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# REPORT

OF THE

## CAUSE

BETWEEN

CHARLES STURT, ESQ.

PLAINTIFF,

AND

THE MARQUIS OF BLANDFORD,

DEFENDANT,

FOR

**Criminal Conversation**

WITH THE

PLAINTIFF'S WIFE;

TRIED IN

COURT OF KING'S BENCH, WESTMINSTER,

On Wednesday, the 27th May 1801,

BEFORE

LORD KENYON, AND A SPECIAL JURY.

*With a PREFACE and APPENDIX.*

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. RIDGWAY, YORK STREET, ST. JAMES'S  
SQUARE.

1801.

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AMH  
BWR

S. Goswell, Printer,  
Little Queen Street, Holborn.

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE public are now put in possession of this trial, of the speeches of counsel, and of the parole evidence; I have likewise, in vindication of my character, which has been grossly calumniated, thought it necessary to give publicity to all the correspondence that any way relates to this unfortunate business. I am aware that my having taken this step must cause some uneasiness to many, for whom I still feel the sincerest esteem; but the exposure is not of my seeking; it is a measure of self-defence, and could not be avoided. The unwarrantable attack made on my private character, by the Attorney General, imperiously calls on me to refute it; but in refuting the attack, it is the farthest from my intention to say any thing disrespectful of the proceedings of the Court: my object is merely to state, that the Attorney General, to speak tenderly of his conduct, appears to have very

much misunderstood the whole case, and to have drawn inferences from the statement he thought proper to give, which the letters he produced do not justify. I feel myself superior to the baseness he attributed to me : I will venture to affirm that there is not a person in the wide circle of a very extensive acquaintance, who does not acquit me of the foul charge, and who is not perfectly convinced that I am incapable of a conduct so filthy and disgraceful; but it is not sufficient that I am known to those who are acquainted with me to be incapable of such profligacy : the world, to whom I have finally appealed, must also be convinced of my innocence. That the Attorney General was justified in exerting his ingenuity and talents in defence of his client; and, if possible, to place him in a light very different to that which he deserves, I will not deny; it was for that purpose his talents were called into action, and no doubt his labours have been well rewarded; but his having indulged himself in a torrent of abuse against the character of a man with whom he was totally unacquainted, though it is not absolutely without precedent, is certainly without excuse, and deserves the severest reprehension. It

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was not necessary for the sake of public justice, that he should have been violent because I had been credulous and imprudent; nor is it an apology or an atonement for the wound given to my feelings, that if the Attorney General had been retained to support the prosecution he would have exerted himself with equal force and success against my opponent. The counsel of my adversary was permitted to accuse me of having connived at the disgrace of my wife. It is a matter of the most perfect indifference to me, whether I stand well or ill in the opinion of that gentleman; but of the good opinion of mankind I am indeed very jealous, and will prove my claim to it to be well founded. The opinion of the world has never yet been a matter of indifference to me, and the rank I hold in society calls loudly on me to refute the malicious calumny of having connived at the intrigues of my wife. It is incumbent on me, not merely to state, but to prove, that my entire and implicit confidence in her integrity rendered me blind to a transaction, which I disclosed the very instant I detected it; and if I bring before the tribunal of the public what has been discussed in a court of law, it is for the express purpose of doing away the gross imputa-



imputation of my having been well apprized of the delinquency of Lady M. long before I invoked the vengeance of the laws against the assassin of my domestic tranquillity. It is due to myself, it is due to the world, to blot out and for ever erase from the minds of men the foul stain attempted to be impressed on my character. My domestic misfortune, in beholding a woman, to whom, in spite of all the irregularities attributed to me, I was tenderly attached, wrested from my affections by a man to whom I had generously given an asylum, I must bear with resignation. It is an evil that will work its own cure: but the loss of character is of far greater import, and what no man can submit to survive, who knows and respects its full value. It is an evil without remedy, unless resisted; and, however sacred the place in which my character was assailed, whatever may be the professional rank of the person by whom it was impeached, it must and shall be redeemed. The Attorney General did not blush to accuse me of having been the accomplice of my own dishonour. The unwarrantable inferences drawn from the letters which he produced, the dates of which were omitted, appear evidently to have misled the jury, where it most behoved my reputation

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they should have been well and candidly informed. It is a painful task to remove unjust impressions, and I am not insensible of the difficulties and prejudices I have to encounter. My comments on the letters alluded to will enable that public, to whose justice I appeal, to decide between the Attorney General and myself, and to pronounce how far he has been justified in the attack he has made on me.

Tedious as it is, I am obliged to go back to a very distant period, to show, that the intimacy and friendship between Lord Blandford and me was such as entirely to remove all suspicion of his dishonourable and treacherous conduct; and that his sister marrying Lady Mary Anne Sturt's brother gave him a footing in my family that enabled him to persevere in his detestable treachery, and utterly prevented the slightest suspicion of Lady Mary Anne's guilt, or his baseness. It was my misfortune to become acquainted with his Lordship through Lord Shaftesbury, at his Lordship's house. I invited him to Critchill; he came with eight or nine horses, servants in proportion, and lived in my house for near nine months. I received him with hospitality and friendship. At a time when Blenheim was not so agreeable to him, my  
doors

doors were generously thrown open to him, as they ever have been at all times to my friends; and he came to me, and was hospitably entertained with an establishment nearly as great as my own, for several months at a time, and at different periods. It appears this Noble Lord, who was living under my roof, was at that very moment, when he had no friend to go to, absolutely planning the seduction of Lady Mary Anne, and tearing up by the roots every thing that was dear and valuable to my repose. This cruel treachery the public will plainly discover to have been practised five years before even the Attorney General hazarded accusing me having an intimacy with any other woman. Admitting the fact, I do not presume to make any defence; I am aware it was a breach of conjugal duty. The Attorney General performed very well his part, in making it a matter of public reprehension. However blameable I may be, for blameable I certainly am, this could be no palliation of Lady Mary's guilty conduct, no justification of the treachery of Lord Blandford. Lady Mary had been persuaded by the vile, unmanly arts of his Lordship, to withdraw her affections from me a year after she married the man of her own

own choice; and continued, as appears by this worthy and immaculate gentleman's letters, to have continued till he married, in the year 1793, the most deserving and amiable woman that ever lived; an example of parental affection to her sex, as well as an ornament to the high rank she deservedly fills. The Learned Counsel was not apprized of this fact; he did not know the base, the cruel, the treacherous conduct of his client, any more than the Noble Lord who presided in the Court. If they either of them had been aware of these facts, sure I am the Learned Counsel, would have been inclined to have spared the man who has been indiscreet, not culpable, who possesses a soul as much superior to base and dishonourable actions as the Learned Gentleman himself; and the Noble Judge who presided on this trial would not have failed to have described, in strong colours, the foul conduct of this ungenerous man. He would have exposed the blasphemous, the vicious tendency of his letters; for surely such a mass of wickedness, of designing art, mixed with nonsensical ribaldry, never was written by any man above the level of a lacquey.

I shall now state where the Attorney General

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seems

seems to misunderstand the letters he produced, whether wilfully or not has nothing to do for my defence. He asserts boldly, that many of the Defendant's letters plainly import, he conceived the husband himself would give no check. Let me ask the Attorney General, as a man of honour, why did his immaculate client take the precaution of sending his guilty letters in an envelope that might have been read by all the world? If he had not been fearful of a discovery, he would not have taken that precaution; or would he have directed Lady Mary Anne to have followed the same example when she wrote to him, had he not been afraid of awakening Lady Blandford's suspicions? Let me ask the Attorney General, would his honourable client sneak into the neighbourhood of Critchill, which he declares he would do, if he did not hear from Lady Mary? would he have changed his post town, would he have sent his guilty letters secreted in parcels, in Parmesan cheese, in a roasting pig, in novels, in gowns; and even in these conveyances, which were intercepted either by myself or servant? Let me appeal to the candour of the Attorney General, if Lord Blandford was not apprehensive of being discovered, could any other  
 motive

motive but fear have prompted him to such deceptions?

The Attorney General again mistakes the time. I became acquainted with Lady Mary's guilt; he declares I was in full knowledge of her guilt six weeks before Lady Mary was confined. Nothing can be more foreign to the truth than this assertion; and if the dates of those letters are referred to, it will be discovered, that it was not till the 25th of December I detected Lady Mary's letter, which alone led me to intercept Lord Blandford's correspondence, which I did on the Sunday following. This letter was not an answer to the one which Lady Mary had written on the 25th of December, and which I had copied and attested by a friend and my own servant previous to its being forwarded to Lord Blandford, but an answer to a letter written by Lady Mary to him at Weymouth, when I was in London.

