puis la conserver pour vous, je reuis enfin, malgré moy la lumiere, je me flatois de sentir que je mourois d'amour ; & d'ailleurs j'estois bien-aife de n'estre plus exposée à voir mon cœur déchiré par la douleur de vostre absence. Après ces accidens, j'ay eu beaucoup de differêtes indispositions : mais, puis-je jamais estre sans maux, tant que je ne vous verray pas? Ie les supporte cependant sans murmurer, puis qu'ils viennent de vous. Quoy? est-ce là la recompêse, que vous me donnez, pour vous auoir fi tendrement aymé? Mais il n'importe, je suis resoluë à vous adorer toute ma vie, & à ne voir jamais personne ; & je vous asseure que vous ferez bien aussi de n'aymer personne. Pourriez vous estre content d'vne Passion moins ardente que la miene? Vous trouuerez, peut-estre, plus de beauté (vous m'auez pourtant dit autrefois, que j'estois affez belle) mais vous ne trouuerez jamais tant d'amour, & tout le reste n'est rien. Ne remplissez plus vos lettres de choses inutiles, & ne m'escriuez plus de me souuenir de vous? Ie ne puis vous
oublier, & je n’oublie pas aussi, que vous m’auez fait esesperer, que vous viëdriiez passer quelque temps avec moy. Helas! pourquoi n’y voulez vous pas passer toute votre vie? S’il m’estoit possible de sortir de ce malheureux Cloistre, je n’attendrois pas en Portugal l’effet de vos promesœes : j’irois, sans garder aucune mesure, vous chercher, vous fuire, & vous aymer par tout le monde : je n’ose me flater que cela puisse estre, je ne veux point nourrir vne esperance, qui me donneroit affeurément quelque plaisir, & je ne veux plus estre sensible qu’aux douleurs. J’auoë cependant que l’occa-sion, que mon frere m’a donnee de vous escrire, a surpris en moy quelques mouue-mens de joye, & qu’elle a suspendu pour vn moment le desespoir, où je fuis. Je vous conuiure de me dire, pourquoi vous vous estes attaché à m’enchanter, comme vous auez fait, puisque vous scauiez bien que vous deuiiez m’abandonner? Et pourquoi auez vous esté si acharne à me rendre malheureuse? que ne me laisfiez vous en repos dans mon Cloistre? vous auois-ie fait quelque inuiure? Mais ie vous demande pardon : ie ne vous im-
pu: rien: ie ne fuis pas en eftat de penser à ma vengeance, & l'accuse feule-
ment la rigueur de mon Destin. Il me femble quen nous feparant, il nous a fait
tout le mal, que nous pouuïïõs craindre; il ne fçauoit feparer nos cœurs; l'amour
qui eft plus puiffant que luy, les a vnis
pour toute nostre vie. Si vous prenez
quelque interefî à la mienne, efcrieuez
moï souuent. Ie merite bien que vous
preniez quelque foin de m'apprendre
l'efvat de voftre cœur, & de voftre fort-
tune, fur tout venez, me voir. Adieu, ie
ne puis quitter ce papier, il tombera
entre vos mains, ie voudrois bien auoir
le mêfme bon-heur: Helas! infenfée
que ie fuis, ie m'appereçois bien que cela
n'eft pas poffible. Adieu, ie n'en puis
plus. Adieu, aymez moy toujours; &
faites moy souffrir encore plus de maux.
SECONDE LETTRE

L me semble que je fais le plus grand tort du monde aux sentiments de mon cœur, de ta chercher de vous les faire connaître en les écrivant : que je serois heureuse, si vous en pouviez bien juger par la violence des vôtres ! mais je ne dois pas m'en rapporter à vous, & je ne puis m'empêcher de vous dire, bien moins vivement, que je ne le sens, que vous ne devriez pas me maltraiter, comme vous faites, par un oubli, qui me met au désespoir, & qui est même honteux pour vous ; il est bien juste au moins, que vous souffriez que je me plaigne des malheurs, que j'avais bien prévus, quand je vous vis résolu de me quitter je connois bien que je me fus abusée lorsque j'ai pensé, que vous auriez
LETTRES TRADVITES

SECONDE LETTRE

vn procédé de meilleure foi, qu'on n'a accoustumé d'auoir, parce que l'excez de mon amour me mettoit, ce semble, au dessus de toutes sortes de soupçons, & qu'il meritoit plus de fidélité, qu'on n'en trouve d'ordinaire : mais la disposition, que vous avez à me trahir, l'emporte enfin sur la justice, que vous devez à tout ce que j'ay fait pour vous, ie ne laisserois pas d'être bien malheureuse, si vous ne m'aymiez, que parce que ie vous ayme, & ie voudrois tout devoir à votre seule inclination mais ie suis si éloignée d'être en cet estat, que ie n'ay pas receu vne seule lettre de vous depuis six mois : j'attribue tout ce mal-heur à l'aueuglement, auquel ie me suis abandonnée à m'attacher à vous : ne deuois-je pas prevoir que mes plaisirs finiroient plutôt que mon amour? pouuois-ie esperer, que vous demeureriez toute votre vie en Portugal, & que vous renonceriez à votre fortune & à votre Pays, pour ne penser qu'à moy? mes douleurs ne peuuent receuoir aucun soulagement, & le souuenir de mes plaisirs me comble de desespoir : Quoy! tous mes desirs seront donc inutiles, & ie ne vous verray jamais en ma
chambre avec toute l'ardeur, & tout l'empportement, que vous me faisiez voir ? mais helas ! je m'abuse, & je ne connois que trop, que tous les mouvemens, qui occupoient ma teste, & mon cœur, n'estoient excitez en vous, que par quelques plaisirs, & qu'ils finissoient aussitost qu'eux ; il falloit que dans ces momens trop heureux j'appellasse ma raison à mon secours pour moderer l'excez funeste de mes délices, & pour m'annoncer tout ce que je souffre présentement : mais ie me donnois toute à vous, & ie n'estois pas en estat de penser à ce qui eût pû empoisonner ma ioye, & m'empescher de ioyyr pleinement des témoignages ardens de vostre passion ; ie m'aperceuois trop agréablement que ie estois auec vous pour penfer que vous fervez vn iour éloigné de moy : ie me souniens pourtant de vous auoir dit quelquefois que vous me rendriez malheureuse : mais ces frayeurs estoient bien-toft dissipées, & ie prenois plaisir, à vous les sacrifier, & à m'abandonner à l'enchante-ment, & à la mauuaisefoy de vos protestations : ie voy bien le remede à tous mes maux, & i'en serois bien-toft déliurée si ie
ne vous aymois plus : mais, helas! quel remède; non l'ayme mieux souffrir encore dauantage, que vousoublier. Helas! cela dépend il de moy? Je ne puis me reprocher d'auoir souhaité vn feul moment de ne vous plus aymer : vous estes plus à plaindre ; que je ne fuis, & il vaut mieux souffrir tout ce que je fouffre, que de ioüir des plaisirs languisans, que vous donnent vos Maîtresses de France: ie n'eneuie point vôtre indifférence, & vous me faites pitié : ie vous déifie de m'oublier entierement : ie me flatte de vous auoir mis en estat de n'auoir sans moy, que des plaisirs imparfaits, & ie fuys plus heureuse que vous, puiqué ie fuys plus occupée. L'on m'a fait depuis peu Portiere en ce Conuent : tous ceux qui me parlent, croyent que ie fuys folé, ie ne féay ce que ie leur répons : Et il faut que les Religieuses foient aussi insensées que moy, pour m'auoir crû capable de quelque soin. Ah! i'enuie le bon-heur d'Emanuel, & de Francifque; pourquoi ne fuys-je pas incessamment auec vous, comme eux? ie vous aurois fuiuy, & ie vous aurois asseurément feryuy de meilleur
EN FRANÇOIS

