

LETTERS

FROM

L O N D O N.

London:

PRINTED FOR BURTON AND HARVEY,
Gracechurch-Street.

1808.

[Price One Shilling.]

Miss Elizabeth Johnson


the gift of
her naughty Brother

J. Johnson R.A. 1st
Jan. 7th 1847


Received by the

LETTERS,
WRITTEN
FROM LONDON,
DESCRIPTIVE OF
VARIOUS SCENES AND OCCURENCES
Frequently met with in the
METROPOLIS AND ITS VICINITY.

For the Amusement of Children.



ILLUSTRATED BY PLATES.



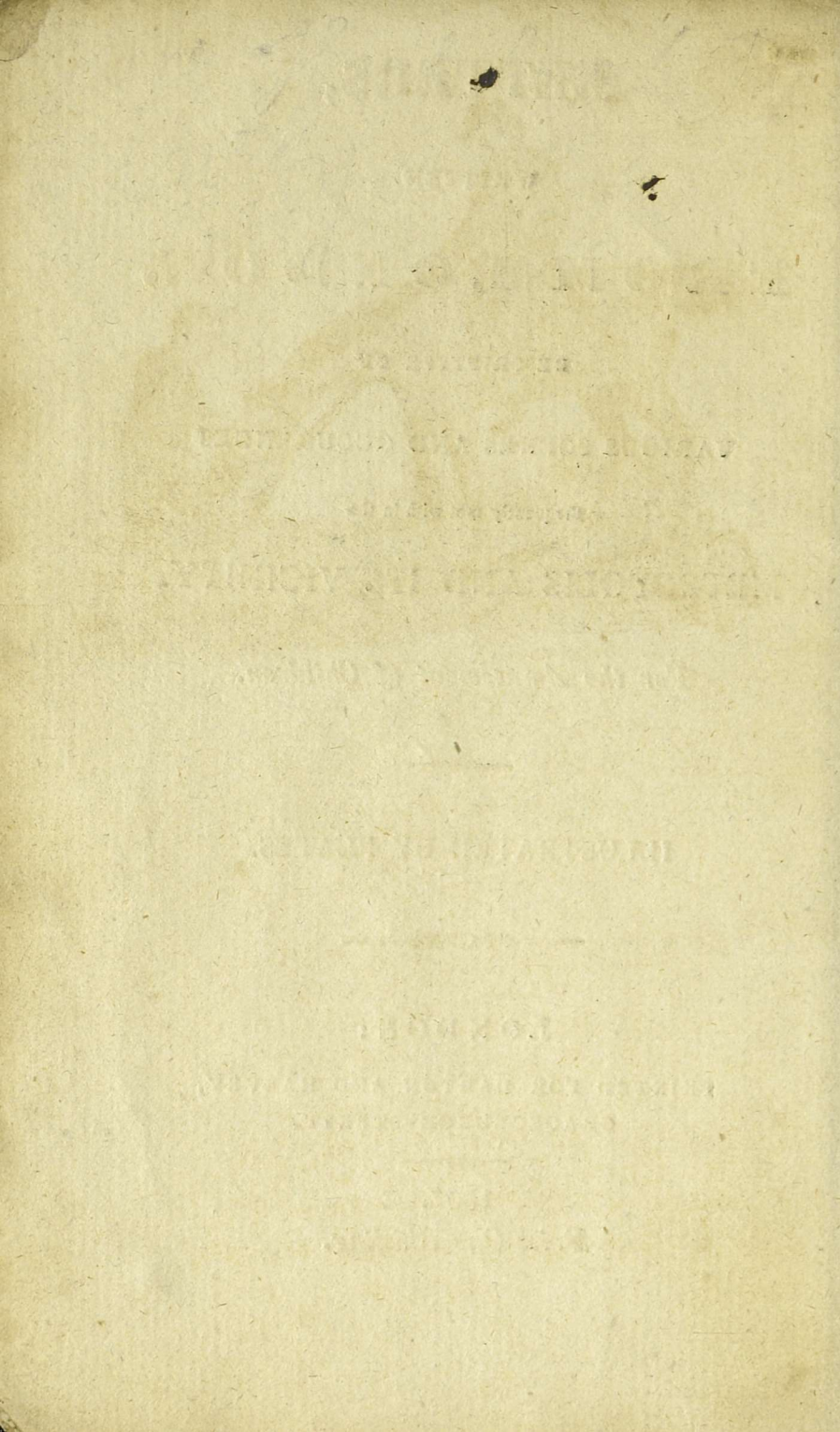
LONDON:

PRINTED FOR DARTON AND HARVEY,
GRACECHURCH-STREET.



1807.

Price One Shilling.





Published by W. Darton and J. Harvey, Dec. 24. 1806.

LETTER I.

London, May 1.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

THE Lynn coach brought us safely to town this morning. We had just day-light sufficient to observe, as we passed, a painting at the Basing-House, in Shoreditch, of a man going to water a horse, on which was written,

Stop, masters, stop! and quench your thirst;
If you don't drink, your horses must.

B

As

As we had been sitting all night, my uncle proposed a walk into the city.

Passing through the High-street of Shoreditch, we saw several pieces of poetry at the doors of some little traders, but most frequently at those who followed the art of shaving; they were novel to me, and may entertain you, who have only seen specimens of *country* wit. One ran thus:

UP This ALLEY LIVES a puff,
SHAVES FOR A PENNY,
& THINKS it ENUFF.