The letter which this very assiduous advocate produced (and of which he did not state the date), with a view to prove the terms of friendship and familiarity, was not written *after* my discovering Lord Blandford's dishonourable conduct, but *written* on the 20th

of December, in answer to a letter of his, desiring me, in my way into Dorsetshire, to call at White Knights. At that period I knew nothing; I suspected no treachery on his part. It would have been more honourable, at least more consistent with justice, for which the Learned Gentleman assumes to be the champion, if he had not brought it forward; or, as he did, stated the date fairly, and told the jury it was written before any discovery had been made.

He triumphantly asks, whether, when this letter was written, I was actuated by the least earnestness to resist what I called the invasion of my bed? Had I offered any proof whatever, that I was affected by the injury I had received? My answer to this is easily explained. I did not detect Lady Mary's letter, or his Honourable Client's treachery, or suspected directly or indirectly such a correspondence existed, "so help me, God!" till five days *after* that letter of the 20th of December last was written. I leave it to the ingenuity of the Attorney General to discover on the 20th what was not known to exist till the 25th of the same month.

The Attorney General expressed his surprise

surprise at evidence not being brought forward,  
 whose situation in my house best enabled  
 them to observe my conduct. I had a un-  
 der-~~undance~~ abundance of evidence, men of as great integrity  
 and as unimpeachable characters as any in the  
 kingdom. Some did bear testimony of my  
 uniform affection and kindness to Lady  
 Mary; many were ready to do the same.  
 I had, besides, several of my domestic ser-  
 vants, who had lived with me many years,  
 all ready and solicitous to prove to the Court,  
 that they never knew the slightest disagree-  
 ment in my family; that Lady Mary and  
 myself lived happily. I could likewise have  
 brought the lady's own family to prove I was  
 indulgent and kind. Delicacy for the feelings  
 of an aged and amiable mother, who had been  
 for several summers in the habit of making a  
 long stay with us, and therefore fully capable  
 of judging how we lived—I repeat, that it  
 was delicacy for her mother, as well as for  
 her brothers (who I knew felt deeply for  
 their sister's misconduct), alone prevented me  
 from calling on them for their testimony in a  
 court of justice. The same generosity that  
 has ever actuated me through life, however  
 prejudicial to myself, guided me in this in-  
 stance: there is not one of them, and I have  
 authority



authority from the Noble Lord to say that he is satisfied that I am not a man capable of conniving at his sister's dishonour; nor did he believe I was aware of her improper familiarity. It is with pride I own myself authorized to appeal to a man so intimately connected with me, and who must be naturally attached to his sister. It has been the repeated declaration of his Lordship, since the discovery of this unfortunate business, that I am incapable of such depravity. The Attorney General's pleasantry, when he observed, he did not know me, but that he had seen me, and, what was worse, had heard me, is unworthy of any animadversion on my part.

He charges me with going to bed, and leaving Lord Blandford with Lady Mary Anne alone. I may have done so; it was from illness and severe suffering, after what he called a soufing in the sea. Was there any impropriety in trusting the woman I placed unbounded confidence in, whose brother was married to his Lordship's sister? Gracious God! what is become of all principle of honour and friendship, if your wife cannot be trusted alone with a man connected by ties of relationship in  
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my family, on the most intimate and confidential footing with myself? how could I suppose treachery from the one, or infidelity in the other, under such circumstances?

My allowing Lord Blandford to drive Lady Mary in a curricle, to permit them *tête-à-tête* in a carriage with none to observe them, to leave them when I failed;—all these the Attorney General laboured to impress the Jury I did with a view to countenance and encourage Lord Blandford's cruel designs. It required the ingenuity of the Attorney General to convert these circumstances into a charge of criminality against me.

There is not a man in the world who would attach any guilt to a person for permitting his wife to drive out into the country with his friend, or leave her with his friend's wife and other company in the house, while he partook of his innocent amusements.

The letter written to Lady Shaftesbury, when at Weymouth\*, was the subject of much severe animadversion, from a man as coarse as he is dexterous, to prove that this letter

\* This letter Lord Blandford surreptitiously obtained or secretly purloined from Lady Shaftesbury, when his Lordship was on a visit to Lord Shaftesbury, at Weymouth. It was written in November.

was

was written by me, with a full conviction of Lady M.'s guilt. It was written in answer to a letter of Lady Shaftesbury, when at Weymouth, inviting me there for the advantage of warm sea-bathing. This letter was written six weeks before I made any discovery whatever, or entertained the slightest suspicion of any improper intercourse. I solemnly protest, it was written without the smallest view or suspicion of any sort, solely to make out a letter to Lady Shaftesbury, ridiculing Lord Blandford's dressing himself so absurdly with only Lady Mary and myself in the house; I think, as far as my memory will allow me, I used the term *petit maitre*. I likewise ridiculed Lady Mary's finery, but I had no authority, I protest, for saying the baubles she wore were presents; being in possession of 400*l.* a-year pin-money, and knowing she was in the habit of sending orders to milliners and jewellers, I knew it was in her power to order what she liked. I repeat, and I do it in the most solemn and awful manner, that although I made the observation as if I conceived them to be presents, I had no reason to believe it; it was only to point out to Lady Shaftesbury the

light

light in which I viewed the vanity and frivolity of Lord Blandford's conduct, whose idle partiality to trinkets and dress I had invariably treated with ridicule. I am at liberty to declare, that this letter never was considered by Lady Shaftesbury, or any of the family, as written by me with any allusion to an improper connexion.

So far from my approving of any presents being received, my memory betrays me very much, if that very letter produced by the Attorney General does not itself express the impropriety of Lord Blandford's making presents, and which was the occasion of my remarking to Lady Shaftesbury, they were more proper for Lady Blandford than Lady Mary; but the former was no favourite, she knew; Lady Shaftesbury having on a former occasion observed the same to me. If Lord Blandford had not presented Lady Mary with a handsome clock, and myself with four silver saltcellars, I should not have made the slightest observation to Lady Shaftesbury about presents. Lady Mary herself knows that I disapproved of these presents being received; I told her, she knew that Lord Blandford was a distressed man; that it would better become him if he considered his family, and curtail

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his extravagance; I observed, she neither wanted clocks, or myself plate—I had enough of my own: this was seen in the same light by Lady Mary Anne; and she assured me she would return them. I made the same observations to a friend of mine, Mr. Allen, and to my butler; I told him I did not understand Lord Blandford's paving the way to visit me, by making presents; it was unnecessary, what I did not expect, and what I disliked; and I would put a stop to it. The answer was, It was friendly and good-natured, and nothing extraordinary for a man who had known me so many years. Surely, then, this was not the conduct of a man who would connive at his wife's misconduct. I am sure, if the whole of that letter had been read, no such horrid inference could have been fairly drawn.

Another letter brought forward, the date of which is suppressed, was written in December 1798, long before I had the smallest suspicion, thanking Lord Blandford for a pipe of madeira. When the plain, honest fact of this madeira is known, I feel no difficulty in declaring, that the charge of this being a bribe, that the harsh epithet of "*cold-blooded man of madeira, who had been eating and drinking his wife,*" will appear to be unsupported.

ported. Lord Blandford, when he had renewed his acquaintance with us in 1798, mentioned, at my table, that he had two or three casks of madeira coming home, that he would spare me one if I liked. Good madeira being difficult to be got, I gladly accepted it; he gave me the merchant's name; I wrote to him, desiring he would have it cased, and put on board a Roole coaster, and let me know the price;—he wrote me for answer, it was in the river; as soon as it arrived he would do as I desired, and begged I would pay for it immediately, as he did not make a sixpence profit. A post or two after, Lord Blandford wrote to me, informing me that he had ordered the wine to be sent to Brownsea, and begged my acceptance of it;—I told him in reply, I did not expect it on such terms, I should feel equally the obligation by letting me have it at the price he was to give; he answered, he had not paid for it, but that he should take it very unkind if I refused it; it was the first opportunity he ever had of making me any return for my friendship and kindness in former times, and that a pipe of madeira could be no object to either of us. Unfortunately, I

received it; I returned him thanks, and this letter was carefully preserved to bring forward, as if he anticipated a discovery. I never preserved a letter of his, God knows, from their unimportance, and never suspecting so much cunning and treachery from any man who had been under so many obligations to me himself for years.