cœur, ie ne souhaite rien en ce mode, que vous voir; au moins fouuenez vous de moy? ie me contente de vostre souuenir: mais ie n'ose m'en asseurer; ie ne bornois pas mes esperances à vostre souuenir, quâd ie vous voyois tous les iours: mais vous m'auez bien apris, qu'il faut que ie me soumette à tout ce que vous voudrez: cependât ie ne me repês point de vous auoir adoré, ie suis bienaisè, que vous m'ayez seduite: vostre absence rigoureuse, & peut-estre éternelle, ne diminuë en rien l'emportement de mon amour: ie veux que tout le mond le sçache, ie n'en fais point vn mystère, & ie suis rauie d'auoir fait tout ce que j'ay fait pour vous contre toute forte de bien-seance: ie ne mets plus mon honneur, & ma religion qu'à vous aymer éperdûement toute ma vie, puisque j'ay commencement à vous aymer: ie ne vous dis point toutes ces choses, pour vous obliger à m'escrire. Ah! ne vous contraignez point; ie ne veux de vous, que ce qui viendra de vostre mouuement, & ie refuse tous les témoignages de vostre amour dont vous pourriez vous empefcher: j'auray du plaisir à vous excuser, parce
que vous aurez, peut-être, du plaisir à ne pas prendre la peine de m'écrire: & je sens vne profonde disposition à vous pardonner toutes vos fautes. Vn Officier François a eu la charité de me parler ce matin plus de trois heures de vous, il m'a dit que la paix de France, estoit faite: si cela est, ne pourriez vous pas me venir voir, & m'emmener en Frâce? Mais ie ne le merite pas, faites tout ce qu'il vous plaira, mon amour ne depend plus de la maniere, dont vous me traiterez; depuis que vous estes party, je n'ay pas eu vn seul moment de fanté, & je n'ay aucun plaisir qu'en nomment vostre nô mille fois le jour; quelques Religieuses, qui scieuenc l'estat deplorable, où vous m'auez plongée, me parlent de vous fort souuent: je sors le moins qu'il m'est possible de ma chambre, où vous estes venu tant de fois, & ie regarde sans cesse votre portrait, qui m'êst mille fois plus cher que ma vie, il me donne quelque plaisir: mais il me donne aussi bien de la douleur, lors que ie pense que ie ne vous reuerray, peut-être jamais; pourquoi faut-il qu'il foit possible que ie ne vous verray, peut-être,
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V'eft-ce que je deuiendray, & qu'est-ce que vous voulez que ie fasse? Ie me trouue bien éloignée de tout ce que j'auois prueu: l'esperois que vous m'écririez de tous les endroits, où vous passeriez, & que vos lettres feroient fort longues; que vous soufstièdrez ma Passion par l'esperance de vous reuoir, qu'vne entiere confiance en voftre fidelité me donneroit quelque forte de repos, & que ie demeurerois cependant dans vn etat asfiez supportable sans d'extrêmes douleurs: j'auois mesme pensê à quelques foibles projets de faire tous les efforts dont ie ferois capable, pour me guerir, si ie pouuois connoifstre bien certainement que vous m'euffiez tout a fait oubliée; voftre éloignement, quelques mouuemens de deuotiō; la crainte de ruiner entiere-
ment le reste de ma santé par tant de veilles, & par tant d’inquietudes; le peu d’apparence de votre retour: la froideur de votre Passion, & de vos derniers adieux; votre départ, fondé sur d’assez meschâes pretextes, & mille autres raisons, qui ne font que trop bonnes, & que trop inutiles, sembloient me promettre vn secours assez asseuré, s’il me deuenoit necessaire: n’ayant enfin à combattre que contre moy mesme, ie ne pouuois jamais me defier de toutes mes foibleffes, ny apprehender tout ce que ie souffre aujourd’hui. Helas! que ie fuis à plaindre, de ne partager pas mes douleurs avec vous, & d’etre toute feule malheureufe: cette pensée me tuë, & je meurs de frayeur, que vous n’ayez jamais esté extrêmement sensible à tous nos plaisirs: Oüy, ie connois presentement la mauuaise foy de tous vos mouuemens: vous m’auez trahie toutes les fois, que vous m’auez dit, que vous estiez rauy d’etre seul auec moy; ie ne dois qu’a mes importunitez vos empreffemens, & vos transports; vous auiez fait de sens froid vn deffein de m’enflamer, vous n’auez regardé ma Passion que comme
vne victoire, & votre cœur n’en a jamais été profondément touché, n’estes vous pas bien malheureux, & n’auez vous pas bien peu de delicatess, de n’auoir fceu profiter qu’en cette manière de mes emportemens? Et comment est-il possible qu’auec tant d’amour ie n’aye pû vous rendre tout a fait heureux? ie regrette pour l’amour de vous seulement les plaisirs infinis, que vous auez per dus: faut-il que vous n’ayez pas voulu en ioûir? Ah! si vous les cônOissiez, vous trouueriez sans doute qu’ils sont plus sensibles, que celuy de m’auoir abusée, & vous auriez esprouué, qu’on est beaucoup plus heureux, & qu’on fent quelque chose de bien plus touchant, quand on ayme violamment, que lors'qu’on est aymé. ie ne sçay, ny ce que ie suis, ny ce que ie fais, ny ce que ie desire: ie suis defchirée par mille mouuemens contraires: Peut-on s’imaginer vn estat si deplorable? ie vous ayme éperduëment, & ie vous mesnage aslez pour n’ofer, peut-estre, souhaiter que vous foeyez agité des mesmes transports: ie me tuérois, ou ie mourrois de douleur sans me tuër, si j’estois asseurée que vous
Françoise n'auez jamais aucun repos, que voftre vie n'est que trouble, & qu'agitation, que vous pleurez sans cesse, & que tout vous est odieux; je ne puis suffire à mes maux, comment pourrois-je supporter la douleur, que me donneroient les voftres, qui me feroient mille fois plus sensibles? Cependant ie ne puis ausfi me refoudre à desirer que vous ne pensiez point à moy; & à vous parler sincerement, ie suis ialousé avec fureur de tout ce qui vous donne de la joye, & qui touche voftre cœur, & voftre goust en France. Je ne fçay pourquoi ie vous écris, ie voy bien que vous aurez seulement pitié de moy, & ie ne veux point de voftre pitié; j'ay bien du depit côtre moy-mesme, quand ie fais reflexion sur tout ce que ie vous ay sacrifié: j'ay perdu ma reputa- tion, je me fuis exposée à la fureur de mes parens, à la feverité des loix de ce Pais contre les Religieuses, & à voftre ingratitude, qui me paroift le plus grand de tous les malheurs: cepen- dant je fens bien que mes remors ne font pas veritables, que ie voudrois du meilleur de mon cœur, auoir couru pour l'amour de vous de plus grans dangers,
& que j'ay vn plaisir funeste d'auoir hazardé ma vie & mō honneur, tout ce que j'ay de plus precieux, ne devoit-il pas estre en vostre disposition? Et ne dois-je pas estre bien aife de l'auoir employé, comme j'ay fait : il me semble meme que ie ne suis gueres contente ny de mes douleurs, ny de l'excez de mon amour, quoi que ie ne puiffe, helas! me flater affez pour etre contente de vous ; je vis, insidelle que ie suis, & ie fais autant de choses pour conserver ma vie, que pour la perdre, Ah! j'en meurs de honte : mon defespoir n'est donc que dans mes Lettres? Si je vous aimois autant que ie vous l'ay dit mille fois, ne serois-je pas morte, il y a long-temps? Ie vous ay trompé, c'est à vous à vous plaindre de moy: Helas! pourquoi ne vous en plaignez vous pas? Ie vous ay veu partir, ie ne puis esperer de vous voir iamais de retour, & ie respire cependant : ie vous ay trahy, ie vous en demande pardon : mais ne me l'accordez pas? Traitez moy feueremēt? Ne trouuez point que mes fentimens soient affez violens? Soyez plus difficile à contēter? Mandez moy que vo' voulez
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que ie meure d'amour pour vous? Et ie vous conjure de me donner ce secours, afin que ie surmonte la foibleffe de mon sexe, & que ie finisse toutes mes irresolutions par vn veritable desespoir; vne fin tragique vo' obligeroit sans doute à penser fouuent à moy, ma memoire vous seroit chere, & vous seriez, peut-estre, sensiblement touche d'vne mort extraordinaire, ne vaut-elle pas mieux que l'estat, où vous m'auez reduite? Adieu, ie voudrois bien ne vous auoir iamais veu. Ah! ie sens vivement la fauffete de ce sentiment, & ie connois dans le moment que ie vous ecris, que j'aime bien mieux estre malheureuse en vo' aimant, que de ne vous auoir iamais veu; je confens donc sans murmure à ma mauuaise destinee, puisque vous n'auez pas voulu la rendre meilleure. Adieu, promettez moy de me regretter tendrement, si ie meurs de douleur, & qu'au moins la violence de ma Passion vous donne du degouft & de l'éloigne- ment pour toutes choses; cette consolation me suffira, & s'il faut que ie vous abandonne pour toûjours, ie voudrois bien ne vous laisser pas à vne autre.
Ne seriez-vous pas bien cruel de vous ferier de mon désespoir, pour vous rendre plus aimable, & pour faire voir, que vous auez donné la plus grande Passion du monde? Adieu encore vne fois, ie vous écris des lettres trop longues, je n'ay pas askz d'égard pour vous, ie vous en demande pardon, & j'ose esperer que vous aurez quelque indulgence pour vne pauure insensée, qui ne l'eftoit pas, comme vous fçauiez, auant qu'elle vous aimât. Adieu, il me semble que ie vous parle trop souuent de l'estat insuportable où ie suis: cependant ie vous remercie dans le fonds de mon cœur du desespoir, que vous me causez, & ie deteste la tranquillité, où j'ay veu, auant que je vous connusse. Adieu, ma Passion augmente à chaque moment. Ah! que j'ay de choses à vous dire.
Quatrième Lettre

Votre Lieutenant vient de me dire, qu'une tempête vous a obligé de relâcher au Royaume d'Algarve : je crains que vous n'ayez beaucoup souffert sur la mer, & cette appréhension m'a tellement occupée ; que je n'ay plus pensé à tous mes maux, êtes-vous bien persuadé que votre Lieutenant prenne plus de part que moy à tout ce qui vous arrive ? Pourquoi en est-il mieux informé, & enfin pourquoi ne m'auriez-vous point écrit ? Je suis bien malheureuse, si vous n'en avez trouué aucune occasion depuis votre départ, & je la suis bien davantage, si vous en aués trouué sans m'écrire ; votre injustice & votre ingratitude sont extrêmes : mais je serois au désespoir, si elles vous attiroient quelque
LETTRES TRADVITES

