

A Letter from Cambridge to a young Gentleman
at Eton School.

By Dr. LITTLETON.

THO' plagu'd with algebraic lectures,
And astronomical conjectures,
Wean'd from the sweets of poetry
To scraps of dry philosophy,
You see, dear sir, I've found a time
'T' exprefs my thoughts to you in rhyme.
For why, my friend, shou'd distant parts,
Or times, disjoin united hearts,
Since, tho' by intervening space
Depriv'd of speaking face to face,
By faithful emissary letter
We may converse as well, or better?
And not to stretch a narrow fancy,
To shew what pretty things I can say,
(As some will strain at simile,
First work it fine, and then apply;
Tag Butler's rhimes to Prior's thoughts,
And chuse to mimic all their faults,
By head and shoulders bring in a stick,
To shew their knack at hudibrastic.)
I'll tell you as a friend, and crony,
How here I spend my time, and money;

For

For time, and money, go together.
 As sure as weathercock, and weather ;
 And thrifty guardians all allow
 This grave reflection to be true,
 That whilst we pay so dear for learning
 Those weighty truths we've no concern in,
 The spark who squanders time away
 In vain pursuits, and fruitless play,
 Not only proves an arrant blockhead,
 But, what's much worse, is out of pocket.
 Whether my conduct bad, or good is,
 Judge from the nature of my studies.

No more majestic Virgil's heights,
 Nor tow'ring Milton's loftier flights,
 Nor courtly Flaccus's rebukes,
 Who banter vice with friendly jokes,
 Nor Congreve's life, nor Cowley's fire,
 Nor all the beauties that conspire
 To place the greenest bays upon
 Th' immortal brows of Addison ;
 Prior's inimitable ease,
 Nor Pope's harmonious numbers please ;
 Homer indeed (for critics shew it)
 Was both philosopher, and poet,
 But tedious philosophic chapters
 Quite stifle my poetic raptures,
 And I to Phœbus bade adieu
 When first I took my leave of you.

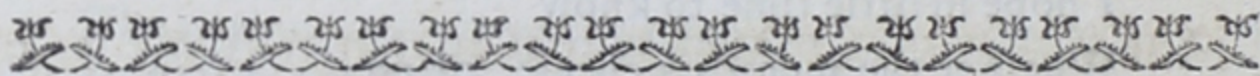
Now algebra, geometry,
 Arithmetic, astronomy,
 Optics, chronology, and statics,
 All tiresome parts of mathematics ;
 With twenty harder names than these
 Disturb my brain, and break my peace.
 All seeming inconsistencies
 Are nicely solv'd by a's, and b's ;
 Our eye-sight is disprov'd by prisms,
 Our arguments by syllogisms.
 If I shou'd confidently write
 This ink is black, this paper white,
 Or, to express myself yet fuller,
 Shou'd say that black, or white's a colour ;
 They'd contradict it, and perplex one
 With motion, rays, and their reflexion,
 And solve th' apparent falsehood by
 The curious texture of the eye.
 Shou'd I the poker want, and take it,
 When't looks as hot, as fire can make it,
 And burn my finger, and my coat,
 They'd flatly tell me, 'tis not hot ;
 The fire, say they, has in't, 'tis true,
 The pow'r of causing heat in you ;
 But no more heat's in fire that heats you,
 Than there is pain in stick that beats you.
 Thus too philosophers expound
 The names of odour, taste, and sound ;

The salts, and juices in all meat
 Affect the tongues of them that eat,
 And by some secret poignant power
 Give them the taste of sweet, and sour.
 Carnations, violets, and roses
 Cause a sensation in our noses ;
 But then there's none of us can tell
 The things themselves have taste, or smell.
 So when melodious Mason sings,
 Or Gethring tunes the trembling strings,
 Or when the trumpet's brisk alarms
 Call forth the cheerful youth to arms,
 Convey'd thro' undulating air
 The music's only in the ear.

We're told how planets roll on high,
 How large their orbits, and how nigh ;
 I hope in little time to know
 Whether the moon's a cheese, or no ;
 Whether the man in't, as some tell ye,
 With beef and carrots fills his belly ;
 Why like a lunatic confin'd
 He lives at distance from mankind ;
 When he at one good hearty shake,
 Might whirl his prison off his back ;
 Or like a maggot in a nut
 Full bravely eat his passage out.
 Who knows what vast discoveries
 From such inquiries might arise ?

But feuds, and tumults in the nation
 Disturb such curious speculation.
 Cambridge from furious broils of state,
 Foresees her near-approaching fate ;
 Her surest patrons are remov'd,
 And her triumphant foes approv'd.

No more! this due to friendship take,
 Not idly writ for writing's sake ;
 No longer question my respect,
 Nor call this short delay neglect ;
 At least excuse it, when you see
 This pledge of my sincerity ;
 For one who rhimes to make you easy,
 And his invention strains to please you,
 To shew his friendship cracks his brains,
 Sure is a mad-man if he feigns.



The I N D O L E N T.

WHAT self-sufficiency and false content
 Benumb the senses of the indolent !
 Dead to all purposes of good, or ill,
 Alive alone in an *unactive will*.
 His only vice in *no good action* lies,
 And his sole virtue is his *want of vice*.
 Business he deems too hard, trifles too easy,
 And doing nothing finds himself too busy.

Silence.