Let me ask, fairly in candour, the Attorney General, if there is any thing extraordinary in a man under the long intimacy there had been between me and Lord Blandford, who partook of every wine the country produced, at my own table; whose horses, whose servants, whose dogs were fed and maintained for months by me; let me ask him, is there any thing criminal in receiving a pipe of madeira from a man under such circumstances? — Surely not; nor can there be any fair ground to support such a foul and detestable charge, that this wine was accepted as a price for my wife's dishonour. The mind who can entertain so base an opinion of any man living must be black indeed.

The only obligation I ever felt myself under to that Nobleman was for a loan of 200/. unsolicited, unasked for, and unexpected;

pected; it came voluntarily from himself. I did feel obliged to him on that occasion. Being at an hotel, and having taken a house, I wished to get into it, but, not liking to quit the hotel till I had settled the bill, I had made up my mind to remain till a sum I expected in a fortnight was remitted. Lady Mary knew my reason, and I have no doubt now that she mentioned this circumstance to Lord Blandford, for I could never account for this voluntary offer in any other way. As it would be a saving of five and twenty guineas or more, I accepted it, and in consequence removed to my house. I did accept this loan more readily, because I knew his affairs had been settled, and he assured me he had not the smallest call for it; and at the same time earnestly requested me not to return it till quite convenient. But God knows I did not accept this paltry loan from any base or dishonourable motive: no, I possess the pride of a man too much, I valued my honourable connexions, I esteemed my own honour, character, and reputation, too highly, ever to suffer it to be handed down to posterity, that I was a man capable of the meanest and most despicable profligacy I in my conscience



science think a man could be capable of—a baseness that I think should deservedly stamp him as an outcast of society.

The Attorney General's pitying Lady Blandford, pitying Lady Mary, I can warmly feel as well as himself; but that he should feel the smallest spark of pity for that example of ingratitude and immorality, I am amazed at. The man who could deliberately utter, from his lips such a harsh phrase as "*gold-blooded man of madeira, who ate and drank of his wife,*" deserves only disdain; and his friendship or his acquaintance I shall never consider as an acquisition.

I have now laid before the public every circumstance; I have honestly, without partiality, without hiding any part of my conduct, stated to the public my case, and I am not without the most sanguine hopes, that they will be firmly convinced that there was nothing ever in my behaviour, nothing in any part of the letters, that could justify the smallest idea that I am by nature capable of conniving at my wife's or my own dishonour; that my unsuspecting disposition, my generous confidence in Lady Mary Anne, has been alone the rock I have been shipwrecked

wrecked upon ; and that the designing, the ungenerous conduct of Lord Blandford must be considered as a singular instance of perfidy and depravity.

*London,*  
*June 9th, 1801.*

C, STURT,

*This*

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STURT,

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STURT, Esq.

VERSUS

THE MARQUIS OF BLANDFORD.

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*MR. Jekyll.*—This action is brought by Charles Sturt, Esq. against the Marquis of Blandford, for criminal conversation with his wife. He lays his damages at twenty thousand pounds. The Defendant has pleaded, he is not guilty; and upon that, issue is joined.

*Mr. Erskine.*—May it please your Lordship—  
Gentlemen of the Jury :

I am of counsel in this cause for the Plaintiff, Mr. Charles Sturt, who is a gentleman of the county of Dorset, and Member of Parliament for Bridport; and it is his misfortune to be obliged to assemble you to consider one of the greatest injuries possible for a man to sustain—that of the seduction of his wife; and more especially under the circumstances which accompany this melancholy case.

I really

I really have been placed so very, very often in the situation of counsel for persons complaining of this most serious of all injuries, that I scarce know how to address juries on the subject. Over and over again the same topics have been urged; over and over again courts of justice have been impelled by that most solemn duty they owe the public, as well as the individuals complaining, to endeavour to repress, by every possible severity, the commission of the crime of adultery. Unfortunately, their endeavours have as yet had very little effect, and I am sorry to say, that the morals of the public, in this respect, seem very little improved.

The Defendant is a man of high and illustrious rank; he is the eldest son of the Duke of Marlborough, and heir to the title and fortune of that nobleman, conferred on his ancestors, at least in some respects, by the bounty of the country for the services formerly rendered by that house.

It is a painful task to me to open this case; and the more so, after the unprofitable waste of time which has occurred in the course of the business of the day\*.

One would wish that persons in eminent and exalted situations of life would not, by their conduct, furnish topics like those too often discussed in this

\* A person of the name of Spence had been tried for the publication of a seditious libel, and the reading of his defence had taken up between two and three hours.

place. There is an awful duty imposed on persons of high stations; and I am sorry to observe in this case, as far as I can judge from the information laid before me, that the Noble Marquis, the Defendant on this record, has not conducted himself with discretion, either as it regards his family or himself, or the unfortunate gentleman whom I represent.

Mr. Sturt married the daughter of the late Earl of Shaftesbury, and sister of the present Earl, Lady Mary Anne Sturt, a lady of great personal beauty and mental accomplishments. This marriage took place in the year 1788, at which time Lord Blandford was a very young man. At this period an intimacy subsisted between this young nobleman and the Plaintiff, which was cemented by a connexion of a family nature; for Mr. Ashley, the brother of Lady Mary Anne Sturt, married a sister of the Noble Marquis. Such a connexion naturally tended to improve the acquaintance, which, for a considerable time previous, had subsisted between the parties; and the Defendant constantly visited at the house of the Plaintiff, and lived upon terms of the strictest intimacy with him.

I shall have an opportunity of laying before you evidence of the existence of that degree of friendship which necessarily took away every suspicion on the part of Mr. Sturt, that Lord Blandford, his relation, was availing himself of the access to his house to debauch his wife.

Lord Blandford is likewise a married man; he married the daughter of the Earl of Galloway, and has five or six children; his lady visited at the house of Mr. Sturt. Thus the Defendant presented himself as a married man, father of a family of children, connected by marriage with the Plaintiff, and living with him in a manner which destroyed every idea of distrust.

Lord Blandford has so conducted himself in the course of this intrigue, that it is out of my power to do that which is usually the course in actions of this sort; namely, to lay before you that species of evidence formerly considered indispensably requisite to maintain them, and generally made use of to prove a criminal connexion. Lord Blandford has so contrived to withdraw himself from immediate observation, that it is impossible to offer you proof of any specific act of adultery.

In many cases of persons being much together, an apparent familiarity and affectionate behaviour may reasonably be urged as inferences of a criminal attachment. Such conduct is often strong evidence to a jury, where the parties have previously been in a manner strangers to one another: for instance, if a man who is merely an occasional visitor in a family, and from whom nothing farther is expected than those attentions which are the result of the common forms and ceremonies of the world, should be observed to deport himself  
with

with more than an ordinary degree of friendship and affection towards the wife of the person in whose house he is a visitor; such a conduct might justly be considered as calculated to awaken suspicion; but I am ready to admit, that evidence of this nature would be of no value in a case circumstanced as this is; for if you consider, that Mr. Ashley, the brother of Lady Mary Anne Sturt, married Lord Blandford's sister, it will follow, that the friendship between him and Lady Mary Anne Sturt, and the reciprocal attentions of Lord Blandford and Lady Mary Anne Sturt towards each other, were perfectly justified by the circumstance of their family connexion:—and I am free to confess, they would be insufficient to found your verdict. In a case like this it is fit I should give proof of a more positive nature.

But for a mere accident Mr. Sturt would not have been in possession of any proof whatever. He would have had the mortification of having children of a spurious breed imposed upon him as his own. His wife would have been debauched, and the children of another man put upon him and invested with the property settled upon them by his marriage articles;—but for an intercepted correspondence, which it will be my duty to lay before you.

In a case of this sort I might have contented myself with reading one letter; but, not having any other evidence, I am afraid his Lordship and you would think it too much for me to ask for  
your



your verdict, without convincing you, by the result of a regular train of correspondence, that I am warranted by the facts of the case in demanding it.