QUATRIÈME LETTRE

malheur, & j’aime beaucoup mieux qu’elles demeurent sans punition, que si j’en estoy vangeé: je résisite à toutes les apparances, qui me deuroient persuader, que vous ne m’aimés gueres, & ie sens bien plus de disposition à m’abandonner aveuglement à ma Passion, qu’aux raisons, que vo’ me donnez de me plaindre de votre peu de soin: que vous m’auriés épargné d’inquietudes, si votre procedé eust esté aussi languissant les premiers jours, que je vous vis, qu’il m’a paru depuis quelque temps! mais qui n’auroit esté abuseé, comme moy, par tant d’empressement, & à qui n’eussent-ils paru sinceres? Qu’on a de peine à se refoudre à soupçonner longtemps la bonne foy de ceux qu’on aime! ie voy bien que la moindre excuse vous suffit, & sans que vous preniez le soin de m’en faire, l’amour que i’ay pour vous, vous sert si fidelemët, que ie ne puis consentir à vo’ trouuer coupable, que pour joüir du sensible plaisir de vous justifier moy-même. Vous m’auez consommée par vos affiduitez, vous m’auez enflamée par vos transports, vo’ m’auez charmée par vos complai-
fances, vous m’auez assuree par vos
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fermens, mon inclinatiō violente m'a QUATRIESME
seduite, & les fuites de ces commencemēs
fi agréables, & fi heureux ne font que
des larmes, que des soupirs, & qu'vne
mort funeste, sans que je puisse y porter
aucun remede. Il est vray que j'ay eu
des plaisirs bien surpresans en vous
aimant : mais ils me couftent d'estranges
douleurs, & tous les mouuemēs, que vous
me causez, font extrêmes. Si j'auois
resisté avec opiniâtrete à vostre amour, si
je vous auois donné quelque sujēt de
chagrin, & de jalouse pour vous enflemer
daunantage, si vous auiez remarqué
quelque mesnagement artificieux dans
ma conduite, si j'auois enfin voulu
opposer ma raison à l'inclination natur-
elle que j'ay pour vous, dont vo' me
fistes bien-toft apperceuoir (quo que
mes efforts euffent esté sans doute
inutiles) vous pourriez me punir feuere-
ment, & vous feruir de vostre pouuoir :
mais vous me parustes aimable, auant
que vous m'euistiez dit,que vous m'aimiez,
yout me témoignastes vne grande Passion,
jen fus rauie, & ie m'abandonnay à vous
aimer eperdueamment, vous n'estiēs point
auueuglé, comme moy, pour-quoy auës
vo' donc souffert que je deuinsse en l'estat où je me trouue? qu'est-ce que vous vouliez faire de tous mes emportemens, qui ne pouuoient vous estre que tres-importuns? Vous fauiez bien que vous ne seriez pas toujous en Portugal, & pourquoi m'y aués vous voulu choisir pour me rendre si malheureuse, vous euuies trouué sans doute en ce Pais quelque femme qui euu esté plus belle, avec laquelle vous euuies eu autant de plaisir, puisque vous n'en cherchiés que de grossiers, qui vo' eut fidelement aime aussi long-temps qu'elle vous eut veu, que le temps eust pû consoler de vostre absence, & que vous auriés pû quitter sans perfidie, & sans cruauté: ce procedé eft bié plus d'vn Tyran, attaché à perfe-cuter, que d'vn Amant, qui ne doit penser qu'à plaire; Helas! Pourquoy exercés vous tant de rigueur fur vn cœur, qui est à vous? Ie voy bien que vous estes aussi facile à vous laisser persuader contre moy, que ie l'ay esté à me laisser per-suader en vostre faueur; j'auoirs refisté, sans auoir besoin de tout mon amour, & sans m'apperceuoir que jeuissse rien fait d'extraordinaire, à de plus grandes
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raisons, que ne peuuët estre celles, qui vo’
on obligé à me quitter : elles m’eussent
parù bien foibles, & il n’y en a point,
qui eussent jamais pu m’arracher d’apres
de vous : mais vous auës voulu profiter
des pretextes, que vous auës trouüés de
retourner en Fræce ; vn vaïseau partoit,
que ne le laissiés vous partir ? vootre
famille vous auoit escrit, ne fçauës
vous pas toutes les perfections, que
j’ay souffertes de la mienne ? Vootre
honneur vous engageoit à m’abandonner,
ay-je pris quelque foin du mien ? Vous
estiés obligé d’aller fëuir vootre Roy, si
tout ce qu’on dit de luy, est vray, il n’a
aucun befoin de vootre fecours, & il vous
auroit excusë ; j’eussë estë trop heureuse,
fi nous auions passé nofîre vie ensemble :
mais puisqu’il falloit qu’vne absence
cruelle nous separât, il me semble que je
dois estre bien aïfe de n’auoir pas estë
infidele, & ie ne voudrois pas pour toutes
les choses du mëde, auoir commis vne
action si noire : Quoy ! vous avez connu le
fonds de mon cœur, & de ma tendresse, &
yous avez pû vous resoudre à me laïser
pour iamais, & à m’expofer aux frayeurs,
que ie dois auoir, que vous ne vous fouue-
nez plus de moy, que pour me sacrifier à vne nouvelle Passion? Je voy bien que je vous aime, comme vne folle: cepen- dant je ne me plains point de toute la violence des mouuemens de mō cœur, je m’accouüstume à ses perfections, & je ne pourrois viure sans vn plaisir, que je descouure, & dont je jouïs en vous aimât au milieu de mille douleurs: mais ie fuis sans cesse percutée avec un ex- trême desagréemēt par la haine, & par le dégoult que j’ay pour toutes choses; ma famille, mes amis & ce Conuent me font insuportables; tout ce que ie fuis obligé de voir, et tout ce qu’il faut que ie faffe de toute necessité, m’est odieux: je fuis si jalouse de ma Passion, qu’il me semble que toutes mes actions, & que tous mes deuoirs vous regardent: Ouy, ie fais quelque scrupule, si ie n’employe tous les momens de ma vie pour vous; que ferois-je, helas! sans tant de haine, & sans tant d’amour, qui remplissent mon cœur? Pourrois-je surviure à ce qui m’occupe incessam- ment, pour mener vne vie tranquille & languissante? Ce vuide & cette insensi- bilité ne peuuent me conuenir. Tout le
monde s'est apperceu du changement entier de mon humeur, de mes manieres, & de ma persône, ma Mere m'en a parlé auec aigreur, & ensuite auec quelque bonté, ie ne fçay ce que ie luy ay répondu, il me semble que ie luy ay tout auoüé. Les Religieuses les plus feueres ont pitié de l'estat où je suis, il leur donne mésme quelque consideration, & quelque menagemêt pour moy; tout le monde est touché de mon amour. & vo' demeurez dans vne profonde indifference, sans m'escrire, que des lettres froides; pleines de redites; la moitié du papier n'est pas remply, & il paroist grossièrement que vous mourez d'enuie de les avoir acheuées. Dona Brites me persecuta ces jours passez pour me faire fortir de ma chambre, & croyant me diuertir, elle me mena promener sur le Balcon, d’ou l’on voit Mertola, je la fuiuis, & je fus aussi-toft frapée d’un souuenir cruel, qui me fit pleurer tout le reste du jour: elle me ramena, & ie me jettay sur mon liçt, où ie fis mille réflexions sur le peu d’apparence, que ie voy de guerir jamais: ce qu’on fait pour me soulager, aigrît ma douleur, & ie
trouue dans les remedes mesmes des raisons particulières de m'asfliger: je vous ay veu souuent passer en ce lieu avec vn air, qui me charmoit, & j'estois sur ce Balcon le jour fatal, que ie començay à sentir les premiers effets de ma Passion malheureuse: il me sembla que vous vouliez me plaire, quoy que vous ne me connussiez pas: je me persuaday que vous m'auiez remarquee entre toutes celles, qui estoient avec moy, ie m'imimaginay que lors que vous vous arrestiez, vous estiez bien aise, que ie vous visse mieux, & i'admirasse vostre adresse,& vostre bonne grace,lors que vous poussiez votre cheual, i'estois surprise de quelque frayeur, lors que vous le faisiez passer dans vn endroit difficile: enfin je m'interessois secrettement à toutes vos actions, je sentois bien que vous ne m'estiez point indifferent, & ie prenois pour moy tout ce que vous faisiez: vous ne connissiez que trop les suites de ces commencemens, & quoy que ie n'aye rien à mesnager, ie ne dois pas vous les escrire, de crainte de vous rendre plus coupable, s'il est possible que vous ne l'estes, & d'auoir à me reprocher tant
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d’efforts inutiles pour vous obliger à quatrième lettre m’être fidele, vous ne le ferez point: Puis-je espérer de mes lettres et de mes reproches ce que mon amour et mon abandonnement n’ont pu sur votre ingratitide? Je suis trop assurée de mon malheur, votre procedé injuste ne me laisse pas la moindre raison d’en douter, et je dois tout appréhender, puisque vous m’auez abandonnée. N’aurez vous de charmes que pour moy, et ne paroistrez vous pas agreable à d’autres yeux? Je croy que ie ne feray pas fachee que les sentimens des autres iustifient les miens en quelque façon, et ie voudrois que toutes les femmes de France vous trouuassent aimable, qu’aucune ne vous aimât, et qu’aucune ne vous plût: ce projet est ridicule, et impossible: neantmoins j’ay assez éprouué que vous n’estes gueres capable d’vn grand entestement, et que vous pourrez bien m’oublier sans aucun secours, et sans y estre contraint par vne nouvelle Passion: peut-estre, voudrois-je que vous eussiez quelque pretexte raisonnable? Il est vray, que ie serois plus malheureuse, mais vous ne seriez pas si coupable: je voy bien que vous
demeurerez en France sans de grands plaisirs, avec une entière liberté; la fatigue d'un long voyage, quelque petite bien-feance, & la crainte de ne répondre pas à mes transports, vous retiennent: Ah! ne m'apprehendez point? Je me contenteray de vous voir de temps en temps, & de sçauoir seulement que no' femmes en même lieu: mais ie me flatte, peut-être, & vous serez plus touché de la rigueur & de la feuerité d'une autre, que vous ne l'auez esté de mes faueurs; est-il possible que vous serez enflammé par de mauvais traittemens? Mais avant que de vous engager dans une grande Passion, pensez bien à l'excez de mes douleurs, à l'incertitude de mes projets, à la diuenité de mes mouuemens, à l'extrauagance de mes Lettres, à mes confiances, à mes desespoirs, à mes souhaits, à ma jaloufie? Ah! vous allez vous rendre malheureux; je vous conjure de profiter de l'estat où ie fuis, & qu'au moins ce que ie souffre pour vous, ne vous soit pas inutile? Vous me fites, il y a cinq ou six mois vne fascheuse confidèce, & vo' m'auoûâtes de trop bonne foy, que vous auiez aimé vne
Dame en votre Pays : si elle vous empêche de reuener, mädez-le moy sans ménagement ? afin que ie ne languissee plus ? quelque reste d’esperance me foutiêt encore, & ie seray bien aise (si elle ne doit auoir aucune suite) de la perdre tout à fait, & de me perdre moy-mesme ; enuyez moy son portrait avec quelqu’vne de ses Lettres ? Et ecrireuez moy tout ce qu’elle vous dit ? I’y trouuerois, peut-èstre, des raisons de me consoler, ou de m’afliger dauantage, ie ne puis demeurer plus long-temps däs l’estat où ie suis, & il n’y a point de châgement, qui ne me soit fauorable : Je voudrois aussi auoir le portrait de votre frere & de votre Belle-fœur : tout ce qui vous est quelque chose, m’est fort cher, & ie suis entierement deuouëë à ce qui vous touche : je ne me suis laïssee aucune disposition de moy-mesme ; Il y a des momens, où il me semble que j’auoirs assez de soumision pour seruir celle, que vous aimez ; vos mauuais traittemës, & vos mépris m’ont tellement abatuë, que ie n’ose quelque fois penfer seulement, qu’il me semble que ie pourrois estre jalousë sans vous déplaire, & que
ie croy auoir le plus grand tort du monde de vous faire des reproches : je fuis souuent conuaincuë, que ie ne dois point vous faire voir aucue fureur, comme ie fais, des sentimens, que vo' desauoüez. Il y a long-temps qu'vn Officier attend vostre Lettre, j'auois resolu de l'escrire d'vne maniere à vo' la faire receuoir sans degouf : mais elle est trop extrava-gante, il faut la finir : Helas! il n'est pas en mon pouuoir de m'y resoudre, il me feemle que je vous parle, quand ie vous escri, & que vous m'estes vn peu plus present ; La premiere ne sera pas si longue, ny fi impurte, vous pourrez l'ouuir & la lire fur l'affeurance, que ie vous donne, il est vray que ie ne dois point vous parler d'vne passion, qui vous deplaisift, & ie ne vous en parleray plus. Il y aura vn an dans peu de jours que ie m'abandonnay toute à vous sans menage-ment : vostre Passion me paroiffoit fort ardente, & fort sincere, & ie n'eusse jamais penfe que mes faueurs vo' eussent afiez rebuté, pour vous obliger à faire cinq cens lieuës, & à vous exposer à des naufrages, pour vo' en éloigner ; per-sonne ne m'estoit redeuuable d'vn pareil
traitement : vous pouvez vous souvenir quatrième de ma pudeur, de ma confusion & de mon désordre, mais vous ne vous souvenez pas de ce qui vous engageroit à m'aimer malgré vous. L'Officier, qui doit vous porter cette Lettre, me mande pour la quatrième fois, qu'il veut partir, qu'il est pressant, il abandonne sans doute quelque malheureuse en ce Pays. Adieu, j'ay plus de peine à finir ma Lettre, que vo' n'en auez eu à me quitter, peut-être, pour toujours. Adieu, je n'ose vous donner mille noms de tendresse, ny m'abandonner sans contante à tous mes mouuemens : ie vo' aime mille fois plus que ma vie, & mille fois plus que ie ne pense ; que vous m'estes cher ! & que vous m'estes cruel ! vous ne m'ecruez point, ie n'ay pû m'empescher de vo' dire encore cela ; je vay recommencer, & l'Officier partira ; qu'importe, qu'il parte, j'écris plus pour moy, que pour vous, ie ne cherche qu'à me soulager, aussi bien la longueur de ma lettre vous fera peur, vous ne la lirez point qu'est-ce que j'ay fait pour estre si malheureuse? Et pourquoi auez vous empoisonné ma vie? Que ne suis-je née en vn
autre Pays. Adieu, pardonnez moy?

Je n'ose plus vous prier de m'aimer; voyez où mon deßtin m'a reduite?