You see I give this literally. I should really have thought the people in London had known how to spell better.

A paper lantern, at another door, exhibited the following:

Walk in, kind Sirs, I'll shave you well;
None in this part can me excel:
My lather's good, my razor's keen;
Depend upon't I'll shave you clean.

My uncle told me there were many specimens of low wit on sign-boards in London. Near Shoreditch-Church two barber's blocks were placed on a post, and the
reader

reader was to make out the sign agreeably to this inscription :



WE THREE LOGGERHEADS B E.

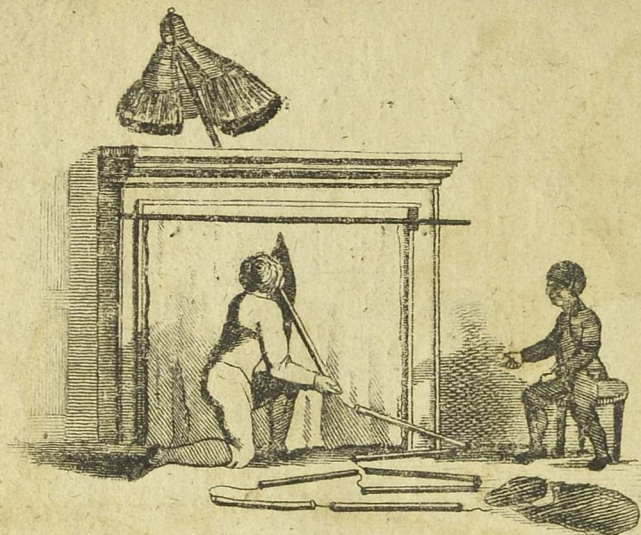
In the window of a public-house we saw two neat paintings, relative to the history of Jane Shore, one representing her when in prosperity, the other when in adversity*.

My uncle informed me, that some persons had thought this parish received its name from *Shore* and *ditch*, the place where she is supposed to have ended her days; but this was an error, as it was named after Sir John de Soredish, a skilful lawyer in the days of Edward III.

The chimney-sweeps make a great bawling here early in the morning. Many of them are very little boys†; and my uncle laments that any chimneys are built so nar-

* The painter has adopted the fable of Rowe, the poet, describing her as being denied all sustenance: showing a baker, hanging, in the back-ground, for giving her a loaf of bread, contrary to the orders of Richard III.

† See note A, at the end.



row, as to occasion such infants being employed. Some humane persons here will not suffer boys to climb their chimneys, but use a machine that in a great measure precludes the necessity of climbing. I have seen a print* and description of it; and at any rate it answers well for nearly upright or modern chimneys. I must now conclude: the postman rings his bell; though quite weary and sleepy,

I am your's, affectionately,

HENRY.

Sold by Phillips, George Yard, Lombard Street.

LETTER



LETTER II.

DEAR EDWARD,

TIRED by travelling the preceding night, I slept soundly, considering the constant noise of coaches and carriages, rattling on the paved stones nearly all night; and the watchmen, who call the time every half hour.

After breakfast we walked from the city to Southwark, and passed by the Monument, which was built to commemorate the dreadful fire of London, in 1666. This pillar is 202 feet high.

Going

Going over London Bridge, the great number of ships and vessels in the river quite surprised me: the masts were so numerous, that they appeared like a wood, whose trees had lost their leaves and branches.

We saw some boats pass through the bridge at nearly low water: to me it appeared very dangerous; and my uncle told me that many persons, annually, lose their lives here, by boats oversetting. London Bridge is now in a shattered condition, though great care is taken to repair it frequently; a young poetess thus mentions it:

When John usurp'd Old England's throne,
 'Cross here he built a bridge of stone,
 With houses on it all a row;
 Over you pass'd, and could not know
 That under flow'd the foaming tide,
 You'd think you walk'd along Cheapside:
 But now no trace of that appears,
 This bridge, though built but ninety years,
 Is crack'd and crazy; though so new
 Its building once was much ado.
 An iron bridge, that won't decay,
 Will here be built, as people say,
 From end to end without a stone,
 The centre arch a lofty one.

We had the pleasure here of seeing one sailor, with a wooden leg, relieve another
 who

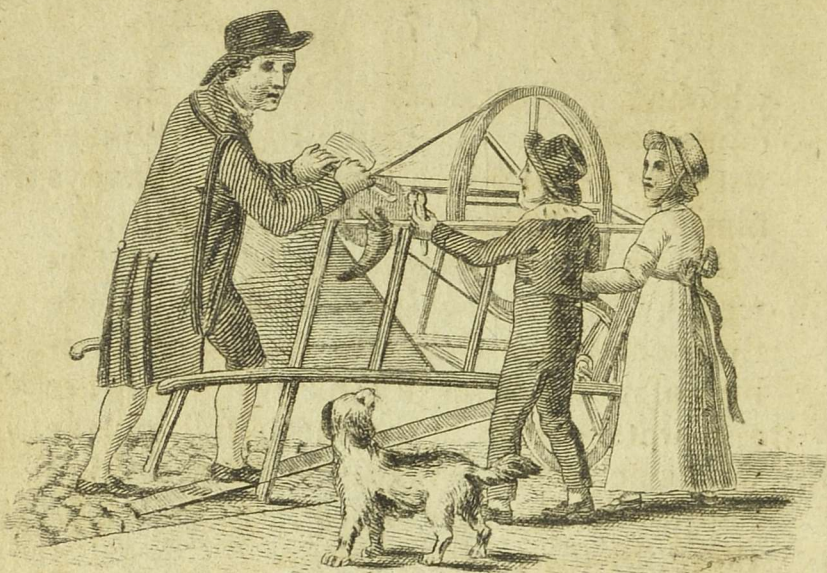
who had lost both his. This poor man has contrived a kind of cradle to sit on; and with the help of two crutches he conveys himself from place to place.