You will find, Gentlemen, that when the Plaintiff intercepted these letters you will have read to you, he conducted himself in a manner highly honourable to himself. It was at a period when Lady Mary Anne Sturt was within two months of her delivery of a child of which she was pregnant, not by him, but by the Noble Defendant! Conscious as he was that the child she was about to bring into the world was not his, yet apprehensive, by a premature discovery, of shocking the feelings of the woman who had betrayed him, and destroying the fruit of her womb, he was too liberal and too honourable to think of doing that which many others under similar circumstances would have done. Instead of immediately exposing her, he consulted his friends, adopted their advice, resolved to withdraw himself from all future connexion with her, and immediately brought this action, the object of which is to receive, at the hands of a jury of his country, those exemplary damages which the circumstances of this case, and the nature of the injury, entitle him to.

The way in which the correspondence between the Defendant and the Plaintiff's wife was discovered, was this:—Mr. Sturt, who, as a Member of Parliament, was in the habit of sending and receiving a great number of letters, had a bag, which

which his servant generally carried to the Post-office, with such as he had occasion to dispatch to his correspondents. Happening one day to examine this bag after his letters had been put into it, he discovered a letter written by Lady Mary Anne his wife to the Marquis of Blandford.

This furnished him with a clue to further discoveries, and it turned out that Lord Blandford had been in the habit of corresponding with his wife. He knew that the defendant had previously written letters of common civility, offering her presents of Parmesan cheese, and mentioning his having approved of the particular colour of a portico, or the embellishments of her rooms; but none of the letters were filled with those endearing expressions calculated to excite his suspicion. He now discovered that they had merely been used as envelopes to letters within, and purposely employed to impose upon him, and conceal the mischief they contained.

The Marquis of Blandford is not a Member of Parliament—Mr. Sturt is; and many of the letters which I shall produce to you came enclosed in envelopes, and franked of course, in order to impose upon this unhappy husband.

You will see, Gentlemen, from the course of the correspondence, that the Defendant attributed to some change in the mind of the lady, that silence on her part which was produced by the interception of their letters. He had no opportunity of clearing

clearing up the cause of her neglect in writing to him, and he consequently thought he had lost her affections.

I shall select some of the letters, in order to illustrate what I have stated to you. This which I hold in my hand is one of the envelopes;—it is in these terms :

No. 2.

“ DEAR LADY MARY ANNE,

“ WHEN I was at Critchill, I measured your Portico Room, and have had one of the new green and yellow carpets made for it; and if you and Charles will accept of it as a sort of joint present, and make use of it, it will give me infinite pleasure. It is gone by Aslett's waggon to Winburn. Remember me to Charles, and believe me

“ Sincerely yours,

“ BLANDFORD.”

It is dated White Knights, Tuesday.

This letter, I suppose, came franked to the Plaintiff, Mr. Sturt, and was opened by Lady Mary Anne Sturt. But you will find that within this envelope was a letter not intended for the husband's sight. The manner in which she acted was this:—after opening the envelope, she would throw it on the table; saying, There, Charles, is a letter from Blandford; and she would artfully conceal the letter meant for herself.

You

You will see the different style and manner in which he addresses himself to her in the envelopes from those which were enclosed. The following is a specimen of one of the latter :

No. 3.

“ *Nine o’Clock, Sunday Morning.*

“ I AM not only disappointed, but alarmed, my dear Mary Anne, at not hearing from you, and I cannot now bear before Tuesday. Surely, my dear, you and I think very differently about writing to each other, or you would not have let six days go by without writing to me, for your last letter was written last Monday night ; you do not make allowances, my dear, for my anxiety about you—indeed you do not. I am never easy but when I am writing to you. I hope it is forgetfulness that is the cause of your silence, and that you continue well. I shall be miserable until Tuesday comes, and if a letter should not come then, for God knows how long your silence may last, I shall set off, and come somewhere in the neighbourhood of Critchill, and find out how you are ;—you drive me to it, my dear, for I cannot bear not knowing how you are ;—how I wish for Tuesday !”

You observe, Gentlemen, that in consequence of the interception of letters, Lord Blandford was alarmed lest something should take place by his coming to Critchill, that might lead to a detection

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of

of the amour; he therefore proposes only to come into the neighbourhood; his guilty mind suggested to him that he could not venture with safety to the house of the man he had injured.

The same letter thus continues, under a subsequent date, of eleven o'clock:

“ Indeed, my dear Mary Anne, I am quite at a loss to conjecture why I did not hear from you to-day; a thousand ideas come into my mind, but I cannot fix upon any one: all I hope is, that it is not from illness. The more, though, that I persuade myself that you would certainly not have kept me so long without hearing of you, the more I am inclined to think that you are ill; may Heaven grant that I may be wrong, and that I may have to upbraid you, and not to know that you are ill! My mind is so uncomfortable about you, that I cannot even think of the subject about which I usually write; I can think of nothing else but you—in my life I never felt such a tremor as I do now! Indeed, indeed, I fear you are ill, for you could not otherwise have used me so cruelly, for you know my feelings.

“ God in Heaven protect you! Was I without any one in the house, I should set off now; but if I do not hear on Tuesday, I am determined to know all about you before the night. Adieu! I cannot write or think.

“ Most truly yours,

“ BLANDFORD.”

There is then another letter, which plainly appears to have been an envelope; it runs thus :

No. 4.

“ DEAR LADY MARY ANNE,

“ IT is so long since I heard from you, that I doubt if you have received my letters. As two letters of mine, to different people, have been lost within this fortnight; this may possibly be the case. I do not yet know where Charles is, but suppose at Critchill. I shall direct this to him there. God bless you!

“ Sincerely yours,

“ BLANDFORD.”

Enclosed in this envelope was the following letter :

“ *One o’Clock, Tuesday.*

“ YOUR letter, which I find ought to have come on Sunday, is just come; but do I dream, or is it your own writing? I think it was in my last letter but one that I expressed a surprize at your never mentioning, in your letters, my coming to Critchill the end of January, and I said I hoped you would have no more whims; I little thought that my conjectures and alarms were so well founded;—and do I, *must* I live to receive a letter from you, saying that you had rather I was absent from you than with you when you are confined?—Strange perversion of feeling! Did you not repeatedly

peatedly urge me to leave Critchill, and go to Weymouth, expressly that I might be with you at the very time you was taken ill; did you not buoy me up with the idea, and was it all to deceive me into compliance? For shame, for shame! you broke your word with me at Critchill; I forgave it, though I could not forget it; and you now break your word again, and show an unwillingness and reluctance to have me with you when you are confined. Is it to let me down easy that you use me so? is it to endeavour to charge the love I bear you with disgust, or what is it? For God's sake remember that our mutual constancy is our only hope, our atonement with Heaven; do not let that slip, nor endeavour to drive me into inconstancy, for it will be sending me into all the torments of hell. Another letter to advise so horrid a measure, too! a measure which I had hoped you would have repented of having made as soon as you had written it; but I have said enough of that measure in a former letter, and shut my mouth upon it for ever. No, you may drive me from you in time by such conduct as you are now pursuing by me, but never can you induce me to trust or care for woman more. Damnation! is not even Mary Anne exempted from deceit and falsehood?

“You tell me to make myself happy, and yet act in a manner that you know must make me miserable. Let me ask you one single question; Do you

you think there is a woman in the world who loves a man truly, that would rather have him absent from her at the time of her confinement than with her? it is impossible, it is unnatural! I am miserable at the idea of not being at Critchill at that time, but doubly so at knowing that you wish me not to be there: suppose I was really your husband, should I be sent out of the house at the time? If that is your intention, it is ingenuous of you to tell me. But I know that your intention is, that I should not come at all there; and I know that your intention has been so ever since I first went to Weymouth; but do you recollect who you deceive, who you use in the manner you do? One who would rather die than deceive you. For shame, for shame, Mary Anne!

“ Notwithstanding you said that nothing should induce you to go to St. Giles’s \* if I was not there, I find by your letter you have been; I suppose the eloquence of a certain person has produced more effect at Critchill than it did in the House of Commons †, and I dare say great part of your letter to me is owing to the same persuasive oratory; he does not like to deny me himself, and has prevailed upon you to do it. I am determined never again to trust to any promises you make me, nor to allow of any qualification or pleasure being

\* A feat of the Earl of Shaftesbury.

† This alludes to Mr. Sturt’s motion on the Ferrol expedition.

put.



put off that can take place immediately ; for I find you can both promise me and deceive me ; I refer to your own conduct to me to prove it ; you cannot say I am harsh or cruel, unless you can prove that what I say is not true. For Heaven's sake, leave off desiring me to make myself happy and comfortable, till you can love as I do, and reckon your promises sacred. You ask me about my reception here ; it was as usual ; but we disagreed in less than an hour after I arrived, and scarcely spoke till next day.

