

LETTER from SMYRNA to his Sisters at
CRUX-EASTON, 1733.

By the Same.

THE hero who to Smyrna bay
From Easton, Hants, pursued his way,
Who travers'd seas, and hills and vales,
To fright his sisters with his tales,
Sing heavenly muse; for what befel
Thou saw'st, and only thou can'st tell.
Say first (but one thing I premise,
I'll not be chid for telling lies;
Besides, my grannum us'd to say
I always had a knack that way,
So, if the love of truth be in ye,
Read Strabo, Diodorus, Pliny—
But like some authors I could name,
Wrapt in myself I lose my theme.)
Say first, those very rocks we spy'd,
But left 'em on the starboard side,
Where Juno urg'd the Trojan's fate.
Shield us, ye Gods, from female hate!

Then how precarious was the doom
 Of Cæsar's line, and mighty Rome,
 Snatch'd from the very jaws of ruin,
 And sav'd, poor ^c Dido, for thy undoing.
 What saw we on Sicilian ground?
 (A soil in ancient verse renown'd)
 The self-same spot, or Virgil ly'd,
 On which the good Anchises dy'd;
 The fields where Ceres' daughter sported,
 And where the pretty Cyclops courted.
 The nymph hard-hearted as the rocks,
 Refus'd the monster, scorn'd his flocks,
 And took a shepherd in his stead,
 With nought but love and worth to plead:
 An instance of a generous mind
 That does much honour to your kind,
 But in an age of fables grew,
 So possibly it may'nt be true.
 While on the summit Ætna glows,
 His shivering sides are chill'd with snows.
 Beneath, the painted landkip charms;
 Here infant Spring in Winter's arms
 Wantons secure; in youthful pride
 Stands Summer laughing by her side;
 Ev'n Autumn's yellow robes appear,
 And one gay scene discloses all the year.

c Dido.

Hence

Hence to rude Cerigo we came,
 Known once by Cytherea's name;
 When Ocean first the goddess bore,
 She rose on this distinguish'd shore.
 Here first the happy Paris stopp'd,
 When Helen from her lord elop'd.
 With pleas'd reflection I survey'd
 Each secret grott, each conscious shade;
 Envy'd his choice, approv'd his flame,
 And fondly wish'd my lot the same.
 O were the cause reviv'd again!
 For charming Queensbury liv'd not then,
 The radiant fruit, had she been there,
 Would scarce have fallen to Venus' share;
 Saturnia's self had wav'd her claim,
 And modest Pallas blush'd for shame;
 All had been right: the Phrygian swain
 Had sigh'd for her, but sigh'd in vain;
 The fair Cœnone joy'd to find,
 The pains she felt repaid in kind;
 No rape reveng'd, no room for strife,
 Atrides might have kept his wife,
 Old Troy in peace and plenty smil'd —
 But the best poem had been spoil'd.

How did my heart with joy run o'er,
 When to the fam'd Cecropian shore,
 Wafted by gentle breezes, we
 Came gliding thro' the smooth still sea!

While backward rov'd my busy thought
 On deeds in distant ages wrought ;
 On tyrants gloriously withstood ;
 On seas distain'd with Persian blood ;
 On trophies rais'd o'er hills of slain
 In Marathon's unrival'd plain.

Then, as around I cast my eye,
 And view'd the pleasing prospect nigh,
 The land for arms and arts renown'd,
 Where wit was honour'd, poets crown'd ;
 Whose manners and whose rules refin'd
 Our souls, and civiliz'd mankind ;
 Or (yet a loftier pitch to raise
 Our wonder, and compleat its praise)
 The land that ^e Plato's master bore —
 How did my heart with joy run o'er !

Now coasting on the eastern side,
 We peep'd where Peneus rolls his tide :
 Where Arethusa came t' appease
 The shepherd that had lost his bees,
 And led him to Cyrene's grott ;
 'Tis a long tale, and matters not.
 Dryden will tell you all that past ;
 See Virgil's Georgics, book the last.
 I speak on't, but to let you know
 This grott still stands in statu quo ;
 Of which if any doubts remain,
 I've proof, as follows, clear and plain.

^e Socrates.

Here, sisters, we such honours met!
 Such honour I shall ne'er forget.
 The Goddess (no uncommon case)
 Proud, I suppose, to shew her place,
 Or piqu'd perhaps at your renown,
 Sent Boreas to invite us down;
 And he so press'd it, that we us'd
 Some pains to get ourselves excus'd.
 My brother shipmates, all in haste
 Declar'd, that shells were not their taste;
 And I had ^f somewhere seen, you know,
 A finer grott than she could shew.

Hence let the Muse to Delos roam,
 Or Nio, fam'd for Homer's tomb;
 To Naxos, known in ancient time
 For Bacchus' love, for Theseus' crime.
 Can she the Lesbian vine forget
 Whence Horace reinforc'd his wit?
 Where the fam'd harp Arion strung
 Nor play'd more sweet than Sapho sung?
 Could the old bards revive again,
 How would they mourn th' inverted scene!
 Scarce with the barren waste acquainted,
 They once so beautifully painted.

And here, 'twixt friends, I needs must say,
 But let it go no farther, pray,
 These sung-up, cry'd up countries are
 Displeasing, rugged, black, and bare;

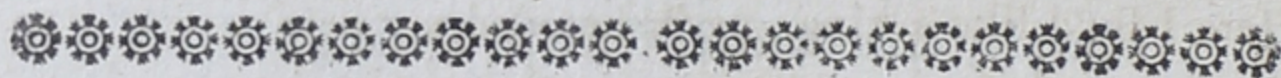
^f *At Crux-Easton.*

And

And all I've yet beheld or known
Serve only to endear my own.

The matters I shall next disclose,
'Tis likely may be wrapp'd in prose;
But verse methought would suit these better,
Besides, it lengthens out my letter.
Read then, dear girls, with kind regard,
What comes so far, what comes so hard;
And to our mother too make known,
How travelling has improv'd her son.

Let not malicious critics join
Pope's homespun rhimes in rank with mine,
Form'd on that very spot of earth,
Where Homer's self receiv'd his birth;
Add, as I said, t' enhance their worth,
The pains they cost in bringing forth;
While his, as all mankind agrees,
Tho' wrote with care, are wrote with ease.



Part of a LETTER to my Sisters at CRUX-EASTON,
wrote from CAIRO in EGYPT, AUGUST 1734.

By the Same.

WHILE you, my dear girls, in your paradise stray,
Diverting with innocent freedom the day,
I wander alone in a barbarous land,
Half bak'd by the sun, half blind by the sand,

Then