I was much pleased with the water-works, which are so constructed as to force that necessary article into the upper chambers of most houses in the city. There are also water-works at the south end, on the west side of the bridge, for the supply of Southwark; but not on so large a scale as those for the city.

We passed through the Borough without observing any thing particular, except the two noble structures of Guy's and Thomas's hospitals: we viewed their outsides; but my uncle declined going into any of their wards, observing that, in its best state, the air of an hospital was not very grateful.

Over the gateway of the Talbot Inn, in the Borough, we read, "This is the inn where Sir Jeffery Chaucer, and nine and twenty pilgrims, lodged, on their journey to Canterbury, in 1383*."

* Many religious persons, in those days, travelled to Canterbury, to visit the tomb of Thomas à Becket, who was assassinated in the cathedral there, in the reign of Henry II. The miracles said to have been wrought at his
tomb



The Butcher-Row being in a narrow part of the Borough, causes an obstruction to passengers; and women are suffered to drive barrows, with fruit, &c. on the pavement, to the danger of the passing crowd. I observed that walking cutlers were frequently to be seen, grinding knives and scissors. My ears were filled with the various cries of numerous traders, who walk the streets.

Women with fruits and flowers, harle-
tomb are recorded in two large volumes, kept in the cathedral. Though canonized, he was, in truth, memorable only for pride, and ingratitude to his sovereign, to which he fell a sacrifice.

guins



quins and columbines; and some little Jew boys, were very busy in selling heart-cakes and shoe-strings: one man was very musical in crying the last article :

Shoe strings, a penny a pair ! a penny a pair !
Come buy of the maker whilst he is here :
They're long and strong, five inches long ;
The measure will bear, I do declare :
Shoe-strings, a penny a pair ! a penny a pair !

Water-cresses and ground-ivy were echoed repeatedly ; while a man with rabbits, which he carried on a long pole over his shoulder, made more noise than any of the rest. A woman, with painted paper for flags and windmills, was followed by several children ; and a disabled sailor cried,

Young lambs to sell ! young lambs to sell !
If I'd as much money as I could tell,
I never would cry, young lambs to sell !

Several Jews cried old clothes ; while an ancient woman sung,

Long and strong scarlet garters, two-pence a pair.

Here are your pretty toys,
For your little girls and boys.

Knives and forks, that won't cut fingers*.

* They were made of bone.

Though

Though now tired with writing, I assure you I am not yet weary of this grand city, or of this charming holiday, that I have been so long expecting. With kind remembrances to all my dear friends at N——, I remain,

Yours, affectionately,

HENRY.

LETTER III.

DEAR BROTHER,

AS I have a great deal to tell you about, I shall, without any preface, proceed with my journal. A shower of rain coming on, we took a coach, (a convenience we know nothing of in the country,) which carried us from the Borough to St. George's Fields, viewing the King's Bench prison, for debtors, to the west, and the county gaol to the east of the road. They are both very large buildings, and my



my uncle laments that vice should so abound, as to give occasion for such extensive receptacles.

Not far from the King's Bench, we visited a very large school*, established on the most liberal plan, for seven hundred boys; and room was making to enlarge it for a greater number. It is so systematically conducted, that they are taught, with great facility, the first rudiments of reading and arithmetic.

The system which has been adopted of rewarding the attentive learners, proves a great stimulus to them. The rewards are toys, of all descriptions, with which the walls of the school-room are covered.

My uncle describes it as a most useful institution, for educating the children of the industrious poor, in reading, writing, and arithmetic.

The rain continuing, the coachman was ordered to drive us to the School for the

* This school was established by Joseph Lancaster, who invites the children of those who cannot pay, to a gratuitous education. Under his direction, one child teaches another, and, to use his own words, "To be a *monitor*, is coveted by the whole school; it being an office which produces solid *pudding* as well as empty praise."

indigent Blind, which is also in St. George's



Fields. Here we were very agreeably entertained, by seeing with what ease the poor lads manufactured baskets, clothes-lines, and sash-cord; and the females spun threads, or made nets. There were nineteen boys and nine girls, comfortably supported by voluntary contributions.

My uncle bought a basket of their making; and several ladies who were visitors bought nets, lines or pincushions; and we stayed a short time to observe them,

them, not only at work, but at play; and



it was surprising to see how well they avoided running against any part of the building when at play. Being told that the greater part of the children here lost their

their sight by the small-pox, we remembered what our modern poet, Bloomfield, has lately written, in his poem of " News from the Farm."

How came the blindness of your only son?
When was this work of bitterness begun?

* * * * *

My boy was healthy, and my rest was sound,
When last year's corn was green upon the ground:
From yonder town infection found its way,
Around me putrid dead, and dying lay.
I trembled for his fate; but all my care
Avail'd not—for he breath'd the tainted air.
Sickness ensu'd: in terror and dismay
I nurs'd him in my arms, both night and day.
When his soft skin, from head to foot, became
One swelling purple sore, unfit to name,
Hour after hour, when all was still beside,
When the pale night-light in the socket died,
Alone I sat, (the thought still soothes my heart,
That surely I perform'd a mother's part,)
Watching with such anxiety and pain,
Till he might smile and look on me again.
But that was not to be,—ask me no more.
God keep small-pox and blindness from your door.