“ I shall direct this to Critchill, as the safest place, as I suppose your letters will be forwarded to you if you are still at St. Giles's, or any where else.

“ I shall now close this unpleasant, heart-breaking subject, with one old, trite, but true observation, that ‘ continual dropping will wear away a stone.’ I remain, much more than you can wish, much more than you have a right to expect,

“ Affectionately, and, I hope,

“ Unalterably yours,

“ BLANDFORD.”

It appears, that subsequent to this period, upon the discovery being made, there was a communication by Mr. Sturt to a near relation, who remonstrated with Lady Mary Anne upon the subject.

At this time Mr. Sturt had resolved never more  
to

to have any further intercourse with his lady. She was then near her delivery of a child which Mr. Sturt knew was not his. The letter he had intercepted afforded ample conviction of his dishonour; for why else did Lord Blandford, if he had not had a criminal connexion with Lady Anne, consider that it would be improper for him to be with her? You will find there was a communication on the part of the relation I have mentioned to Mrs. Sturt, of the unhappy state in which, by her guilty conduct, she had placed her husband. You will find also, that she communicated this to Lord Blandford; and you will see how he endeavoured to prevent the repentance of this unhappy lost woman, and plunge her deeper into the jaws of destruction. In a letter, to which there is no other date than "Nine o'clock, Thursday," he says thus:

## No. 7.

"I HAVE just received, my dear Mary Anne, your extraordinary letter, perhaps the most extraordinary I ever got from you. I am, as you must be convinced, miserable at the prospect of your being talked and frightened out of the *remains* of love you may have for me. With respect to my not being upon my guard at Weymouth, I can positively affirm, that I never did or said any thing to Lady S. that could possibly authorize her to say all she did to you; and as for being uneasy when I did not hear from you, how could she tell when I  
did,

did, for I never showed her any of your letters, or told her I had heard; so that this is a *downright lie*. What she means by my not going to town till you are there, I am also at a loss to conceive; for I *repeatedly* told her, my house would not be ready to receive me. I am perfectly convinced, that whatever her ideas are, that I have neither done or said any thing to her to induce her to form those opinions, though, God knows, I do not deny the truth of them. I must now ask you, once for all, Do you mean that my visits to Critchill in future should be guided by her? because, if so, the sooner I put it out of my power to make them, the better; and now I find how truly I prophesied in my last letter, that your wish was to prevent my coming to Critchill *at all*.

“ I suppose she abused me finely to you; I hope you will have the sincerity left to tell me all the abuse she lavished on me, that I may have an additional reason never to set my foot within her house again. You have now a fine argument in your favour against me, the entreaties of your friends. I must add one thing, that if I am not to stand in person, I must beg not to be sponsor, as was before settled. Alas! how little did I suppose, that your attachment could be guided by the advice of another! but here it must end. Once for all then, will you hearken to me, or to others? answer me this, and that shall seal our fate! seal it for ever! And, O merciful Father! bear me witness

ness that my love for Mary Anne has ever been pure and unceasing; and that, though she now gives me up, following the dictates of others in preference to those of her own heart, I never shall cease to love; never will cease to pray for her happiness, both in this world and the world to come; and grant also, most indulgent Father, that the misery and anguish with which my short life will be chequered, may insure to her something like happiness in this world, and endless joys in the world to come!

“ So ends this strange and eventful history; alas! how often have I told you, that *your* attachment would not bear a check, and how much I dreaded such a one as the present; it was my morning and my evening song to you; alas, how true! If you answer this letter thoroughly, our correspondence may close, as you seem to wish it, and I am not to have even the advantage of hearing about my own child. *Damnation!* worse than a dog you use me; but I must not complain. Adieu! And you tell me to be happy; know though, and by my God it is true, that I am more wretched, more in torture now, than I ever was in my life, and that I cannot long bear it. Tell me not to be happy; tell me the truth, that you prefer others' wishes to my comfort, and that you delight in making me wretched; tell me, then, swear it, and force me to decide upon the only steps which can rid me of misery! Cruel Mary Anne, you have

been told I love you to phrenzy; why then add fuel to my brain, which is now in flames? Take care you do not make me mad,

“ The oftener I read your letter the more terrible my situation appears. To have fostered a love for you, and to have built hopes of its one day becoming mutual, and for it now to be blasted, is more than I can bear. My sorrows must consume me at last; you do not know them, you cannot feel them; had I ever plagued you and ill-used you, as much as I have ever tried to do the reverse, you could not wish me such anguish. Oh! deceitful Mary Anne, why have I pitched my affections upon one who has not a heart to return them, and can have the extreme barbarity to say, ‘ I would love you, but my friends advise me against it, and their advice is my first consideration,’ prior to mine, prior to one who, was I to live a thousand years, I could not tell you half what I have felt for you. Why was not I convinced, when you first refused to leave the world for me? why was not I then convinced you did not love me? I ought to have been; but blindness has damned me. Alas! it is but too plain that the person you wrote about has now got an ascendancy over your actions, even to persuade you to *kill and destroy me!* Good heavens, is it possible? Don’t say again I was off my guard, for it is *a lie!* and so you trust I will do away any ideas she may have by going to town early in February.

'ary.' Cold, inanimate woman! what would you be at? do you know it is me you are addressing? I who you have so often sworn you loved, you adored? What is the change owing to? Tell me, assure me I have a rival, and I will murder myself to be out of his way; any thing to make you happy: but spare me, spare my poor heart a little; I will promise you not to injure a hair of his head if there is a rival: only spare me, don't torture me, let me die quietly; spare me, once, my Mary Anne; by the oaths you have now broken, by the protestations of love which you now forsake, by all the dear deceits which you practised upon me in assuring me you loved me; by all these spare me. Deceive me a little longer, I shall not live long; let me fancy you love me, and let me have the idea, though the reality is, I know, for ever flown. Lady S. cannot object to that; I will write and get her consent if you do not. Curse the childish tears that are now falling on the paper; but I cannot help them; my heart is ready to break, and the only comfort I can have, is, that you have broke it.

"You say you hate any one to suspect any attachment between us; in short, you are ashamed of loving me, and had rather forego the pleasures of it than have it thought: Thank God, I believe this idea will cure me.

"BLANDFORD.

"I don't care a straw who sees this letter."

Such is the manner in which he remonstrates with this lady for endeavouring to quit the connexion. I will now read one letter, which will show you more than any I have yet read, the situation in which these two persons stood with regard to each other.

It is dated "Two o'clock, Thursday," and is as follows :

No. 10.

"THOUGH I have but just sealed up my letter to you, I cannot help making one effort more to preserve you for me, and myself for you, in case my letter just sealed should fail. For God's sake, Mary Anne, if you have not burnt the letter I wrote to you from St. Giles's (and you said you would not), for God's sake, and for your own sake, and my sake, read it over again; do not shut your eyes against conviction, but be persuaded, that whatever militates against our love *cannot be acceptable in the eyes of Providence*. Do not imagine that — is your friend in the advice she gives you; do not imagine it is you she means to serve; no, she means to curry the favour of another by it, and certainly will contrive that that other shall know it: you can guess the lady I allude to, one near me at present: do not suppose that Lady S. is either your friend or mine in her advice; no, our bitter enemy.—'Listen not to the voice of the *charmer*, charm he ever so wisely.'—She is in hopes of destroying the attachment she may think  
you

you have for me; and she thinks that when I see that gone, that mine will soon follow: this is her plan. She has lost her own love, and wishes you to do the same; but can so short an absence as a fortnight induce you to listen to her in preference to me? I would think it impossible. I feel uncommonly inspired to put you on your guard against her; depend upon it, the *fiend* is at the bottom of it all; he is *too cunning, and under too many obligations to me, to do it himself*, and has employed another as evil minded as himself. Believe me, my dear, I am speaking truth; for though he does not care for you, he cares for himself.