Adieu.
CINQVIESME LETTRE

E vous écris pour la dernière fois, & j'espère vous faire con-
noître par la différence des termes, & de la manière de
cette Lettre, que vous m'avez
enfin persuadée que vous ne m'aymiez
plus, & qu'ainsi je ne dois plus vous aymer:
Je vous r'envoyseray donc par la première
voye tout ce qui me reste encore de vous:
Ne craignez pas que je vous écriue ; je ne
mettray pas mefme votre nom audeffus
du pacquet ; j'ai chargé de tout ce
détail Dona Brites, que j'auois accouf-
tumée à des confidences bien éloignées
de celle-cy ; ses soins me feront moins
suspects que les miens, elle prendra
toutes les precautions necessaires, afin de
pouvoir m'asseurer que vous auez receu
le portrait & les bracelets que vous
m'auez donnés : Le veux cependant que vous fçachiez que je me sens, depuis quelques jours, en estat de brûler, & de déchirer ces gages de vostre Amour, qui m'estoient fi chers, mais ie vous ay fait voir tant de foibleffè, que vous n'auriés jamais crû que j'euffe peu devenir ca-
pable d'vne telle extremité, je veux donc jouïr de toute la peine que j'ay euë à m'en
séparer, & vous donner au moins quel-
que dépit : Je vous aduoûie à ma honte
& à la vostre, que ie me fuis trouuée
plus attachée que ie ne veux vous le
dire, à ces bagatelles, & que i'ay fenty
que j'auois vn nouueau besoin de toutes
mes reflexions, pour me défaire de
chacune en particulier, lors mesme que
ie me flattois de n'estre plus attachée à
vous : Mais on vient about de tout ce
qu'on veut, avec tant de raisons : Je les
ay misës entre les mains de Dona Brites;
que cette resoluction ma coufté de larmes!
Apres mille mouuements & milles in-
certitudes que vous ne connoîssez pas, &
dont ie ne vous rendray pas compte
assurement. Je l'ay conjurée de ne m'en
parler iamais, de ne me les rëdre iamais,
quand mesme ie les demanderois pour
EN FRANÇOIS

les reuoir encore vne fois, & de vous les CINQVIESME
renuoyer, enfin, sans m'en aduertir.

Je n'ay bien connu l'excés de mon Amour que depuis que j'ay voulu faire
to' mes efforts pour m'en guerir, & ie
crains que ie n'eusse ose l'entreprendre,
fi j'eusse pu préuoir tant de difficultées &
tant de violences. Je suis persuadée
que j'eusse senti des mouuemens moins
desagreeables en vo' aymant tout ingrat
que vous estes, qu'en vous quittant pour
toiusjours. J'ay éprouué que vous m'estiez
moins cher que ma passion, & j'ay eu
d'estranges peines à la combattre, apres
que vos procedés iniurieux m'ont rendu
toûtre personne odieuse.

L'orgueil ordinaire de mon sexe ne
m'a point aydé à prendre des resolutions
contre vous; Helas! j'ay souffert vos
mepris, j'eusse supporté votre haïfe &
toute la jalousie que m'eust donné l'at-
tachement que vous euffiez peu auoir
pour vn autre, j'aurois eu, au moins
quelque passion à combattre, mais toûtre
indifference m'est insupportable; vos
impertinantes protestations d'amity, &
les civilités ridicules de toûtre derniere
lettre, m'ôt fait voir que vous auiez receu

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LETTRES TRADVITES

CINQVIESME LETTRE

toutes celles que je vous ay écrites, qu'elles n'ont causé dans vosfre cœur aucun mouvemment, & que cependant vous les avez luës: Ingrat, je suis encore assez folle pour estre au desespoir de ne pouuoir me flatter quelles ne soient pas venuës jusques à vous, & qu'on ne vous les aye pas renduës; Je deteste vostre bonne foy, vous auois-je prié de me mâder sinceremêt la verité, que ne me laissiez vous ma passion; vous n'auiez qu'à ne me point écrire; ie ne cherchois pas à estre éclaircie; ne fuis-je pas bien malheureuse de n'auoir pû vous obliger à prêdre quelque soin de me tromper? & de n'estre plus en estat de vous excuser. Scâchez que je m'aperçois que vous estes indigne de tous mes sentimens, & que je connois toutes vous méchantes qualitez: Ce-
pendât (si tout ce que j'ay fait pour vous peut meriter que vous ayez quel-
que petits égards pour les graces que ie vous demande) je vous coniure de ne m'écrire plus, & de m'ayder à vous oublier entièrement, si vous me témoi-
gniez foiblement, mesme, que vous auez eu quelque peine en lisât cette lettre, je

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EN FRANÇOIS

vo' croirais peut-être; & peut-être cinquiesme LETTRE
aussi votre adieu & votre consentement me donneroient du dépit & de la colere, & tout cela pourroit m’enflamer: Ne vous mêlez donc point de ma conduite, vous renuerferiez, sans doute, tous mes proie à, de quelque manière que vous voulussiez y entrer; je ne vceu point fçauoir le succés de cette lettre; ne troublés pas l’etat que ie me prepare, il me semble que vous pouuez estre content des maux que vous me causés (quelque defsein que vous eussiez fait de me rendre malheureuse: Ne m’oftez point de mon incertitude; j’espere que j’en feray, avec le temps, quelque chose de tranquille: je vous promets de ne vous point hayr, ie me dêfie trop des sentiments violents, pour ofer l’entreprendre. ie suis perfuadéé que ie trouuerois peut-être, en ce pays vn Amant plus fidele & mieux fait; mais helas! qui pourra me donner de l’amour? la passion d’vn autre m’occupera-t’elle? La mienne a t’elle pù quelque chose sur vous? N’éprouue-je pas qu’vn cœur attendry n’oublie jamais ce qui l’a fait apperceuoir des traîports qu’il ne con-

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cinquième
tenante

Lettres traduites

CINFIVSME LETTRE

noissoit pas, & dont il estoit capable; que tous ses mouvemens font attachés à l'Idole qu'il s'est faite; que ses premieres idées & que ses premieres blessures ne peuvent estre ny gueries ny effacées; que toutes les passions qui s'offrent à son secours & qui font des efforts pour le remplir & pour le contenter, luy promettent vainement vne sensibilité qu'il ne retrouve plus, que tous les plaisirs qu'il cherche sans aucune envie de les rencontrer, ne furent qu'à luy faire bien connôitre que rien ne luy est si cher, que le souuenir de ses douleurs. Pourquoi m'auez vo' fait connôitre l'imperfectio & le désagréement d'un attachement qui ne doit pas durer éternellement, & les mal-heurs qui suivent vn amour violent, lors qu'il n'est pas reciproque, & pourquoi vne inclinatiô aueugle & vne cruelle destineé s'attachent-elles, d'ordinaire, à nous déterminer pour ceux qui feroient sensibles pour quelque autre.

Quand même je pourrois espérer quelque amusemêt dans vn nouvel engagement, & que je trouuerois quelqu'vn de bonne foy, j'ay tant de pitié de moy-mesme, que je ferois beaucoup de
EN FRANÇOIS

scrupule de mettre le dernier homme du monde en l'état où vous m'auez reduite, & quoy que je ne fois pas obligée à vous ménager ; je ne pourrois me refoudre à exercer sur vous, vne vengeance si cruelle, quand même elle dependeroit de moy, par vn changement que je ne prevois pas.

Le cherche dans ce moment à vous excusier, & je cöprend bien qu'vne Religieuse n'est guere aymable d'ordinaire : Cependant il semble que si on estoit capable de raisons, dans les choix qu'on fait, on deueroit plustoft s'attacher à elles qu'aux autres femmes, rien ne les empeche de penser incessamment à leur passion, elles ne sont point détournée par mille choses qui dissipent & qui occupent dans le monde, il me semble qu'il n'est pas fort agreable de voir celles qu'on ayme, toufiours distraites par mille bagatelles, & il faut auoir bien peu de delicateffe, pour souffrir (sans en estre au desespoir) qu'elles ne parlent que d'assemblées, d'auxstements, & de promenades ; on est sans cesse exposé à de nouvelles jalousies ; elles sont obligeées à des égards, à des complaisances, à des conversations : qui peut l'asseurer qu'elles
n'ont aucun plaisir dans toutes ces occasions, & qu'elles souffrent toujours leurs marys avec vn extrême dégout, & sans aucun consentement; Ah qu'elles doivent se défier d'vn Amant qui ne leur fait pas rendre vn compte bien exact là dessus, qui croit aisément & sans inquietude ce qu'elles luy disent, & qui les voit avec beaucoup de confiance & de tranquillité sultes à tous ces deuoirs: Mais je ne pretens pas vous prouver par de bonnes raisons, que vous deuiez m'aymer; ce font de tres-méchans moyens, & j'en ay employé de beaucoup meilleurs qui ne m'ont pas reüssi ; je connois trop bien mon destin pour tâcher à le surmonter; je seray mal-heureuse toute ma vie; ne l'étois-je pas en vous voyat tous les iours, je mourois de frayeur que vous ne me fussiez pas fidel, je voulois vous voir à tous moments, & cela n'estoit pas possible, j'estois troubleé par le peril que vous couriez en entrant dans ce Conuent; ie ne viuois pas lors que vous estiez à l'armée, i'estois au desespoir de n'estre pas plus belle & plus digne de vous, ie murmurois contre la mediocrité de ma condition, ie croyois fouuët que l'attachement
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que vous paroissiez avoir pour moy, vous pourroit faire quelque tort, il me sem-bloit que je ne vous aymois pas assez, j'appréhendois pour vous la colere de mes parents, & j'estois enfin dans un état aussi pitoyable qu'est celuy où je suis présentement; si vous m'eussiez donné quelques témoignages de votre passion depuis que vo' n'estes plus en Portugal; j'aurois fait tous mes efforts pour en sortir, je me fussé déguisée pour vo' aller trouuer; helas! qu'est-ce que je fussé devenüe, si vous ne vous fussiez plus souciée de moy, apres que j'eussë esté en France; quel désordre? quel égarement? quel côble de honte pour ma famille, qui m'est fort chere depuis que je ne vous aymé plus. Vous voyez bien que je cönnois de sens froid qu'il estoit possible que je fussë encore plus à plaindre que ie ne suis; & ie vous parle, au moins, raisonnablement vne fois en ma vie; que ma moderatiö vous plaira, & que vous ferez content de moy; je ne veux point le fçauoir, je vous ay desia prié de ne m'écrire plus, & je vous en conjure encore.