The rain having ceased we walked past the Asylum for female Orphans, which benevolent institution affords a maintenance and education for a number of poor and distressed children, who are received at the age of nine years, and at fourteen

fourteen are apprenticed out to trades, or become domestic servants. In our path-way from thence, by the Magdalen*, we saw a poor blind woman, attempting to excite compassion, by singing, and playing on a violin. The words she sung were,

By the small-pox I lost my sight,
I can't discern the day from night.

She was relieved by a young gentleman, who said he had lost his sight by the same disorder, although he had been inoculated. This was an affecting incident; but my uncle said, that since Dr. Jenner had discovered the effects of the cow-pox, in preventing the patient from catching the small-pox, the deaths by that disorder had greatly decreased. Many thousands of persons, who had been inoculated for the cow-pox, and afterwards associating with those who had the small-pox, had escaped the infection, and were thus preserved from the dangers attending that disorder.

Hoping you are all as well, happy, and merry, as I am, I again bid you farewell.

HENRY.

* An hospital for distress and imprudent females.

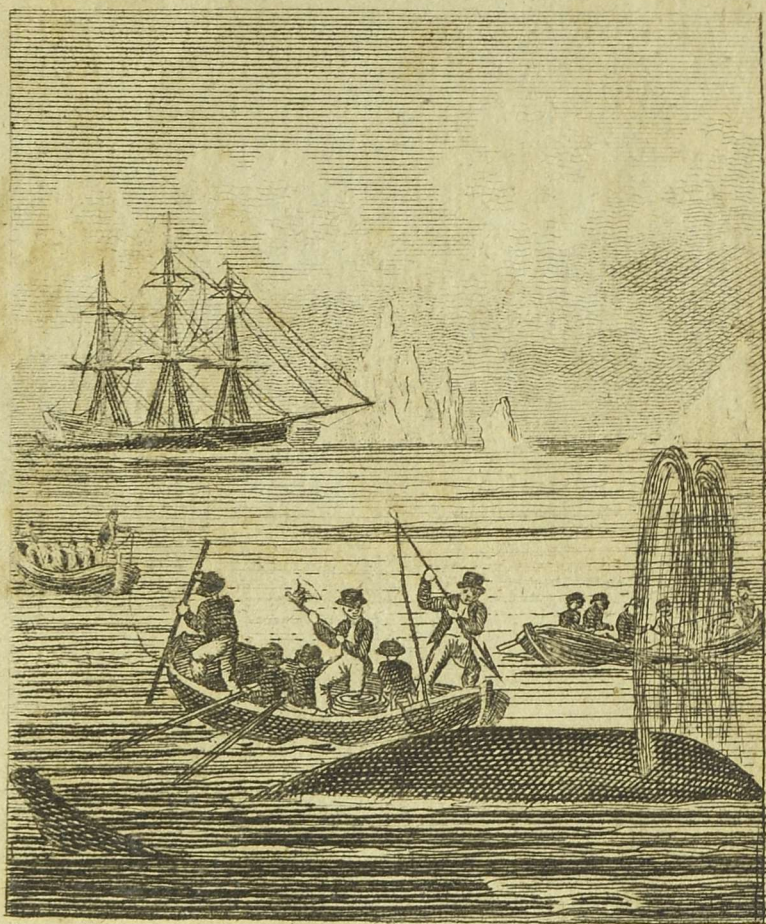


P. S. Please to send up my boots, for a little rain makes London streets very dirty. I must beg you to have the nails taken out of the toes and heels; for though they prevent my slipping in our lands in *Norfolk*, they might cause me to fall on London stones. I have heard that Bloomfield* the poet had a sad fall, on his first arrival in London, owing to the nails in his shoes.

* See the account prefixed to the *Farmer's Boy*.

LETTER

LETTER IV.



I FIND, my dear brother, that
even in London one cannot be always
walking about and seeing sights; and I
have

have now and then found my time hang a little heavily, for want of the books and studies which occupy it at home. Observing this, my uncle has borrowed a folio of very entertaining prints, of a friend of his, who has a large collection: perhaps it may amuse you to have a description of a few of them.

I was particularly interested by one, representing the whale fishery. As an ox is the largest animal we had ever seen in Norfolk, I was surprised at being told, by a person acquainted with the fishery, that a whale exceeds the size of one hundred oxen taken together: some have been found from one hundred to one hundred and forty feet in length. To catch so large an animal is a very bold attempt; and as they are found in either the North or South frozen seas, among rocks and shoals of ice, the danger is great. These animals being timid, the chief fear is of their overturning a boat; or when struck with the harpoon, of dragging the boat and the crew after it. If the wound is mortal, they strike him a second or a third time, and then kill him with spears. When dead, he floats belly uppermost, and his blood

blood reddens the waters as far as the eye can see. The boats then approach him, and the men tie him with a rope to the vessel.

A shout of joy and victory is then heard from the crew, who, after a dose of brandy, begin to cut up the whale. Two men enter his mouth, and cut out the tongue and barbs: others attack his tail and fins; these are boiled for making glue. The Greenlanders eat the tail, and some parts of the flesh. A whale affords nearly one hundred tons of fat, and about five hundred barbs*, which are as valuable as the former; and the whole produces a good sum of money.

