

Fac-simile of Old Letter, penes J. S.

“ Heaven witness
 I have been to you a true and humble wife,
 In all times to your will conformable.”
Shakspeare.

FVEN as an almost unique specimen of a long-lost style of caligraphy this letter is worthy of re-production; but in these present days of petticoat-rule it is highly suggestive of how a *placens uxor* of some short two-and-a-half centuries ago had to address her liege lord and master. Whether, however, a covert meaning may not be detected between the lines, of the fair writer's being only too thankful that her husband should still longer “order his house and affaires in the countrey,” that she might prolong her stay with her deare mother and sisters in the then fashionable *purlieu* of Blackfriars, may be left to the gentler sex to determine.

I acknowledge most thankfully your great kind-
 nes, and noble fauour, in setting mee hence so often
 from you since you went into the country, I haue
 receaued from you, 3. letters, being deprived of your
 presence, I esteeme it a great happines to heere
 of your wellface and safety which I reioyce, and
 pray God to continue, I desire you not to thinke I
 am discontent at your absence, I asure you I place
 my happines in your contentment and in seeing
 you enjoy your owne degrees, which I thinke is to be
 where you are, ordering your house and affaires, and
 I shall be loath to draw you ~~to~~ from thence till
 it shall please you most willingly to absent your
 selfe from thence, and then I shall be glad to see you
 the newes of my longer stay with my Mother and sisters,
 is most ioyfull to mee I am infinitely bound to them
 for their kind vantage, and sweet Compaie, now in

your absence, my sisters presents their best respects
to you I beseech you to present ^{my} best respects
to my Brother Sleigh and his wife I thank them
for desiring my Company I think it pleased you
to rest with me concerning the discourse of your
children I desire God to bless them and remember
to them I intreat you my most loving and intire affection
craving pardon for these rude lines, I rest

Blackfriars 4:21:
of Mar 7 (9. 1640. P.)

Your obedient wife
M^{rs} Sleigh

To the W^{or} my very loving
husband Samuel Sleigh
Esq, this presents



Margaret, ux. 2 Sir Samuel Sleigh, of Etwall, M.P.
da. Sir Rob^t Darcy, of Dartford, co. Kent
mge. license dated 17th Feb. 1635 '6
ob. 3rd May, a. d. 1647. at 34