“ Let me entreat you to shut your ears against any thing she may say; she is a devil, I see it, and her whole aim is to disunite us; but I cannot think till I see it that she can succeed; her very representation of my love for you as frantic, shows that she wished to imply that it would not last. Take care what you listen to about me; for remember, that though at first we hear our friends abused with disgust, the second time we listen to it we hear it with indifference, and the third time we join in it. For God's sake, Mary Anne, if you value your love for me, if you do not wish to conquer it, beware of her arts; her wish is to deceive, *her very religion teaches her to be an hypocrite*; and while she is pretending to be your friend, she is secretly undermining both our happiness. Can you for a moment give a preference to her counsels? Can I have

any



any thing but your good, your welfare; at least? What a new scene of difficulty it must open to me if you listen to her; to that *abominable, odious, diabolical woman, the pest of our sex, as she is the disgrace to her own!* She of whom you have so often had reason to complain; is to be preferred and listened to in preference of me! I cannot think it possible; I must not; cannot allow it; I must be less than a man to suffer you to throw yourself away in this manner, and make us both wretched. I am bound by duty as well as love to open your eyes ere it is too late, and ere you have made her some promise, which she, by her art, will prevail on you to make: her object is plain; it is, that you should by degrees shake off your connexion with me; and can you really consent to that? I have no doubt, that now she has once begun the subject, she will make use of many arguments, which may appear plausible till they are refuted and their fallacy proved. I have no doubt I shall be represented to you by degrees as a *seducer, a monster, or, at best, a madman*; I have no doubt but that many things will be said to you; and the longer interval she can obtain from your being able to converse with me, the more chance she will think she has; this is one great reason why she wished you to prevent my coming to you the end of this month. Surely it does not require great penetration to see through all these things; nothing appears clearer to me, and I trust you will see it  
in

In the same light. Be assured also, that if you give way in this one instance, about my not coming to Critchill, that she will never cease plaguing you, and will reckon her victory complete. I am willing, according to your first request, not to come till after you are confined; but if you persist on wishing me not to come to the *christening*, I must say coolly and quietly, that you will do the most ill-judged thing you ever did in your life; and I really, if Charles is there, shall not think myself allowed, both for your sake and mine, to indulge you in it. I really hope and believe you love me; but if you persist in this, it will be really too gross a contradiction to my hope and belief. But I am sure you will not, and upon reflection you will believe all I say; for both our sakes you ought.

“ Suppose you had ever said \* \* \* \* \*  
 \* \* \* \* (and surely there was greater cause) what she has said to you, do you think she would have taken your advice? Have I ever been as long with you as he is at ———? Do I attend you up to town, and return when you return? In short, can it be compared? It is surely not for ——— to talk as she does; you ought to have told her so at once. Good God! how sorry I am you listened to hear her abuse me! Swear to me, or we must part for ever, that you will never again listen to her upon that subject. Is this the time of day that you should ask advice of others, after having  
 so

So long devoted yourself to me and my counsels? Are you now to take refuge in the advice of others? and are they to supplant me? You talk of my not being guarded, but it is you who have been unguarded in paying attention to what ——— has told you: why did you not tell her, as you have often done, that it was all nonsense; and that you could not help Charles having who he liked to his house? How comes it that ——— should be chosen as your confident? and miraculous does it seem to me, that you could so quietly have listened to her so long: was it not partly acknowledging the truth of what she said? Say not then that I have been unguarded, for I have never been so; but say rather that you have, and that you have listened to hear me abused, till you was convinced I deserved it. Mercy! is it possible? Am I, or ought I to be told now, that you renounce me by the advice of your friends? Are you not sworn to me, and to me alone? Had you said all this in June 1798, it might have passed; but you was then, alas! as eager as I was (after the explanation we had) to renew our love, which we found had never been extinguished, though I married with that intent; and four years, or, believe, five, had passed without ever seeing each other, or holding any intercourse. Are you to tell me now, that your friends are against it, and to jilt me in this manner?

“ I have

" I have now said every thing which tenderness, reason, and religion dictates; and I am confident that if I meet with an equal share of the three in her whom I am addressing, she will spurn the advice of others when it can any way militate against our mutual love. Your answer to this must seal our doom for ever; but as I anticipate it, I must sign myself, what I have never ceased to be,

" Yours affectionately,

" And most sincerely so,

" BLANDFORD."

There is a postscript added to this letter, dated Sunday, which is to this effect :

" I have no letter from you to-day; none since Thursday: this completes every thing; however, I shall make no further comments upon your inhumanity: I only think it right to tell you, that you have succeeded in making me the veriest example of wretchedness that, I believe, ever drew breath. *Lady B* is quite alarmed about me, for I burst into tears continually and talk so in my sleep, that she is quite frightened. Things might have been otherwise; you might have made them so; one piece of wisdom you will have been taught by it, namely, how dangerous it is to let a third person in between ourselves and those we love.

" Adieu! That you may profit by my misfortunes is still the prayer of one who, had you  
 E treated

treated him with moderate kindness, would never have ceased being, for a moment,

“ Most affectionately and

“ Unalterably yours,

“ B———.

“ I must beg for an answer to this as soon as you can; for the tortures of suspense, and such a suspense! are worse to me than the agonies of death! Two words—nay, one will do; am I to belong to you or to nobody?”

Such, Gentlemen, is the manner in which Lord Blandford addresses this guilty woman, and drives her on to destruction. After having invaded the bed of her husband, after having imposed upon him a spurious race to enjoy the fortune entailed upon them by his marriage settlement, after having accomplished the ruin of the soul and body of this wretched wife, after his adulterous commerce had been suspected and discovered, after her relation had been endeavouring to bring her back to a sense of her duty, or at least that she might not add to her crime by a repetition of it, this is the manner in which he argues in his letters to her, written in order to prevent her following the advice of her friend; and makes use of religion and Providence as a stalking-horse, as if religion or Providence could have any thing to do with regard to a love of so guilty and infamous a nature.

There

There is a letter which perhaps I might have hastened to at once, and left it to the officer of the Court to have read the other two letters, which are necessary to fill up the chasm; and that is one which, I humbly submit, would of itself be sufficient to entitle me to your verdict; but probably you, Gentlemen, and his Lordship, would have said, We wish to be convinced by a regular train of correspondence, that a long intrigue has taken place introductory to it, and that as I could not prove any specific act of adultery, I ought not to content myself with the production of one letter.

It is for this purpose I have read the different parts of the correspondence. The letter I am now about to read is decisive of the guilt of the Defendant: it is dated Sunday night, and was written after the delivery of the child of which Lady Mary Anne Sturt was within six weeks of being delivered at the time the discovery of the illicit amour was made. It is in these terms:

No. 18.

“ THAT Heaven, my more than ever beloved Mary Anne, who has so indulgently granted my prayers for your safe deliverance, may still continue to shield you under its safeguard, is my constant and ardent prayer! *However we may have had hitherto separate concerns, we can have but one now; but one point to look to, and that one the dear pledge of our eternal love! Oh, my wife! my dear, my*

E 2

*adored*

*adored wife! the blessed mother of my child, what a poor conveyance language is to express the feelings of a heart really overcome with affection and love! I love you ten millions of times more than ever I did. My joy at hearing you was safe, and my ecstasy at knowing that you was comparatively free from pain, was more than I really can express. Suffer, my adored Mary Anne, that the dear babe, who, alas! I have not yet seen, may so cement us in love and affection, that no machinations of others may ever have a chance of succeeding in causing even a temporary coldness between us! Love the father in the child, my dear, and never be ashamed of the workings of nature and sympathy! Love my poor Georgiana for the sake of your George, your Blandford, your husband, your devoted half! Heaven knows, and Heaven only knows, how I love you, my dear Mary Anne; and Heaven will reward me yet for my constancy. Oh! could I now press my child and its dear mother to my arms; I could do it with the greatest innocence! It appears more like a romance than a real narration of facts, that I should be separated from a mother and child I adore! When you do write, my dear, write as if you acknowledged me as your husband, for so I am by every divine law! I thought a month ago that I had arrived at the utmost pitch of loving, but I find that I was mistaken, and that I now love more than ever, for I love you now as my wife and the mother of my child. Adieu, my love: I  
 must*

must not write too much to agitate you; I will write again soon, but you must expect tautology.

“ Most religiously and unalterably yours,

“ BLANDFORD.”

This letter must convince every man who reads it, that Lord Blandford knew he was the father of the child of which Lady Mary Anne had been delivered, and that he was endeavouring to deprive her of repentance, and urge her in the unhappy course in which he had involved her.

I shall prove, besides, that Lord Blandford had determined to forsake his own family, to give up his own wife and beautiful children, in order to go to a distant country with Lady Mary Anne Sturt, there to spend the remainder of his days.