If you have been interested with my account of the whale, I will proceed to describe, as well as I am able, another print, of a bird-catcher, who travels occasionally to London, to dispose of his live stock. For besides many singing birds, he had an owl to sell; also a pretty little

* The barbs, or whalebone, are split into thin slices of different lengths, and are made into fishing rods, umbrellas, whips, stays, &c. The ribs and real bones of the whale serve for making chairs, tables, and benches. The beams and rafters of some buildings are supplied by whale-bones.



Published by W. Darton & J. Morrey Dec^r 24 1806.

bitch and her puppy. The whole group made a pleasing picture. The honest donkey, who bore the burden of all these living creatures, looked very patient, and trotted along to the music of barking dogs, and singing birds; gratified, perhaps, as much by the one as the other.

Another print represented Johnson, the celebrated smuggler, in the act of leaping the turnpike gate, after breaking out of prison at noon day. My uncle told me that this man had taken more pains, and in a few years had run into more danger,



danger, to live by illicit means, than he need have experienced in a long life of honest industry*. Once more, adieu!

Yours,

HENRY.

* This man fled to Holland, but some time after took the advantage of a general pardon for exiles, to return to England. He was employed by our government as a pilot, in the expedition against Holland, in 1799; but on the peace in 1801, he again followed smuggling, and other illegal practices, and being taken, was imprisoned in the Fleet prison: but the night before he was to have been removed to Newgate, he made a wonderful escape from the top of the prison, by descending a very high wall, that was guarded by spiked irons, &c. at the top.

LETTER

LETTER V.

MY DEAR EDWARD,

I HAVE now been some time in London, and though much amused by the variety of curiosities which are every where to be met with in this prodigious city, I assure you I think with real pleasure of my return to the country, which is so pleasant, quiet, and delightful: for as to the fine churches and grand buildings which ornament the metropolis, though very interesting and wonderful, as works of art, to me they are not half so pleasing as the noble old oaks that overshadow our cottage; nor are the wide streets and grand squares of London half so pretty to my eye, as the winding lanes and green meadows of our little village. Besides, the idea of meeting my dear mother and you, seems worth all the fine things I have seen since I first came here. I have not been more pleased with any sight I have yet seen, than with the prospect from the top of St. Paul's, which I ascended this morning.

You

You know what a while it takes to go up our steeple stairs at N——: well, but you can form no idea from that, of the height of this surprising building. I thought I should never have arrived at my journey's end. In ascending, we first came to the stone gallery, which runs all round the bottom of the dome. From this place the prospect is beautiful; but from the iron gallery, which surrounds the top of the dome, the effect is indeed curious and beautiful. The coaches in the streets looked extremely diminutive, and the people reminded me of the Liliputian nation. The great river Thames appeared but a narrow stream; and all the houses and churches were in miniature. We could scarcely distinguish the noise of the rumbling carriages, and the general din below; though the noise is really so great, that one might sometimes halloo loud enough to alarm all the neighbours in our parish, without being noticed in London streets.

Returning from this pleasing excursion, a little tired, I betook myself to the folio, and opened upon a print, representing
Mr.



Mr. Daniel's Life Preserver, as exhibited passing through London Bridge. I have not time to describe the whole contrivance: but by means of a leather apparatus, which is put over the head, and buckled on, and which the wearer may fill full of air, a person may float, with ease and safety, for any length of time; and should the plan be generally adopted, it will doubtless be the means (as indeed it has already been) of saving many a valuable life*.

* See note B, at the end.

My



My uncle proposed, for the afternoon's entertainment, a visit to the Panorama, of which you have heard him speak. In our way thither, through the Strand, I was diverted by a travelling dromedary. The poor animal bowed to us respectfully, at the command of his master; and bore, very patiently, with two little monkeys, and several boys, who were mounted on his back, and who seemed to treat him with very little ceremony. I could not help wishing it were in my power to send the poor creature back again

again to its native deserts, where it might enjoy its liberty, instead of parading through the crowded streets of a city. But I quite forgot the dromedary, and all my benevolent wishes, when we arrived at the Panorama; where, having passed through some dark passages, and ascended a long flight of stairs, we suddenly found ourselves on a green platform, with the beautiful city of Paris stretched all round us. I could scarcely believe it was only a painting, every object appeared so natural. I heard a lady who had been at Paris say, it was a most exact representation of the place, and that she could even distinguish the very house she had occupied when there. I could not help smiling at the river Seine, upon which the city stands; for though there are three handsome bridges built across it, it is such a narrow stream, that one might almost jump over it. Compared with our noble river Thames, it is really quite contemptible.

We saw, distinctly, the palace of the Thuilleries, where Bonaparte now resides; also the Place de Grève, where all the dreadful executions took place in the reign

reign of Robespierre, and where the unfortunate king and queen suffered; the recollection of which excited some painful reflections. My uncle dropped the tribute of a tear, as one of the company mentioned these enormities.

I have not time to describe, more particularly, this very interesting sight; to me it was highly gratifying, for had I actually been on an eminence in the city itself, I could scarcely have had a more correct idea of its general appearance. It was a short journey from the centre of Paris to the heart of London, where we soon found ourselves surrounded by noise and bustle. I am very glad Bonaparte has not such an easy access to us.

For my evening's entertainment I had recourse to the folio, where the first object that attracted my attention was an elephant, travelling in China, with a company of nobles on his back. This must be a droll mode of conveyance, very different from our swift-footed horses, and the way in which one is whirled along in a stage coach. It is wonderful to see an animal which is strong enough to crush
all



all its employers to death, patiently submitting to control, and as obedient to the word of command, as the weakest creature could be. I have heard, that when provoked by ill usage, they are fierce and revengeful.