N'auez vous jamais fait quelque re-
flexion sur la manière dont vous m'avez traitée, ne pensez-vous jamais que vous m'avez plus d'obligation qu'à personne du monde; je vous ay aymé comme vne incensée; que de mépris j'ay eu pour toutes choses! votre procedé n'est point d'vn honnest homme, il faut que vous ayiez eu pour moy de l'auersion naturelle, puis que vous ne m'avez pas aymée éperduément; je me suis laissée enchanter par des qualitez tres-médio- cres, qu'auez vous fait qui deust me plaire? quel sacrifice m'avez vous fait? n'avez vous pas cherché mille autres plaisirs? avez vous renoncé au jeu, & à la chasse? n'estes vous pas parti le premier pour aller à l'Armée? n'en estes-vous pas reuenu après tous les autres, vous vous y estes exposé follement, quoy que je vous eusse prié de vous ménager pour l'amour de moy, vous n'avez point cherché les moyens de vous establir en Portugal? où vous estiez estimé; vne lettre de votre frere vous en a fait partir, sans hesiter vn moment, & n'ay-je pas feceu que durant le voyage vous auez esté de la plus belle humeur du monde. Il faut aduoer que je suis obligée à
vous haïr mortellement ; ah ! je me suis attirée tous mes mal-heurs : je vous ay d’abord accoustumé à vne grande passion, avec trop de bonne foy, & il faut de l’artifice pour se faire aymer, il faut chercher avec quelque adresse les moyens d’enflamer, & l’amour tout seul ne donne point de l’amour, vous voulez que je vous aymasse, & comme vous auz formé ce dessein, il n’y a rien que vous n’eussiez fait pour y paruenir, vous vous fusiez mesme resolu à m’aymer, s’il eut esté nécessaire ; mais vous auez connu que vous pouuiez reuissir dans vostre entreprise sans passion, & que vous n’en auziez aucun besoin, quelle persidie ? croyés vous auzoir pû impunement me tromper, si quelque hazard vous r’amenoit en ce pays, je vous declare que je vous liureray à la vengeance de mes parents. J’ay vécu long-temps dans vn abandonnement & dans vne idolatrie qui me donne de l’horreur, & mon remords me persecute avec vne rigueur insupportable, ie sens vivement la honte des crimes que vo’ m’auez fait com- mettre, & ie n’ay plus, helas ! la passion qui m’empechoit d’en connoistre l’énor-
CINQVIÈME LETTRE

mité ; quand est-ce que mon cœur ne sera plus déchiré ? quand est-ce que je seray delivrée de cet embarras, cruel ! cependant je croy que je ne vous souhaitte point de mal, & que je me resouderois à consentir que vous fussiez heureux ; mais cômez pourrés vous l'estre si vous auéz le cœur biè fait ; je veux vous écrire vne autre Lettre, pour vous faire voir que je seray peut-être plus tranquille dans quelque têps ; que j'auray de plaisir de pouuoir vous reprocher vos procedés iniustes après que je n'en seray plus si vivement touchée, & lors que je vous feray connoîstre que je vous mépriſe, que je parle avec beaucoup d'indifference de vſtre trahifon ; que j'ay oublie tous mes plaisirs, & toutes mes douleurs, & que je ne me fouuïens de vous que lors que je veux m'en fouuënt. Je demeure d'accord que vous auez de grands aduantages fur moy, & que vous m'avez donné vne passion qui ma fait perdre la raifon, mais vous deuez en tirer peu de vanité ; jeſtois jeune, jeſtois credule, on m'auoit enfermée dans ce convêt depuis mon enfance, ie n'auois veu que des gens desagreables,
EN FRANÇOIS

je n’auois jamais entendu les louanges que vous me donniez incessamment, il me sembloit que je vous deuois les charmes, & la beauté que vo’ me trouuiez, & dont vous me faisiez appercevoir, j’entendois dire du bien de vous, tout le monde me parloit en voftre faureur, vous faisiez tout ce qu’il falloit pour me donner de l’amour; mais ie fuis, enfin, reuenuë de cét enchantement, vous m’auiez donné de grands secours, & j’aduoüe que j’en auois vn extrême besoin: En vous renuoyant vos lettres, je garderay soigneusement les deux der- nières que vous m’auiez écrites, & ie les reliray encore plus fouuent que ie n’ay leu les premieres, ayn de ne retomber plus dans mes foibleffes, Ah! quelles me coutët cher, & que j’auoirs efté heureuse, si vous eussiez voulu souffrir que ie vous eussëe toujours aimé. Je connois bien que ie fuis encore vn peu trop occupée de mes reproches & de voftre infidelité; mais souuenez-vous que ie me fuis promise vn estat plus paisible, & que j’y paruiendray, ou que ie prëdray contre moy quelque resolution extrême, que vous apprendrez fans beaucoup de
déplaisir ; mais ie ne veux plus rien de vous, ie suis vne folle de redire les mêmes choses si souuent, il faut vous quitter & ne penser plus à vous, ie croy même que je ne vous écriray plus, suis-je obligée de vous rendre vn compte exact de to’ mes divers mouvements.

FIN.
EXTRAIT DU

Privilege du Roy

PAR Grace & Privilege du Roy, donné à Paris le 28. jour d'Octobre 1668. Signé par le Roy en son Conseil, MARGERET. Il est permis à CLAUDE BARBIN, Marchand Libraire, de faire imprimer un livre intitulé, Lettres Portugaises, pendant le temps & espace de cinq années; Et défenses sont faites à tous autres de l’Imprimer, sur peine de quinze cent livres d’amande, de tous dépens, dommages & intérêts, comme il est plus amplement porté par lesdites Lettres de Privilege.

Achevé d’imprimer pour la première fois le 4. Janvier, 1669.

Les Exemplaires ont été fournis.

Registre sur le Livre de la Communauté des Marchands Libraires & Imprimeurs de cette Ville, suivant & conformément à l’Arrêt de la Cour de Parlement du 8. Avril, 1653, aux charges & conditions portées par le présent Privilege. Fait à Paris le 17 Novembre 1668. SOVBRON, Syndic.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
THE following forms the English Bibliography of the Letters:—


Here is the Preface:—

To the Reader. | You are to take this Translation very kindly, for the Author of it has ventured his Reputation to oblige you: Ventur'd it | (I say) even in the very Attempt of Copying so Nice an Original. It is, in French, one of the | most Artificial Pieces | perhaps of the Kind, | that is anywhere Existant: Beside the peculiar Graces, and Felicities of that Language; in the matter of an Amour, which cannot be adopted into any other | Tongue without Ex- tream Force, and Affectation. There was | (it seems) an Intrigue | of Love carry'd on | betwixt a French officer, and a Nun in | Portugal. The Cavaliere forsakes his Mistress, and Returns for France. The Lady expostulates the Business in five Letters of complaint, which she sends after him; and those five Letters are here | at your Service. You |
THE LETTERS OF A

BIBLIOGRAPHY

will find in them the | Lively Image of an | Extra-
vagant, and an | Unfortunate Passion ; | and that a
woman may | be Flesh and Bloud, in a | Cloyster,
as well as in a | Palace.

'Five love-letters from a Nun to a Cavalier,' etc., etc., 1693. 16mo. (2nd edition.)

'Five love-letters from a Nun to a Cavalier,' etc. etc., 1701. 16mo. (3rd edition.)

* 'New Miscellaneous | Poems | with five | Love-
Letters | from | a Nun to a Cavalier | . Done into
With frontispiece. 16mo. The Letters occupy
pp. 3-43; the date of the 1st edition is unknown.

'Letters | from a | Portuguese Nun | to | an Offi-
cer | in the | French Army.' | Translated by | W. R.
Bowles, Esqre. London, 1808. 12mo., with frontis-
piece. pp. xvi-125. This includes the so-called
Second Part of the Letters.

'Letters from a Portuguese Nun,' etc., etc., 1817.
(2nd edition.)

'Letters from a Portuguese Nun,' etc., etc., 1828.
(3rd edition.)

'The Love Letters of a | Portuguese Nun | being
the letters written by Marianna | Alcaforado to Noël
Bouton de Cha-milly, Count of St. Leger (later | Marquis of Chamilly) in | the year 1668.' | Trans-
PORTUGUESE NUN

‘Five love-letters written by a Cavalier (the Chevalier Del) in answer to the five love-letters written to him by a Nun.’ London 1694. 12mo.

* ‘Seven | Portuguese Letters; | being a | second part | to the | Five Love-Letters | from a | Nun | to a | Cavalier |.’ London 1681. pp. iii-78. 8vo.

* ‘Seven | Love-Letters | from a | Nun | to a | Cavalier,’ | etc.. etc., 1693. Small 4to. (2nd edition.)

N.B.—The translations marked with an asterisk are not mentioned by Senhor Cordeiro in his Bibliography.
APPENDIX
DURING the passage of the present work through the press, Mr. York Powell was fortunate enough to acquire by purchase in Oxford a book not mentioned in any bibliographical dictionary, nor possessed by any of the chief English libraries, containing a translation into verse of the five Letters of the Portuguese Nun. On account of the rarity of the book, of which this is probably a unique copy, as well as of the curious rendering of the famous Letters, it seemed advisable to transcribe here all that concerned the love-lorn Marianna, which has therefore been done. It should perhaps be mentioned that every inquiry as to the author of this translation and the date of its first edition has proved fruitless.

The following is a description of the book in question—
New Miscellaneous

POEMS

With Five

Love-Letters

FROM

A Run to a Cavalier.

Done into Verse.

Nil dulcius est iisdem amare aut amari,
præter hoc ipsum amare & amari.


London, Printed for W. Mears, at
the Lamb without Temple-bar. 1713.
LETTERS OF A NUN

One vol. in 16mo.

First comes the Preface, then a Table of Contents, and the title-page to the Letters, which runs,

Five | Love-Letters | From a | Nun | to | A Cavalier | Done into Verse | London | Printed in the Year 1713.

The Letters take up pp. 3-43, after which is another title-page to the Miscellaneous Poems, then the Poems themselves follow, occupying pp. 47-129.

The frontispiece to the volume shows the Nun seated at a table in the act of writing; upon the table is a lighted candle, rosary and ink-pot, while the portrait of her lover hangs over some book-shelves. The engraving is unsigned, and seems to be different from any of those hitherto recorded.
LOVE-LETTERS
FROM
A NUN TO A CAVALIER

LETTER I

H! the unhappy Joys which Love contains,
How short the Pleasures, and how long the Pains!
Curs'd be the treach'rous Hopes that drew me on,
And made me fondly to my Ruin run.
What I the Blessing of my Life design'd
Is now become the Torment of my Mind:
A Torment! which is equally as great
As is his Absence that doth it create.
Heav'n's! must this Absence then for ever last,
This Absence! which does all my comfort blast?
Must I no more enjoy the pleasing Light
That charm'd my Heart with Rapture and Delight?
Must I no more those lovely Eyes behold
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LETTERS OF A NUN

Which have so oft their Master’s Passion told?
Nor was I wanting in the same intent;
A thousand times my Eyes in Flashes sent
The Dictates of my Heart, and shew’d you what
they meant.
But now they must be other ways employ’d:
When I reflect on what I have enjoy’d
Tears of their own accord in Streams will flow,
To think I’m scorned, and left by faithless you.

And yet my Passion does so far exceed
A vulgar Flame, that I with Pleasure bleed,
And doat upon the Torments which from you pro-
ceed.
From the first moment I beheld your Face,
To you I dedicated all my Days:
Your Eyes at first an easie Conquest gain’d,
Which since they have but too too well maintain’d.
Your Name each Hour I constantly repeat;
But what’s (alas !) the Comfort which I meet?
Nought but my wretched Fate’s too true Advice,
Which whispers to me in such Words as these:
Ah ! Mariane, why do’st hope in vain
To see thy lovely Fugitive again?
The dear, false, cruel Man ’s for ever gone,
And thou, unhappy thou ! art left alone:
Gone is the Tyrant, slighting all thy Charms,
And longs to languish in another’s Arms.
In vain you weep, in vain you sigh and mourn,
For he will never, never more return.
To fly from thee, he left his Downy Ease,
And scorn’d the Dangers of the raging Seas.