You will see, during the whole course of this criminal correspondence, the Defendant professing the greatest friendship for the Plaintiff, and at the same time abusing him, by using his privilege of a Member of Parliament, in sending these letters to his wife under cover of envelopes directed to himself.

As a proof of this assertion, I will now read to you a letter he wrote to Mr. Sturt only a few days before the detection which led to the present action. It is thus :

No.



No. 41.

“ DEAR CHARLES;

“ I WAS, indeed, in hopes to have seen you here in your way down, and I believe I should have passed a couple of days at Longford in my way, if I had not hoped to have seen you here on Monday; and I really thought my letter pretty decisive. I conclude by your letter, that Lady M. A. has returned from Critchill; that you are there by this time, and acquainted with all my adventures. I shall be most happy to come to you the end of January, and shall probably not take my gun in my hand till then, as we have no pheasants at all, you know, here; and I think partridge-shooting poor sport in comparison. If my wishes could procure you “ a merry Christmas,” I would give them with delight; but for *children of adversity*, like you and me, to wish each other what they must be certain can only exist in wishes, would be almost an insult; so I shall make a bargain with you, that “ merry Christmases and happy new years” may be dropt between us till one or the other of us can see a prospect of either being realized. Most heartily, though, do I wish you joy of the last day of the year, being, if I remember right, Lady Mary Anne’s birth-day; and most sincerely do I hope that she may see many more; and I cannot perhaps wish her a greater share of happiness than her own merits entitle her to.

“ I long

" I long to shoot at Abbey Cross, without the risk of meeting Parson King. My kindest compliments to Lady Mary.

" Believe me,

" Dear Charles,

*White Knights.*

*Wednesday.*

" Very sincerely yours,

" BLANDFORD."

I confess, Gentlemen, that, as it appears to me, it would be a most shameful waste of time to endeavour, by any thing I could say, to excite your resentment and indignation at a conduct like this. I stand here to represent Mr. Sturt, to plead for him, and to state his wrongs to you—wrongs they are, not only as they affect him, but as they affect the public, the cause of virtue, religion, and morality, and every thing dear and sacred that belongs to social life: and I maintain, that it is impossible for you to give any verdict that can be adequate to the injury sustained by a man who is placed in this situation by the conduct of the Defendant; that the children he looked up to as the dearest comforts of his life, he can only consider as the spurious issue of an adulterous intercourse, with the additional mortification of being conscious that they must inherit the property settled upon the offspring of his wife, for such is the effect of his marriage articles.

I am persuaded, Gentlemen, you will give the fullest attention to this case. It is not my intention  
to

to offer any parole evidence of an act of adultery ; the Defendant has taken care to conduct himself with a degree of circumspection which precludes the possibility of laying before you that kind of proof which usually constitutes the foundation of these sorts of actions.

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The Rev. Dr. *Charles Moss* proved the solemnization of the marriage between the Plaintiff and his wife, on the 14th April 1788, at the house of the lady's father.

Mr. *Jonathan Brundrett*, clerk to Mr. Lowten, the Plaintiff's solicitor, produced an extract of the entry made in the register-book of marriages in the parish of St. George, Hanover Square.

The register was to this effect : 14th April 1788. Charles Sturt, Esq. of the parish of St. James, Westminster, and the Right Hon. Lady Mary Anne Ashley, spinster, were this day married by special license of his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The *Attorney General* submitted, that as the marriage had been solemnized in an uncanonical place, the special license ought to be produced.

Lord *Kenyon* said he had never known a special license required to be produced in an action of this

this kind ; and at all events he should not stop the cause for want of it.

*The Rev. GEORGE MARSH sworn.—Examined by  
Mr. JEKYLL.*

Q. You are a clergyman ?

A. Yes. I am the rector of Critchill.

Q. I believe it is within that parish the country residence of Mr. Sturt is situated ?

A. It is.

Q. Your residence is near his ?

A. We live about a mile and an half from each other.

Q. How long have you been acquainted with Mr. and Lady Mary Anne Sturt ?

A. I have been acquainted with Lady Mary Anne ever since her marriage, which is thirteen years ago, and with Mr. Sturt since the year before.

Q. I believe you have had frequent occasions of being with Mr. Sturt and Lady Mary Anne, both at their town and country residence ?

A. Only in the country, while they have resided at Critchill, which in the course of the thirteen years has not been above a third of the time.

Q. In what manner did they appear to you to have lived together ?

A. I saw no impropriety in the behaviour of either of them ; they conducted themselves with great appearance of affection on both sides.

F

*Cross-*

*Cross-examined by Mr. GIBBS.*

Q. Have you known them up to the last year?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you christen the child?

A. I named it in the house—it was never received into the church.

Q. Was Mr. Sturt present?

A. No; he was not.

Q. Who was?

A. Lady Mary; and, I think, Mrs. Sykes, the children's governess, and the nurses were called in. Lord *Kenyon*. What children have they?

A. I believe three besides this last; one son and two daughters—the eldest daughter about ten, and the son about six.

*Captain SALVIN.—Examined by Mr. ERSKINE.*

Q. Are you acquainted with Mr. Sturt?

A. Yes.

Q. How long have you known him?

A. About fourteen years.

Q. Have you been in the course of visiting him?

A. Yes; I have been in the family for two months together at a time.

Q. What was his behaviour towards his wife, so far as you was enabled to observe it?

A. I never saw a family more united than it appeared to be in every respect. They lived together with the greatest harmony, I thought.

Q. Did

Q. Did Mr. Sturt appear to be affectionate and attentive to Lady Mary Anne?

A. Very much so.

Q. Did she appear so to him?

A. I thought so, particularly after his escape from the sea last year. I never saw a person more affected, or express greater concern for a husband than Lady Mary Anne did upon that occasion.

Q. What is the date of the period you are speaking of?

A. It was in the latter end of the month of September, or beginning of October last.

WILLIAM BRETTON, Esq.—Examined by Mr.  
GARROW.

Q. How long have you been acquainted with Mr. Sturt and his lady?

A. I have been acquainted with Mr. Sturt ten years, and Lady Mary Anne three years.

Q. Have you had any opportunities of seeing them together, and of knowing how they behaved towards each other?

A. Only once; I spent three weeks with them at Brownsea Castle.

Inform his Lordship and the Jury how they appeared to live together.

A. In perfect harmony.—I thought his attention to his wife more than common.

Q. Had they children?

A. Yes; two daughters and a son.

Q. The eldest a young lady about ten years old?

A. Just so.

Mr. WILLIAM BELL.—Examined by Mr. JEKYLL.

Q. I believe, Sir, you are a surgeon?

A. Yes.

Q. Where do you live?

A. At Poole, in the county of Dorset.

Q. Is that in the neighbourhood of Brownsea Castle, the seat of the Plaintiff?

A. It is about five miles distant.

Q. How long have you known Mr. and Lady Mary Anne Sturt?

A. I have attended them between four and five years.

Q. Have you frequently attended them?

A. Yes; rather so.

Q. During such times as you have had the opportunity of observing, say whether or not Mr. Sturt manifested an affection for his wife.

A. Uniformly.

Q. What was her conduct towards him?

A. Very similar; but of late rather cold. I attended during a slight illness of Mr. Sturt's last year, and I thought her behaviour towards him was rather distant and cold; there was not that warmth and affection I should have expected from a wife.

Cross-

*Cross-examined by Mr. GIBBS.*

Q. Have you attended them constantly?

A. Always, when they have been at Brownsea Castle, for the last three years.

Q. How lately?

A. I have attended the domestics up to the present time. The last time I attended Mr. Sturt was last year, after his miraculous deliverance from the water.

*Mr. THOMAS KING.—Examined by Mr. ERSKINE.*

Q. You attended the family as apothecary?

A. Yes.

Q. Where do you live?

A. At Cranbourne, in Dorsetshire.

Q. How far is that from the Plaintiff Mr. Sturt's residence?

A. It is about six miles from Critchill.

Q. Did your attendance in the family give you an opportunity of visiting there?

A. Frequently.

Q. Had you an opportunity of observing Mr. Sturt's behaviour to his wife?

A. I had.

Q. What was his conduct towards her?

A. Uniformly kind, good, and affectionate.

Q. Do you know the Defendant, Lord Blandford?

A. Yes.

Q. Have



Q. Have you ever corresponded with him ?

A. Yes ; I have received many letters and notes from him.

Q. Who were they brought by ?

A. Generally his own servant.

Q. Have you seen him afterwards, so as to ascertain that they came from him ?

A. Yes.

Q. Are you acquainted with his manner of writing ?

A. I think I am.

Q. Do you believe these letters (said Mr. Erskine, producing those meant to be given in evidence) to be his hand-writing ?