Another picture represented a Chinese riding on a zebu; with an African boy on



an ostrich, which reminded me of our cousins George and Harry attempting to ride the great hog belonging to Farmer Truman,

man, of which I send a sketch. The account of other amusing prints, I must defer till we meet again, and at present remain your affectionate brother,

HENRY.

LETTER VI.

I WISH, dear Edward, I could give you any idea of a London fog: walking out yesterday evening, I was astonished with the effects of one. Though the streets were well lighted, it was impossible to see two yards before us; and every instant we ran against the passengers, in spite of all our caution. For my part I thought it good fun; but my uncle not liking it quite so well, we soon groped our way home again.

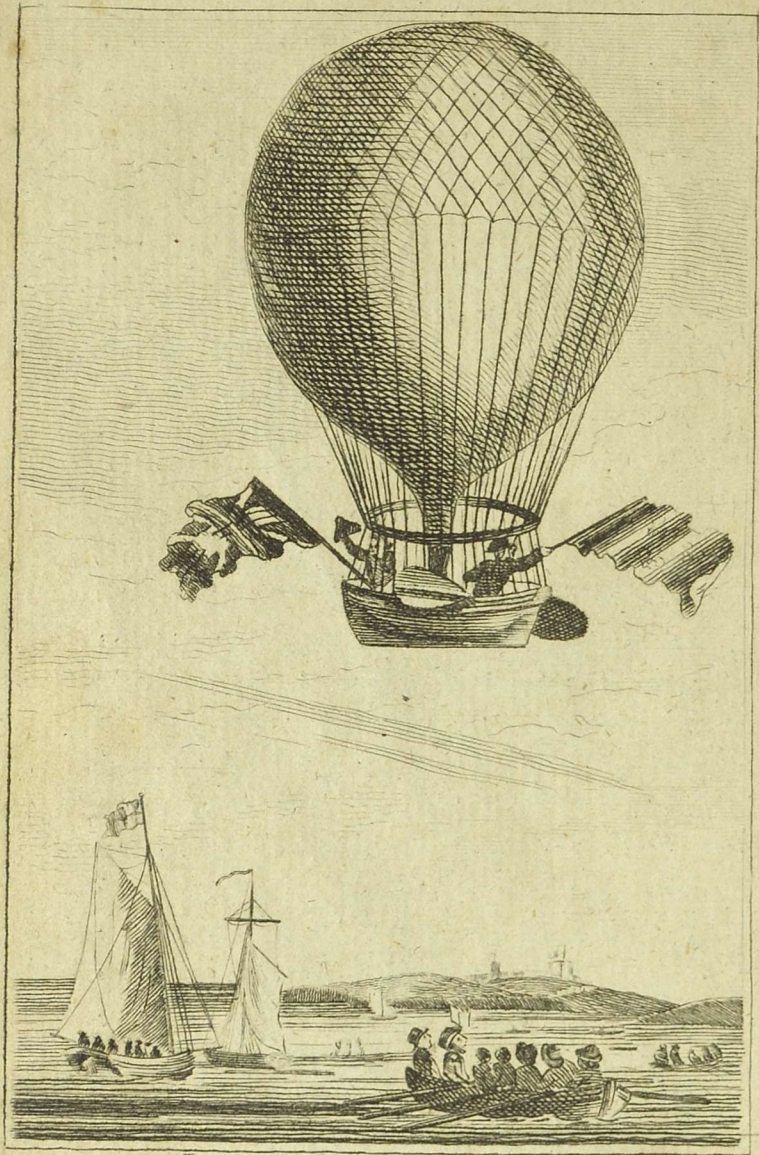
This morning we went to see Westminster Abbey. You know that kings, and queens, and great people, are interred in this grand place. It is melancholey to see such a number of noble monuments, which,
though

though they make a fine appearance, are of so little use to those who lie beneath. One part of the Abbey, properly called Poets' Corner, contains the busts of Spenser, Shakespear, Milton, Thomson, Watts, Gay, Goldsmith, and others.

When we left the Abbey we took a turn in the Park, which was all in a bustle, owing to his Majesty's holding a levee this morning. We were much amused with the sight of the company, in their elegant carriages, and in such rich and fanciful dresses, that I should vainly attempt to describe them. This busy scene formed a striking contrast with the silent grandeur of Westminster Abbey: and as we were walking up and down the Mall, my good uncle made many useful reflections on the vanity of these gay spectacles. Just as we reached Buckingham House, I was gratified by a sight of the king, who was going to St. James's in a chair. The men walked so very fast, I could only just catch a glimpse of him; but I had time to discern his countenance, and I thought he looked very good-natured.

Well, dear Edward, since I last laid down my pen, I have had a treat indeed!

We



Published by W. Darton & J. Harvey, Dec^r 24. 1806.

