THE MASQUERADE: OR, THE HISTORY OF LORD AVON AND MISS TAMEWORTH. IN A SERIES OF LETTERS. VOL. II

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HISTORY

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LORD AVON.

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IN & SERIES OF LETTERS.

V O L. II.

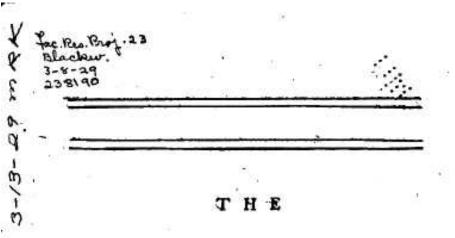
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MASQUERADE.

LETTER XXIX.

Mr. MOUNTNEY to Colonel ACKWORTH.

Y OU defire fo earneftly to hear how Avon and his Eudocia go on, that I proceed to inform you—My lord is perfectly recovered from his illnefs : but as to his jealoufy, it will not, I am inclined to imagine, be totally eradicated ; becaufe his love is, I think, increafed— The concern which fhe difcovered at his illnefs, and her readinefs to pardon him, Vol. II. B at

at a time when he knew he was the aggreffor, have operated fo powerfully on him, that he is half wild with rapture.

The picture which occasioned all this confusion was, it feems, drawn of the fize of that which Sedley gave to Olivia, and fet in the fame manner, by order of lady Avon; who, having long had a fancy to have my lord's portrait, in the drefs in which the first faw him, and thinking Sedley's picture a ftriking likenefs, went privately with Olivia to the painter, and defired him to copy my lord's face from her bracelet; (as he had refused to gratify her request, because he deemed it an idle one) and to drefs him in the manner fhe defcribed .- It was just come home that evening when he caught her admiring it-He took it for Sedley's; and from that miftake arofe the quarrel between -them, which was attended with fuch unhappy confequences.

Olivia, who before always took my lord's part, has owned to me that fhe thought

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thought him quite wrong : blaming, however, my lady for leaving him; and faying every thing the could think of, to perfuade her to ftay in town, but to no purpole .--

By what I can fee, my lady will be very glad to come to Grofvenor-Square; tho' my lord enjoys fo much of her company, with fo little interruption, that he will be very loth to give up his tranquility for crowds and noife.

A man may really live here very agreeably : the country is, at prefent, charming: what must it then be in the height of fummer?

Mr. Heber, the only near neighbour-(farmers excepted) is much of the gentleman, and is a true lover of the old English hospitality, His eldest daughter, Alicia, is a fine young woman, tho' fome years older than lady Avon or than Olivia, and a very different character; being neither fo meek as her fifter, nor fo fpirited as Eudocia : the is fenfible, good-natured, and

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and truly polite, according to my ideas of politenefs; for the always endeavours to make herfelf agreeable to those with whom fhe converfes, and to make them pleafed with themfelves. I honeftly declare that I could fpend my days with these worthy creatures : that is, if Olivia was difpofed to beftow her heart upon me .--But the poffession of her heart is a happinefs I dare not expect, tho' fhe is much more free and eafy in her behaviour to me than when we were in town. I might, I believe, be, in time, bleffed with her friendship; but the devil take your platonics, I will have nothing to do with them.

Avon has fo little platonifm, even in appearance, that Eudocia chides him feverely fometimes. I could not help finiling at them yefterday.—We were walking in the garden; fhe afked him if they fhould fet out for London next morning.

" What ?

"What? tired of Derbyshire already, my love? How happily could I spend all my days here with your charming company!—But you shall be indulged in every respect; only give me one more kis, and we will go to-morrow."

"Píhaw — You are never fatisfied," cried fhe—fmiling on me with fuch an exceffive archaefs, "even Mr. Mountney' laughs at you."—

" Laugh at me, madam," replied he; warmly; " may not a man kifs his wife without being laughed at? Whenever Mountney marries, he may take the fame liberty before me at any time.—Friendihip is nothing, if the pleafures refulting from it are not freely enjoyed."—

"Thankee, my lord," faid I, feizing Olivia—" If this young lady would but confent to look upon me, in the light in which you are viewed by lady Avon, you fhould not outdo me in love, I promife you."

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Olivia

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Olivia blufhed and broke from me, butfaid nothing.

Eudocia cried, "See there, my lord, the force of example! You have, by your behaviour, authorized your friend to be impertinent, and put us both out of countenance."

"Nay now, my lord," faid I, "I am quite of your fide of the queftion; e'enfay what you pleafe to her, and do what you pleafe with her."

This revived his good humour: he feized Eudocia, while I ran after Olivia, and had but juft caught her, when the lively lady Avon flew haftily from the arms of her hufband to fave her friend from mine. A romping-bout with two fuch fine creatures, few men could have refifted; and I fwear there was fo much brightnefs mixed with fenfibility in Eudocia's eyes, when fhe laid hold of my fhoulder, in order to give Olivia time to efcape, that I had need of all my friendfhip,