APPENDIX

Letter I

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APPENDIX

Letter I

In France, dissolv’d in Pleasures, now he lies,
And for new Beauties every moment dies;
The Joys which once he with such Ardour sought
Are now (alas!) all vanish’d and forgot;
Nor art Thou ever present in his Thought.—-

But hold! my Passion hurries me too far,
And makes me think you falser than you are.
You’ve, sure, more Honour than to use me so
For what I have endur’d and done for you,
Forget me! ’tis impossible you shou’d;
Nay, I believe you cannot if you wou’d.
My Case is bad enough without that Curse,
I need not find fresh Plagues to make it worse.
And when I think with how much care you strove
To let me see at first, your dawning Love;
When I reflect upon the Bliss it brought,
The Pleasure is too great to be forgot;
And I shou’d think I were ungrateful grown,
Should I not love you, tho’ by you undone.—-

Yet oh! the Mem’ry of my former Joys,
So hard ’s my Fate, my present Ease destroys.
’Tis strange that what gave such delight before,
Shou’d serve to make me now lament the more.—-

A Thousand Passions, not to be exprest,
Your Letter rais’d in my distracted Breast;
My vanquish’d Senses from their Office fled,
A long time stupid on the ground I laid,
And since I’ve often wish’d I had been dead.
But I unhappily reviv’d again
To suffer greater Torment, greater Pain;
PORTUGUESE NUN

A Thousand Evils I each Day endure,
Which nothing but the Sight of you can cure;
Yet I submit, without repining too,
Because the ills I bear proceed from you.——

And 'tis because you know the Pow'r you have,
You use me thus, and make me such a Slave.
Oh! give me leave to speak——
Is this the Recompense you think is due,
To those that sacrifice their Lives for you?
Yet use me as you will, to my last Breath,
Tho' loath'd by you, I '11 keep my plighted Faith.——

And did you understand what Pleasure lies
In being constant, you wou'd Change despise.
You '11 never meet with one will prove so kind,
Tho' in another you more Beauty find.
Yet I can tell the time, tho' now 'tis gone,
(Poor as it is) when mine has pleas'd alone.——

You need not bid me keep you in my Mind,
I'm too much of myself to that inclin'd.
I can't forget you, nor those Hopes you give
Of your return, in Portugal to live.
Cou'd I from this unhappy Cloister break,
You thro' the Perils of the World I 'd seek.
I 'd follow where you went, without Regret,
And constantly upon your Fortune wait,
Think not I keep these Hopes to ease my Grief,
Or bring to my despairing Soul Relief;
No, I 'm too well acquainted with my Fate,
And know I 'm born to be unfortunate.——

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Yet while I write, some glimmering Hopes appear
That yield a respite to my wild Despair,
And some small Ease afford amidst my Care.
Tell me, what made you press my Ruin so?
Why with your Craft a harmless Maid undo?
Why strove t' ensnare my too-unguarded Heart,
When you were sure ere long you shou'd depart?
What Injury had I e'er done to you,
To make you with such Wiles, my Innocence pursue?

But pardon me, (thou Charmer of my Soul !)
For I will charge you with no crime at all.
Let me hear oft from you, where-e'er you are,
For I methinks shou'd in your Fortune share,
But above all, I beg you, by the Love
Which once you swore shou'd ever constant prove;
By all those Vows, which you so often made
When on my panting Bosom you have laid,
Let me no longer this sad Absence mourn,
But bless me, bless me with your kind Return.
Adieu—and yet so tender am I grown,
I know not how to end these Lines so soon;
Oh ! that I could but in their Room convey
Myself, thou lovely faithless Man, to Thee!
Fool that I am, I quite distracted grow,
And talk of things impossible to do;
Adieu,—for I can say no more—Adieu.—
Love me for ever, and I 'll bear my Fate,
(Hard as it is) without the least Regret.
LETTER II

From a Nun to a Cavalier

LAS! it is impossible to tell
Th' afflicting Pains that injur'd
Lovers feel.
And if my Flame, by what I write,
you rate,
Then have I made my self unfor-
tunate.

Blest should I be, cou'd your own Breast define
The raging Passion that I feel in mine;
But I must ne'er enjoy that happy Fate:
And if I'm always doom'd to bear your Hate,
'Tis base to use me at this barb'rous rate.
Oh! it distracts my Soul when I reflect
Upon my slighted Charms, and your Neglect:
And 'twill t' your Honour as destructive be,
As 'tis conducive to my Misery.

It now is come to pass what then I fear'd,
When you to leave me in such haste prepar'd.
Fool as I was, to think your Flame was true,
True as th' Excessive Love I bear to you!
T'encrease my Torments all your Acts incline;
To make me wretched is your whole Design.

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APPENDIX  Nor wou'd your Passion any Ease allow,
Letter II    If only grounded on my Love for you:
             But I'm so far ev'n from that poor Pretence,
             Six Months are past since you departed hence;
             Six tedious Melancholy Months are gone,
             And I've not been so much as thought upon:
             Blind with the fondness of my own Desire,
             Else might have found my Joys wou'd soon expire.
             How cou'd I think that you'd contented be
             To leave your Friends and Native Place for me?
             Alas! Remembrance of my former Joys
             Adds to the Number of my Miseries.
             Will all my flatt'ring Hopes then prove in vain?
             Must I ne'er Live to see you here again?
             Why may not I once more behold your Charms,
             Once more enfold you in my longing Arms?
             Why may not I, as heretofore, receive
             Those sweet transporting Joys which none but you
             can give?——

I find the Flame that set my Soul on Fire
In you was nothing but a loose Desire.
I should have reason'd ere it was too late,
And so prevented my approaching Fate:
My busie Thoughts were all on you bestow'd,
I for my own repose not one allow'd:
So pleas'd was I, whilst in your Lovely Arms,
I thought myself secure from future Harms:
But yet you may remember, oft I've said,
You 'd be the Ruin of a harmless Maid;
But those were Notions that abortive dy'd,
And I upon your flatt'ring Oaths rely'd.
PORTUGUESE NUN

Cou'd I cease loving you, I shou'd have Ease,
But that's a Cure far worse than the Disease;
And 'tis (alas) impossible, I find,
To raze your Image from my tortur'd Mind;
And it's a thing which I did ne'er design,
For your Condition is far worse than mine;¹
You 'd better share what my poor soul endures,
Than th' empty Joys you find in new Amours.
So far am I from envying your Fate,
I rather pity your unhappy State.
I all your false dissembling Arts desie:
I know I 'm rooted in your Memory,
And am perhaps the happiest of the Two,
In that I now am more employ'd than you.
They 've made me Keeper of the Convent Door,
Which is a Place I ne'er supply'd before;
It is an Office I ne'er thought t' have had;
All who discourse me think that I am mad.
Our Convent too must be as mad as I,
Or they might have perceiv'd my Incapacity.

Oh! how I wish to be as blest as they
Who, as your Servants, your Commands obey.
I shou'd be Proud, like one of them, to wait
On you, tho' 'twere ev'n in the meanest State.
My Love for you I don't at all repent;
That you 've seduced me, I am well content.
Your Rig'rous Absence, tho' 'twill fatal prove,
Yet lessens not the Vigour of my Love.
My Passion I to all the World proclaim,
And make no Secret of my raging Flame.

¹
Some Things I've done irregular, 'tis true,
And glory'd in them, 'cause they were for you;
My Fame, my Honour, and Religion, are
All made subservient to the Love I bear.

Whilst I am writing, I have no intent
That you shou'd Answer what I now have sent:
Force not your self, I'll not receive a Word
You send, that comes not of its own accord.
If not by writing you do Ease receive,
So 't too to me shall Satisfaction give,
To Pardon all your Faults I'm much inclin'd,
And shall be pleas'd to prove you're not unkind.

I'm told that France has made a Peace; if so
A Visit here then sure you might bestow,
And take me with you wheresoe'er you go,
That must alone at your disposal be,
I fear (alas) it is too good for me.
Since you first left this sad forsaken Place,
I've not enjoy'd a Moment's Health or Ease:
The Accent of your Name my Cares abate,
Which I a thousand times a Day repeat.
Within our Convent some there are who know
From whence the Source of all my Sorrows flow,
Who strive to Ease me and Discourse of you.

I'm constant to my Chamber, which is dear
To me, because you've been so often there:
Your Picture as unvaluable I prize,
And have it always fixt before my Eyes:
PORTUGUESE NUN

The Counterfeit does Satisfaction give;
But when I think that I must never live
To see the Bright, the Fair Original,
Great are the Horrors, great the Pains I feel,

Oh! how I 'm wrack'd and torn with endless Pain
To think I ne'er must see you here again!
But why shou'd it be possible to be
That I your lovely Form no more must see?
For ever! are you then for ever gone?
For ever must I make my fruitless Moan?
No, Mariane, thou wilt soon have Peace;
Kind Death approaches, he will give thee Ease.
Ah me! how fast my fainting Spirits fail!—
Farewel, Oh, pity me!—Thou lovely Man,
Farewel.—
LETTER III

From a Nun to a Cavalier

What will become of miserable me?
What will th' Event of my Misfortunes be,
How can I hold, now all my hopes retire?
On them I liv'd, and must with them expire.

Where are the cordial Lines to heal my Pain,
T'assure me I shall see you here again?
Where are the Letters that should bring Relief,
Compose my Soul, and mitigate my Grief?

Fool'd with vain Projects, I of late design'd
To strive to calm and heal my tortur'd Mind:
The slender Hopes I have of seeing you,
Joyn'd with the Coldness of your last Adieu;
Th' Improbability of your Return,
The many tedious restless Nights I've born,
Your frivolous Excuses to be gone,
Encourag'd my Design and urg'd me on;
Nor did I doubt Success till, ah! too soon,
I found I still must love, still doat and be undone.
LETTERS OF A NUN

Wretch that I am! compel'd alone to bear
The heavy Burthen, which you ought to share.
You're the Offender, and I undergo
The Punishment, which ought to fall on you.
'Tis plain, I never yet enjoy'd your Love,
Since all my Torments can't your Pity move,
Feign'd were the Transports, false the Vows you made,
And only us'd that I might be betray'd.
Your whole Design was to ensnare my Heart
Then cruelly to act a Tyrant's Part.

T' abuse a Love like mine, is highly base,
And cannot but redound to your Disgrace.
Who would have thought, when of my love possest,
'Twas not enough to make you ever blest?
And 'tis for your own sake I'm troubled most,
When I but think upon the Joys you've lost:
Nay, did you judge aright,—
The difference soon by you perceiv'd would be,
Betwixt abusing and obliging me;
Betwixt the Pleasures, which you might have prov'd,
Of loving much, and being much belov'd.