We went to see Monsieur Garnerin ascend in a balloon. The crowd was immense; but we pushed as near as we could, and had a good view of this curious machine. It is a large globe, made of silk, and filled with inflammable air, which being much lighter than the air of the atmosphere, naturally rises in it. A young gentleman of our party having, I suppose, rather more curiosity than prudence, and wishing to examine the balloon minutely, put his head nearly within it, but he suddenly withdrew it, as he was half suffocated by the vapour. Mr. Garnerin and another gentleman having placed themselves in a kind of basket, which was suspended from the balloon, the cords which fastened it to the ground were cut, and it instantly ascended with vast rapidity. The multitude gave a general shout as it arose; and the gentlemen, waving their hats, returned the salutation. Rising, it caught the rays of the sun, and appeared like a ball of bright gold; then only like a black speck in the clouds; and soon vanished quite out of sight. I would not close my letter till I heard what became of these adventurers; and we have just learned, that
after

after a sail of little more than three quarters of an hour, they descended in safety near Colchester, in Essex, which is a large, handsome town, fifty-one miles distant from London! Such a novel appearance must doubtless have excited much surprise and conjecture among the simple country people. They might probably imagine that the moon herself, with two of her inhabitants, was come to pay them a visit; and if Monsieur Garnerin spoke his native language, it would certainly corroborate the idea. However this may be, they have, I understand, found their way back again in safety to London, though in a less expeditious machine: so that they have escaped much better than many who have tried the same hazardous experiment. I have heard of one, who, owing to the bursting of his balloon, fell when at the height of four thousand feet from the ground, and was of course dashed to pieces instantly.

I must conclude, in haste. Adieu!

HENRY.

LETTER



LETTER VII.

DEAR BROTHER,

WE had yesterday a charming excursion to Greenwich. Being too far for my uncle to walk, we mounted one of the long-bodied stages.

Our fellow passengers were quite disposed to be merry, and occasionally a little riotous; which propensities, I am obliged to confess, the sage-like gravity of my look and deportment, did not appear greatly to check: and my uncle's benevolent smile.

smile is not, you know, calculated to damp general gaiety.

Greenwich is a very interesting place. The prospect of the river, city, and adjacent country, from the Park, is varied and beautiful; but I was most pleased with the Hospital, which is an establishment for the maintenance of old and disabled sailors. It is quite delightful to see the comfort in which great numbers of them are ending their days. They have each a separate apartment, which we observed were kept in the greatest neatness and order, and many of them ornamented according to the taste of the inhabitant. Most of the pensioners employ themselves in making sundry little articles, which they are sure of disposing of to the visitors of the hospital.

We were pleased to observe the smile of content, which was visible in almost every face. We saw several pensioners collected together in one spot, dressed in yellow coats, which, we were told, was a mark of disgrace, for drunkenness, &c. &c. One old and venerable looking man particularly interested us. My uncle entered into conversation with him, and found

found he had seen much service, and been in various engagements, of which he gave us some account: several honourable scars testified the truth of his narration. Though he seemed well satisfied with his present situation, he appeared to take great pleasure in the recollection of his past active life, and was still a warm patriot.

We could not prevail on ourselves to quit this noble hospital, without viewing the Painted Hall, which is one of its greatest curiosities. It is a very fine room, and the ceiling is particularly beautiful. A flight of steps leads from this room to the upper hall, the ceiling and sides of which are adorned with various paintings.

We next proceeded to the chapel, which is capable of conveniently accommodating 1000 pensioners, nurses, and boys; besides pews for the directors and officers. The whole is profusely ornamented with painting and carving.

Being a fine evening, we took a boat, and had a delightful sail home, up the river. I must now conclude my letter, and beg you to excuse its brevity.

Yours, ever,

HENRY.





LETTER VIII.

DEAR BROTHER,

I WISH you could have heard the musical notes of a flower-man, who passed our door this morning: he sings out the praises of his plants in the most diverting way you can imagine:

All alive! all alive! Growing, blowing; all alive!

And thus he goes on, round and round, without ever seeming weary of his song. While listening to this performer, I was struck by the appearance of a blind man, with his wife and son, crying mats, mops, and

and brooms: the old man frequently sung,

Full five-and-thirty years I've lost my sight,
And cannot now discern the day from night.
So I in darkness am oblig'd to go:
To sell my goods I wander to and fro.

Buy a mat; buy a door mat, or a table mat.
Pray buy something of a poor blind man.

I hope people are so considerate as to buy these articles of such unfortunate and deserving objects. The shrill cry of a milk-woman diverted my attention from the poor mop seller. I felt disposed to a draught of new milk, before breakfast; but recollecting, that instead of its being pure and warm from the cow, as we have it at N——, it probably was more than half water, I changed my resolution. When we consider the immense population of this large city, and that there is scarcely an individual in it who is not supplied with a small quantity of this pleasant addition to his tea or coffee, we cease to wonder at the arts which are made use of to increase its apparent quantity.

Being up rather earlier than usual, since I have been an inhabitant of this city, we took

took a walk, before breakfast, to Covent Garden Market. I could not have supposed that any place in London could appear so green and pretty. Long ranges of green-house plants, many the most rare and beautiful, form a striking effect. Then there are stalls of nosegays, formed of such flowers as we should find it difficult to equal in the country. The gardeners' stalls, containing every kind of vegetable in the greatest perfection, add much to the gaiety of the scene; while the fruiterer exhibits a tempting display of the most rare and exquisite fruits, in and out of season. I must tell you, as a great secret, that I purchased here some very curious hyacinth roots, for my mother; and I assure you they will make a striking appearance in glasses, on our mantle-piece, in winter.

You see we were mistaken in supposing the country was the only place for these kinds of things; since the best productions, of every sort, are sent from all parts of the country to London, where they are sure of a great price and ready sale: for I find the Londoners are so fond of good things, that they care not what price



price they pay the good country people for the fruits of their industry.

