

**LETTERS ON THE
IMPROVEMENT OF
THE MIND.
ADDRESSED TO A LADY**

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Letters on the improvement of the mind. Addressed to a lady by Mrs. Chapone

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MRS. CHAPONE

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ADDRESSED TO A LADY.

By MRS. CHAPONE.

WITH
THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

I consider our human Soul, without Education, like marble in the Quarry, which shows none of its inherent Beauties till the Skill of the Polisher fetches out the colours, makes the surface shine, and discovers every ornamental Cloud, Spot, and Vein, that runs through the Body of it. Education, after the same manner, when it works upon a noble Mind, draws out to view every latent Virtue and Perfection, which, without such Helps, are never able to make their Appearance.

ADDISON.

A New Edition.

LONDON:

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FOR SCATCHERD AND LETTERMAN, AVE-MARIA LANE; LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN; CADELL AND DAVIES; F. C. AND J. RIVINGTON; SHERWOOD, NEELY, AND JONES; G. AND W. B. WHITTAKER; BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY; J. MAWMAN; J. HARRIS AND SONS; FARVEY AND DARTON; AND C. TAYLOR.

1820.

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TO

MRS. MONTAGU.

MADAM,

I BELIEVE you are persuaded that I never entertained a thought of appearing in public, when the desire of being useful to one dear child, in whom I take the tenderest interest, induced me to write the following Letters:—perhaps it was the partiality of friendship, which so far biassed your judgment as to make you think them capable of being more extensively useful, and warmly to recommend the publication of them. Though this partiality could alone prevent your judgment from being considered as decisive in favour of the work, it is more flattering to the writer than any literary fame; if, however, you will allow me to add, that some strokes of your elegant pen have corrected these Letters, I may hope, they will be received with an attention, which will insure a candid judgment from the reader, and perhaps

will enable them to make some useful impressions on those, to whom they are now particularly offered.

They only, who know how your hours are employed, and of what important value they are to the good and happiness of individuals, as well as to the delight and improvement of the public, can justly estimate my obligation to you for the time and consideration you have bestowed on this little work. As you have drawn it forth, I may claim a sort of right to the ornament and protection of your name, and to the privilege of publicly professing myself, with the highest esteem,

MADAM,

Your much obliged friend,
and most obedient
humble servant,

HESTER CHAPONE.

L I F E
O F
H E S T E R C H A P O N E .

AMONG the illustrious women whose literary productions adorned and improved the age in which they appeared, and are likely to be transmitted with reputation to posterity, Mrs. Chapone is entitled to distinguished consideration. However, incited by the persuasions and encouraged by the applauses of Richardson, she had many prejudices to encounter, many impediments to overcome. Female writers, always severely scrutinized, and often condemned, had not then obtained the estimation they have since commanded.

Hester Mulso, better known as Chapone, was the daughter of Thomas Mulso, Esq. of Twywell, in Northamptonshire; who, in the year 1719, married the posthumous daughter of

Colonel Thomas, of the Guards. She lived long enough to see the last props of an ancient and towering family fall to the dust.

Of the immediate connections of Mr. Mulso, his elder sister, Anne, was married to the Rev. Dr. Donne, formerly Prebendary of Canterbury; and the younger, Susanna, to the brother of his own wife, the Rev. Dr. John Thomas, who was preceptor to his Majesty King George III., and who successively held the bishoprics of Peterborough, Salisbury, and Winchester. Mr. Mulso had himself several children; but of these only five lived to grow up, and even of the five, Charles, his third son, who was an officer in the navy, died, in the Mediterranean, at the age of twenty-one.

Thomas, the eldest of Mr. Mulso's sons, was bred to the law; and, for some years, he went the Oxford circuit. He declined legal practice on coming to the possession of his paternal inheritance; but was afterwards made Registrar of Peterborough, and a Commissioner of Bankrupts. He published, in 1768, 'Calistus, or the Man of Fashion;' and 'Sophronius, or the Country Gentleman.' Thomas was the elect brother of Mrs. Chapone. He died early in February, 1799; and, as his death was not thought near, she lost, in him, the tie that bound her to life.