Such is the Force of my excessive woe,
I'm quite insensible of what I do;
Ten Thousand different Thoughts distract my Mind,
My rigid Fate can't be by words defin'd;
To Death I love, yet cannot wish that you
Should share the Miseries I undergo.
To loath, t'have all things odious in your sight,
Receive no Ease by Day, no Rest by Night:

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APPENDIX
Letter III

Your Soul o'erloaded with continual Cares,
Your Eyes still flowing with a flood of Tears;
Did you but suffer this my grief for you,
'Twou'd quickly finish what my own can't do.

Why do I write? Shou'd I your Pity move,
What good wou'd Pity do without your Love?
I scorn it; and my self with equal Scorn
I loath, when I reflect on what I've born:
My Friends I've lost, and Reputation too,
Have ran the hazard of our Laws for you:
But what's much worse, now I all this have done,
False as you are, ev'n you're ingrateful grown.

Yet, oh! I cannot, cannot yet repent,
But rather am with all my Ills content:
I cannot grieve at what I've done for you,
But more for your dear sake wou'd undergo;
To you wou'd sacrifice my Life and Fame;
They're yours, which you (and only you) can claim.

In short, I'm vex'd with every thing I do;
Nor can I think I'm kindly us'd by you.
False as I am, why don't I die with Shame,
And so convince you of my raging Flame?
If I had lov'd so well as oft I've said,
Your Cruelty ere this had struck me dead.
No, all this while, 'tis you've deluded been,
And have the greatest Reason to complain.
How could I see you go, and yet survive,
out of Hopes of your Return and Live?
I've wrong'd you; but I hope you will forgive.
PORTUGUESE
NUN

Yet grant it not, treat me severely still,
Tell me, that I’ve abus’d, and us’d you ill.
Be harder still to please, encrease my Care.
And end my Sufferings with a sure Despair.
A Fate that’s Tragical would doubtless be
The Way t’ endear me to your Memory.
Perhaps too you’d be touch’d with such a Death,
When you reflect how I’ve resign’d my Breath.
To me I’m sure, ’twou’d welcome be indeed,
And far to be preferr’d before the Life I lead.—

Farewel, I wish your Eyes I’d never seen,
But ah! my Heart, now contradicts my Pen.
I find I’d rather live involv’d in Harms
Than once to wish I ne’er had known your Charms.
And since you think not fit to mend my State,
I’ll cheerfully (tho’ hard) embrace my Fate.
Adieu,—but Promise me when I am dead,
Some pitying Tears you’ll o’er my Ashes shed.
At least, let my too-sad Example prove
The means to hinder any other Love.
’Twill yield some Ease, since I must lose your Charms,
That you’ll not revel in another’s Arms.
Neither can you be so inhumane sure
To make my Fate assist a new Amour.
I fear my Lines are troublesome to you;
But you’ll forgive my foolery—adieu,
Ah me! methinks too often I repeat
The Story of my too unhappy Fate;
Yet let me pay the Thanks to you I owe
For all the Miseries I undergo.

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LETTERS OF A NUN

APPENDIX
Letter III

I hate the State in which I liv'd before
The more my Cares encrease, I 'm pleas'd the more;
My Flame does greater every moment grow—
And I have still—Ten Thousand Thousand
Things to say to you.—
From a Nun to a Cavalier

E Gods! the Torments that from Love arise
When the dear Object's absent from our Eyes!
I'm told you've been by raging Tempests toss'd,
And forc'd to seek some Hospitable Coast,
The Sea, that is the faithless Lover's Foe,
I doubt will hardly e'er agree with you.
And oh! my Fears for th' Dangers you may meet,
Make me my own Tormenting Pains forget.

But is your Friend then more concern'd to know Than I, the Perils that you undergo?
If not, how comes it that you cou'd afford To write to him, whilst I have not a Word?—

Why do I talk? what cou'd I else expect? But base Ingratitude, and cold Neglect?
From one who slighting all which once he swore Now sooks new Beauties on a Foreign Shore.—
Yet Heav'n avert its Wrath, nor may'st thou be E'er punished for thy Treachery to me,
For faithless as you are, I’m still inclin’d
Not to revenge, but rather to be kind.

Tis plain, I’m now the least of all your Care,
Else you’d have some regard to My Despair.
But I, tho’ wrack’d and torn with endless Pain,
To one relentless as the grave complain.
Yet I, fond I! regardless of my Fame,
Still Cherish, and Indulge this fatal Flame;
In vain my Reason offers to perswade,
I scorn its Counsel, and contemn its Aid,
And find a Pleasure in my being mad.

Had you but with this Coldness been posset,
When first you rais’d those Tumults in my Breast:
How many plagues had it from me detain’d!
How calm! how easie had I now remain’d!

But where’s the Woman wou’d not have believ’d
Your Arts, and not have been (like me) deceiv’d?
Who cou’d your num’rous Oaths and Vows mistrust?
Who cou’d have thought that you shou’d prove un-just?
The frequent Protestations that you made
Wou’d have a Heart more firm than mine betray’d.
’Tis hard to think the Man whom once we love,
Shou’d false, shou’d cruel, and ingrateful prove.
Nay, I’m so easie, I’ve already made
Excuses for you, and wou’d fain perswade
My too too cred’lous Heart, that I am not betray’d.
It was your Converse that at first refin’d
My Ignorance, and till then, unpolish’d Mind.
'Twas from your Passion that I caught this Flame
That is destructive to my Ease and Fame.
In vain 'gainst you I strove my Heart to arm,
For you in ev'ry Action had a Charm.
Your pleasing Humour, and the Oaths you swore,
Made me believe you ever wou'd adore.
But now (alas !) those grateful Thoughts are fled,
And all my Hopes are with my Pleasures dead:
I sigh and weep, a thousand Plagues possess
My Soul, and give me not a moment's Ease.
Great were my past Delights, I must confess,
Excessive were the Joys, and vast the Bliss,
But then, oh, cruel Fate! my Miseries were not less.

Had I with Artifice e'er drawn you on,
And what I most desir'd have seem'd to shun;
Had I the cunning Arts of Women us'd,
And with feign'd Scorn your gen'rous Love abus'd;
Had I my growing Flame with Care suppress
When first I felt it rising in my Breast;
Nay, when I found I lov'd, had I conceal'd
My Passion, nor to you my Soul reveal'd,
That for your Hate had been some small Pretence,
Which you might now have urg'd in your defence;
But—
So far was I from using such Deceit,
My Heart was never conscious of a Cheat:
And I no sooner of your Passion knew,
But frankly I return'd the like to you.—

Yet you, tho' I was fondly blind, cou'd see,
Not ign'rant what the Consequence wou'd be.
Why with such Wiles then did you draw me on,
To leave me wretched, hopeless, and undone?
You knew you shou’d not long continue here,
And so did make me love but to despair.
Why was I singl’d out alone to be
Th’ unhappy Object of your Cruelty?—
Sure in this Country you might those have met
Who were for your cross Purposes more fit;
Such, who by frequent Use had got the Pow’r
To give their Hearts but for the present Hour;
Who of your Falshood never wou’d complain,
Nor give themselves for you a moment’s Pain.
Is’t like a Lover then to use me so,
Me, who’d give up all I have for you?
Is it not rather like a Tyrant done,
To ruine and destroy what is your own?

Had you but lov’d so truly as you said,
You never from me in such haste had fled.
But you! how easie did you go away!
Nay, e’en seem’d pleas’d you cou’d no longer stay
The few Excuses that you made to go,
How slight they were! but any thing wou’d do,
To fly from one already nauseous grown,
That lov’d you but too well, and trusted you too soon.—

‘My Friends (you cry) and Honour call me hence,
‘And I must now be gone, to serve my Prince,’
Why was not that nice Honour thought on then,
When you deluded me to give up mine?

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This was all Fiction, which you did devise
To seem less guilty, and to blind my Eyes.
But, ah! should I have too much Bliss enjoy’d,
Might I with you have liv’d, with you have dy’d.—
My only Comfort is, I’ve been to you,
Spite of this Absence, constant, just, and true;
And can you then, who all my Thoughts controul,
And know the earnest Secrets of my Soul,
Can you be so regardless of my Pray’r,
T’abandon me for ever to Despair?
You see I ’m mad, but yet I ’ll not complain,
For I ’m so us’d to suffer your Disdain,
That now I find a Pleasure in my Pain.—

But what ’s my greatest Curse, those things no more
Can please me now, which I have lik’d before.
My Friends, Relations, and my Convent too,
Are odious all, and all detested grow,
Nay, ev’ry thing that not relates to you.
The flitting Hours of each succeeding Day,
If not on you bestow’d, I think they ’re thrown away.—

So great ’s my Love, and with such pow’r does rule,
It takes up the whole Business of my Soul.
Why then t’expel this Passion shou’d I strive?
For ’tis impossible I shou’d survive
This restless state, and with Indiff’rence live.

So much I now am chang’d from what I was,
That all observe and wonder what ’s the Cause:
My Mother chides, and urges me to tell
What ’tis creates my Grief, and what I ail,
THE LETTERS OF A

APPENDIX
Letter IV

I hardly know what Answers I have made,
But I believe that I have all betray'd.
The most severe and hardest Hearts relent,
And are with Pity touch'd at my Complaint.
To cruel Thee alone I sigh in vain,
For all the World beside compassionates my Pain.

'Tis seldom that you write, and when you do,
Your Lukewarmness each Line does plainly shew.
'Tis all but Repetition and Constraint,
Dull is each Word, and each Expression faint.

My kind Companion took me t'other day
To the Balcon' that looks tow'rs Mertola;
The Sight so struck my Heart that, while I stood,
Strait from my Eyes a briny Deluge flow'd.
I then return'd, and strove to ease my Care,
For all my Thoughts brought nothing but Despair.
What others do to help me in my Grief,
Adds only to my Pains, and brings me no Relief.

From that Balcon' I often took delight
To see you pass, and languish'd for the Sight.
'Twas there that fatal Day I chanc'd to be
When first my Heart resign'd its Liberty:
'Twas there I drew the Poison from your Eyes,
'Twas there this raging Passion had its rise.
Methought on me alone you seem'd to gaze,
And careless look'd on every other Face;
And when you stopt, I fondly thought to me
'Twas meant that I your lovely Shape might see.
PORTUGUESE NUN

I call to mind what Trembling seiz'd my Breast,
Caus'd by a Leap given by your prancing Beast.
I near concern'd in all your Actions was,
Flatter'd my self I was of some the cause.
What follow'd, to relate I 'll now forbear,
Lest you appear more cruel than you are;
And 'twill perhaps your Vanity encrease
To find my Labours have no more Success.
Fool as I am! to think to move you more
By Threats than all my Love cou'd do before!
Too well (alas!) I know my Fate to come,
And you're too too unjust to make me doubt my
Doom.

Since I am not allow'd your Love to share,
All ills in Nature I have cause to fear.
I shou'd be pleas'd did all our Sex admire
Your Charms, if you did not return the Fire;
But there's no fear, I by Experience know
None ever long will be ador'd by you.
You 'll easily enough forget my Charms
Without the taking others to your Arms.
By Heav'ns, I love, I doat to that degree,
That since I find you 're ever lost to me,
I wish you 'ad some Excuse to hide your Crime,
That to the World you might less guilty seem.
'Tis true, 'twould make my Case but so much worse,
But then 'twould advantageous be to yours.—

While you are free, in France, perhaps the fear
Of not returning Love for Love may keep you there.