Just as we reached our lodgings, we were much diverted by the appearance of a beggar man, who, to attract the attention of passengers, exhibited a board, with the design of which I inclose a sketch of what was painted upon it. The idea entertained my uncle exceedingly, and he gave him some halfpence, rather indeed for the sake of his wit, than his necessity; and, doubtless, he obtains many a penny on the same account.

From



From this our attention was arrested by the voice of the bell-man, who was crying a lost child! We heard it described as a little girl, about three years old, in a white frock and red shoes; with light hair, and blue eyes. A large reward was offered to the restorer, but no one was able to give any information to the distressed parents. Hoping the little truant may shortly be discovered,

I remain, once more,

Your affectionate brother,
HENRY.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

MY DEAR MOTHER

THOUGH I have hitherto, according to agreement, addressed my letters to Edward, I cannot prevail upon myself to leave London, without writing one to you; especially as you were so good as to send me so kind a letter last week.

As my uncle intends returning home early in next week, this is probably the last letter you will have from me till we meet.

You express a fear, my dear mother, that the many entertaining things I have met with in this very agreeable excursion, may render me unwilling to leave the scene of gaiety, and wean my affections from home; but I believe I may safely assert, that this little absence will make me value it more than ever: and I am sure that no pleasure I have enjoyed since I left home, can equal the joy of that moment when I shall meet you, and all my dear friends, once again. Besides, I begin to be weary of
this

this idle life, and am quite impatient to return to my studies. I fear it will take some time to regain what I have lost in this very long holiday; but perhaps a little extra application will set me forward again.

I hope I shall ever gratefully remember my dear uncle's kindness, in taking so much pains, trouble, and expence, to amuse and instruct me, during my stay here.

I am glad Edward has been so much pleased with my letters. They were, I know, brief and imperfect; but I shall try to supply their many deficiencies when I return: and you must expect, for these twelve months, at least, to be entertained with nothing else than my city adventures.

You will be rejoiced to hear that the little girl who was lost, as I mentioned in my last letter to Edward, was soon after restored to her distracted mother. She was found by a gentleman, (who had heard the cry of the bellman in a bye street,) some way from her home, whither she had slowly strayed. Recognizing her immediately, he rescued her from the surrounding



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rounding crowd, and had the unspeakable satisfaction of restoring the little runaway to its delighted and grateful parents.

As I hope so soon to see you, I need not apologize for the brevity of my letter; for I must now make the most of my little remaining time in London.

Trusting I shall meet you all in health, I am, my dear mother, your ever dutiful and affectionate son,

HENRY.

NOTES.

NOTES.

NOTE A.

About or in the month of August, 1804, a chimney-sweeper at Burlington (or Bridlington) in Yorkshire, bought a little boy, for the sum of eight guineas, of a beggar woman. This child, who appeared to be about four years of age, was employed to sweep a chimney in that town: he was taken up it by an elder boy, who left him there, when, as might reasonably be expected, he fell down, by which accident he bruised his legs terribly against the grate. His air and manner appeared so different from those of the children who are usually employed for that purpose, that the inhabitants of Burlington were quite in an uproar. The lower people said it was a shame to keep such a child to so mean an employment; and poor as they were, he should be welcome to share with their own children. The Miss Stricklands, of Boynton, hearing of the child, went to see him: they were much interested with him, and so persuaded that he had been stolen, that they took him home with them, (the chimney-sweeper being glad to part with him.) Soon after he got to Boynton, the seat of Sir George Strickland, a plate with something to eat was brought him; on seeing a silver fork he was quite delighted, and said, *Papa had such forks as those*. He also said the carpet in the drawing room was *like Papa's*. The house-keeper showed him a silver watch: he asked what sort it was: *Papa's was a gold watch*. He then pressed the handle and said, *Papa's watch rings, why does not yours?* Sir George Strickland, on being told this circumstance, showed him a gold repeater: the little boy pressed the spring, and when it struck he jumped about
the

the room, saying, *Papa's watch rings so*. At night when he was going to bed, he said he could not go to bed until he had said his prayers; he then repeated the Lord's Prayer almost perfectly.

The account he gives of himself is, that he was gathering flowers in his mamma's garden, and that the woman who sold him came in and asked him if he liked riding. He said, *Yes*; and she told him he should ride with her. She put him on a horse; after which they got into a vessel, and the sails were put up, *and away we went*. He had no recollection of his name, or where he lived; and was too young to think his father could have any other name than that of Papa. He started whenever he heard a servant in the family at Boynton, called George, and looked as if he expected to see somebody he knew; on enquiry, he said he had an *uncle George, whom he loved dearly*. He says his mamma is dead; and it is thought his father may be abroad. From many things he says, he seems to have lived chiefly with an uncle and aunt, whom he invariably says were called Mr. and Mrs. Flembrough. From various circumstances it is thought impossible he should be the child of the woman who sold him, his manners being very civilized, quite those of a child well educated. His dialect is good, and that of the south of England. This little boy, when first discovered, was conjectured to be about four years old, and is described as having beautiful black eyes and eye-lashes, a high nose, and a delicate soft skin.

The above is taken from an account, which was communicated to the committee of the Society for Super-seding the Necessity of Climbing Boys, &c. at a meeting at the London Coffee House, on Wednesday, the 21st of August last, and which was printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for September.

To which account was added the following observation and request.

From the above it appears a matter of some doubt, whether the child was stolen from his parents, (or parent,)

~~Received
that~~

~~of~~

permanently

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