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APPENDIX
Letter IV

But mind not that, if you I sometimes see,
I shall contented with my Fortune be,
To know one country holds my Love and me.

Why with vain Hopes do I my Reason blind?
To one less doting you may prove more kind.
Pride in another may a Conquest gain
Greater than mine, with all the endless Pain
Of constant Love, which I 've endur'd for you:
But, oh! from me take Warning what you do;
Retract your Heart ere yet (it) is too late,
And think upon my too too wretched Fate,
Reflect upon my endless Miseries,
Despairs, Distractions, and my Jealousies;
Think on the Trust that I 've repos'd in you,
Th' Extravagance which all my Letters shew.

I well remember you in Earnest said,
For one in France you once a Passion had.
If she 's the Reason why you don't return,
Be free, and let me thus no longer mourn;
For if my Hopes and Wishes are but vain,
Tell me the Truth——
And end at once my wretched Life and Pain.—
To me her Picture and her Letters send,
They 'll make me worse, or else my Fate amend;
Such is the State of miserable me,
That any change would advantageous be
Your Brother's and your Sister's send me too,
All will be dear to me that 's so to you.—

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PORTUGUESE NUN

Methinks I cou'd submit to wait upon
The happy Woman that your Heart has won,
So humble am I made by all your Scorn,
And the ill Usage that from you I've born;
Scarce dare I say, I may myself allow
To Jealous be, without displeasing you,
Fain wou'd I think that I mistaken am,
And fain persuad'd be, that you ar not to blame.

The Person that 's to bear these Lines to you,
Wants to be gone, and does impatient grow.
I thought in this not to have giv'n Offence,
But yet I'm fall'n into Extravagance.
And now methinks 'tis time that I had done,
But I've no Pow'r to end these Lines so soon,
Nor force the pleasing Vision from my Sight;
My lovely Charmer's present while I write.
Twelve solitary Months are almost past
Since in your trembling Arms you held me last,
And fondly, to my Ruin, me embrac'd.
Fierce, and true as mine, I thought your Flame,
And, oh! believ'd 'twould always be the same.
Ne'er cou'd I think, that when you had enjoy'd
My Favours, with them you'd so soon be cloy'd:
Or that the Dangers of the Sea you'd run,
Scorn Rocks and Pirates too, that you might shun
A Maid that lov'd like me, and is by you undone.
Reflect, thou faithless Man! and call to mind
What I've endur'd for you, yet not repin'd,
And tell me, can this Treatment then be kind?

APPENDIX
Letter IV

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APPENDIX
Letter IV

The Officer now presses me to 've done
My Letter, or (he says) he must be gone;
He's as impatient, as if he, like you,
Were running from another Mistress too,
Farewel—from me you parted with more ease
(Perhaps for ever too) than I can do with these.

My Mind a thousand pleasing Notions frames,
And I cou’d call you many tender Names;
More dear than is my Life to me, are you;
And dearer far than I imagine too;
Sure never any yet so cruel prov’d,
To be so barb’rous when so well belov’d.

'Tis hard to end,—See I begin anew,
And th' Officer won't stay; oh! let him go:
I write to entertain my self, not you;
And 'tis so long, you 'll never read it thro',
Gods! how have I deserving such Plagues as these?
And why was you pick'd out to spoil my Peace?
Oh! why was I not born where I might pass
In Innocence and Happiness my Days?
'Tis too too much to bear, no Tongue can tell
What I endure—Farewel—false Man!—Farewel,
See! see! how miserable I 'm made by you,
When I dare not so much as ask your Love—adieu.
LETTER V

From a Nun to a Cavalier

HOPE, by th' different Ayre of this, you 'll find
That as I've chang'd my Stile, I've chang'd my Mind.
The Substance of these Lines will let you know
That you're to take them for my last Adieu:
For since your Love is past redemption gone,
I've no Pretence to justifie my own.
All that I have of yours shall be convey'd
To you, without so much as mention made
Of your loath'd Name; the Pacquet shall not bear
Those Letters which I now detest to hear.

In Donna Brites I can well confide,
And whom, you know, I've other ways imploy'd;
Your Picture she'll (and all that 's yours) remove,
Those once-endearing Pledges of your Love:
A thousand Times I've had a strong Desire
To tear and throw them in the flaming Fire;
But I'm a Fool too easie in my Pain,
And such a generous Rage can't entertain.

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Wou'd but the Story of my Cares create
The like to you, methinks 'twou'd mine abate.
Your Trifles, I must own, went near my Heart,
With them I found it difficult to part.
To what was yours I bore such mortal Love,
Tho' you yourself did quite indiffer'nt prove,
They've cost me many a Sigh, and many a Tear,
And more Distraction than you e'er shall hear.
My Friend, I say, now keeps them in her Pow'r,
And I am never to behold 'em more;
She them will secretly to you convey,
Without my Knowledge hasten them away:
Tho' for a sight I on my Knees shou'd lie,
The more I pray, she must the more deny.

Ne'er had I known the Fury of my Flame
Had I not try'd my Passion to reclaim;
Nay, to attempt a Cure I 'd ne'er begun,
Cou'd I 've foreseen the Hazards I must run:
For sure I am, I cou'd with greater Ease
Support your Scorn, as rig'rous as it is,
Rather than to retain the dreadful Thought,
That Absence must for ever be my Lot.

I shou'd be happy if I cou'd be Proud,
And with the Nature of our Sex endow'd:
Cou'd I despise you, and your Actions scorn,
And be reveng'd for all the Ills I 've born.

Fool as I am, to let my hopes rely
On one who strives t' encrease my Misery!
You talk of Truth and Sincerity;
They both are what you never shew'd to me.
To tell you what I've born 'tis now too late,
(For th' most obliged, and yet the most ingrate)
Let it suffice I all your Falsehood know;
And all I ask for what I've done for you,
Is, Write no more, but some Invention find
To tear your Image from my Tortur'd Mind.

I too must now forbear to write to you,
Lest a Relapse shou'd by that means ensue;
And the Event of this I've no Desire to know.
Methinks you shou'd enough contented be
With th' Ills you have already brought on me:
Sure now you need no more molest my Ease,
Or shake the Structure of my future Peace.
Do you but leave me in Uncertainty,
I hope in time I shall at quiet be:
'Tis not impossible but I may find
A Love as true as you have been unkind.
But what will Love that any Man shall shew
Afford to me, without I love him too?
Why shou'd his Am'rous Passion more incline
To move my Heart, than yours was mov'd by mine?
And I perceive by what I now endure,
That the first Wounds of Love admits no Cure;
All sorts of Remedies then prove in vain,
W' are ne'er recover'd to our selves again;
So fixt, and so immutable is Fate,
We're doomed to Love, though w'are repaid with Hate.

I'm sure I cou'd not so hard-hearted be,
To treat another as you've treated me:
APPENDIX

Letter V

Provided you was to another chang'd, Of you I cou'd not that way take revenge.
I'd fain perswade my self a Nun shou'd ne'er Confine the Passions of a Cavalier;
But if a man wou'd by his Reason move,
A Mistress in a Convent is most fit for Love;
Those in the World do all their Thoughts employ
On Balls, on Visits, and their Finery,
Encrease their Husbands' Jealousies and Cares,
Whilst those who favour us have no such Fears.
Alas! we've nothing here to change Desire,
But by Reflection daily fan the Fire.

I wou'd not have you think that I maintain
These Arguments, in hopes I may regain
Your Love; too well I know my Destiny;
I always was, and still must wretched be.
When you was here I did no Rest enjoy:
Present, for fear of infidelity;
When distant, Absence did my ease destroy.
I always trembled while you was with me,
Lest you shou'd be found, and come to Injury:
While in the Field, both Lives in Danger were;
Fear of my parents did encrease my Care.
So that 'tis plain, ev'n at the best, my Mind
Was as disturb'd as I at present find:
Since you left me, had you but once seem'd kind,
I shou'd have follow'd, and not been confin'd.
Alas! what wou'd have then become of me,
T'have brought a Scandal on my Family;
T'have lost my Parents and my Honour too,
And, after all, to be despis'd by you?

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PORTUGUESE
NUN

What Thoughts soever you of me retain,
I reconjure you ne’er to write again:
Methinks you shou’d sometimes reflect upon
The base ungen’rous Injuries you ’ve done.

No woman sure did e’er so easy prove;
What did you ever do to gain my Love?
You was the first that to the Army went;
To stay the longest there, the best content.
Did you more careful of your Person grow,
Altho’ upon my knees I begg’d you wou’d do so?
Did you e’er strive to fix in Portugal,
A Place where you was well belov’d of all?
Your Brother’s Letter hurry’d you away,
On the receipt of it you ’d not a moment stay;
And I ’m inform’d you ne’er was pleased more
Than when on board a making from our Shore.
You can’t deny but you deserve my Hate,
And I may thank my self for all my Fate;
I was too free, and gave my Heart too soon,
And brought upon my self the Ills I ’ve undergone.
Alas! from Love alone Love ne’er will rise,
It must be rais’d by Skill and Artifice.
Your first Design was to ensnare my Love,
And nothing wou’d have spar’d that might successful
prove:
Nay, I believe, if it had needful been,
Rather than failed, you wou’d have lov’d again;
But you found easier ways to work upon,
And thought it best to let the Love alone.—

Perfidious Man! which way can you atone
For th’ base and treach’rous Affronts you ’ve done?

207
The blinding Passion now is vanquished quite,
That kept the foulness of them from my sight:
Must my tormented Soul never have Ease?
When shall I be, thou cruel Man, at Peace?

Within a while you yet perhaps may hear,
Or have a Letter, from your injur’d Fair,
To let you know that she is at repose,
Freed of the Torments that from you arose.
Oh! what a Pleasure it will be to me,
Without concern t’ accuse you of your Treachery!
When I’ve forgot the wracking Pains I’ve born,
And able am to talk of you with Scorn!

You’ve had the better, it is plainly prov’d,
Because I you have out of Reason lov’d;
But by the Conquest you small Honour won,
For I was young, and easily undone.
I, whilst a Child, was cloister’d, knew no hurt,
Discours’d with none but of the vulgar Sort,
And what belonged to Flatt’ry never knew,
Till I unhappily was taught by you:
You’d a good Character of every one,
Which you made use of to entice me on.

My Indignation, and your Falsehood too,
Makes me at present much disorder’d grow;
But, I assure you, I will shortly find
Some Means or other for to ease my Mind.
Perhaps may take a way to quit my Care
Which, when ’tis acted, you’ll be pleas’d to hear.
Fool as I am, to say thus o'er and o'er
The same that I've so often said before!
Of you a Thought I must not entertain,
And fancy too I ne'er shall write again?
For what occasion's there that I to you
Shou'd be accountable for all I do?

THE END OF THE NUN'S LETTERS.

APPENDIX
Letter V