A. I do believe so.

This closed the parole evidence, and the officer of the Court proceeded to read the several letters detailed by Mr. Erskine, in his opening speech, and numbered 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, and 18.

Mr. Garrow.—We now propose to read a letter sent by Lord Blandford to Mrs. Start subsequent to the discovery of their criminal intercourse.

The officer of the Court read it; as follows :

“ London,

*“ London, February 16th, 1801.*

**“ MY EVER BELOVED MARY ANNE,**

“ I HAVE now fulfilled my promise ; the fatal christening is over, and I am still in England ;— still in the country where all I love upon earth resides, and where, however far off I may carry myself, my heart will for ever remain. I will enter, though, immediately on the subject, by saying, that I have now pursued every method I could think of, of assuring you, both of my unbounded love and thorough repentance for having caused you the uneasiness and misery which, from too great hastiness (and not, I assure you, from a wish to do it), I inadvertently occasioned. You know my heart ; and I will venture to affirm, that at this very moment you are persuaded that I adore you. I have, however, found, at least my little remains of reason dictates it to me, that your love for me is extinguished, and that I have now nothing to hope, nothing to look forward to, and nothing left to value myself or my life for ; nothing to serve as a solace to my woe, nothing upon which I can even ground an illusion of pleasure. I have considered, very seriously considered, and reconsidered my situation ; I find I now hold to nothing, I am like a single pin in the world ; my father and mother rather wish me ill than well (as I have lately had a proof of) : Lady B. after a short time, will be much happier without me ; and the pang which once my leaving the country would have occasioned

occasioned you, reason tells me, can now never arise, for the love which would have occasioned it is extinguished, and I am as totally disregarded by you as a perfect stranger. But here let me assure you, that was the most distant idea thrown out to me, that my leaving the country would still occasion you one regret, I would instantly abandon it. But, alas! I must, indeed, have the powers of illusion beyond example, to suppose that that can be the case. I have therefore formed my plans, which are these; As soon as I can possibly get an answer back from Mr. Traytorrens, my good friend in Switzerland, and that I can put my affairs in order before I go, I mean to bid an adieu, most likely an everlasting adieu, to the country;—I was always attached to Switzerland, and the people to me; and the romantic scenes are very congenial to my feelings. A letter to Newstratel, where Traytorrens resides, will reach him in about twelve days; he will immediately, and I am sure joyfully, answer it, and I can have the answer as soon: so that by this day four weeks I may leave London for Yarmouth, where I shall embark for Hamburgh. Now, lest you should imagine I should leave Lady B. and my children in any want of me, I will tell you, that as my income from my father is 2000*l.* per annum, and the profit of the White Knights' estate, I intend to reserve 1000*l.* per annum for myself, and leave the other 1000*l.* and the profits of White Knights for  
 Lady

Lady B. and the children; and as my children grow up and want more, should I live, I can add 2 or 300*l.* a-year out of my 1000*l.*; for money, as well as every thing else, will become more indifferent to me daily. My house in town will be let after this winter, and, being a bargain, will produce 1 or 200*l.* over and above the rent and taxes, if well managed; so that there will be left for Lady B. and the children, at least 1500*l.* per ann. with a comfortable house (White Knights) to live in; and when she wishes to come to town, she has many relations who can accommodate her. My two eldest boys, and the younger children of course, are too young to feel any regret at my going; and I have got a very good private tutor for them, who is now with them, and who will finish them for Eton, and then take the two younger ones. Every thing will go on better when I am gone; and I flatter myself that the good arrangements I shall make before I go, will prevent the world from finding much fault with me for going.—Distress and the conduct of my father I shall urge as my inducements. I particularly wished you to know exactly how I should leave my children, &c. that you might not be deceived by reports after I am gone, as there will be many; and though perhaps you will not be able to contradict them, still I should be miserable you should have any more cause to reproach me within your own mind. In addition to the former, all my jewels, horses, books,

drawings,

drawings, and plants, which may be useless to Lady B. after I am gone, are to be sold, and kept as a fund for her use and the children. Oh! my poor heart, how it throbs! but I must check my condition, and proceed; I shall certainly write to you, my ever adored Mary Anne, the day before I set off; no one but yourself will know any thing of it till I am out of reach; though I doubt if I have a friend who would wish me back, I was determined that you should know it, to show you that you can never lose my confidence.

“ Thank God, and thank you my ever dear, I have got your picture, given me by (what you used to sign yourself) “ my unakerable and devoted Mary Anne.” This dear picture of a dear original, for I shall never change—this dear picture, I say, will be equally smothered by my kisses and bathed by my tears. Alas! when I reflect how many hours have lately been spent in crying, and how many more are to be exhausted the same way, it overcomes me, and makes me sick from sorrow; but God’s will be done, and may you ever be able to cure all unruly passions which may arise in your breast in as short a time as you have now done the passion of love;—for how can I doubt you once felt it for me? With respect to the letters which I have written by my adored Mary Anne while she loved me, those I am sure you will allow me to keep, upon my solemnly assuring you that they will be kept always where you have seen them: and as I shall

shall take one copy of my will with me, should I die abroad, my box will be burnt immediately; O! Mary Anne, those letters will be a comfort to me, for now I must draw comfort from the idea of your having once loved me dearly, and I am not going to try to forget you, but to be able to think of you uninterrupted by the world! I have some of your letters so kind, such endearing expressions, and charming sentiments of love; one in particular I shall seal up in a cover, and beg that it may be put into my coffin; and indeed, my much loved Mary Anne, that is the best place for me now, for I feel that I can never be of use to society again in any way;—losing your affection has totally overcast me, and destroyed all faculty of action in my mind. I once thought it impossible I could ever lose it. Alas! I was too soon, but as I have lost it, nothing remains for me but to tear myself from a country where chance might still throw me in your way; and, by so doing, avoid you any unpleasant rencontres; and by retiring myself to another country, I shall be enabled to indulge a more quiet melancholy than I could do in this country, where I could never carry my plan into execution. This, too, will effectually do away any of the reports which seem to have given you so much uneasiness; and the secret of your once having loved me will be buried with me in the grave. How false is the idea, that love cannot

exist without a hope of reciprocity! I have no hope, and yet I address you. I have now only to add, that I pray that God may preserve you and another, who has the next claim to my affection: I shall hope to be able to prove to you, that I can never change from being  
 Your unalterably attached and devoted

“BLANDFORD”

Mr. Garrod. We do not mean to read any more of the mass of letters in our possession, except the one sent on the last day of the year, by the Defendant, to Mr. Stark. — It is the letter No. 41.

This letter, which was the last of those enumerated and detailed by Mr. Erskine, was read by the officer of the Court, and closed the evidence for the Plaintiff.

DEFENCE.

... of the ...

**DEFENCE.**

... as required ... to ...

*The Attorney General (Sir Edward Law).*

**GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY,**

**T**HERE have certainly occurred, in the course of this case, many circumstances that must give great pain to every feeling and moral mind; many things that at first are calculated to excite some degree of resentment against the noble person who is Defendant on this record; and some that appear to be very inexplicable on the part of the Plaintiff; and when you consider the case in all its circumstances and bearings; and particularly the grounds of the claim of the Plaintiff to damages at your hands; it will be material for you to contemplate his conduct, and see whether, at the time he is complaining of having been injured and dishonoured by the seduction of his wife, he has not been himself privy to and an active party in producing his own dishonour.

If it should appear that he has been living in a state of adulterous concubinage with another woman;



man ; if it should appear he has children, the consequence of such impure connexion ; if it should appear that his wife, of the loss of whose society he complains, could not be ignorant of this ; that she was deprived of the conjugal endearments, affection, and confidence of her husband, I would then put it to you, not whether she stands morally excused for the violation of her duty as a wife (for I am ready to admit the conduct of her husband is no justification of her guilt), but whether the Defendant does not therefore stand exempt from all claim of damages ?

I should ill deserve, Gentlemen, your credit, or that of his Lordship, if I paused one moment on the question, whether the correspondence you have heard read is proof of the adultery ? It is a species of proof new in cases of this kind ; but I admit that it is capable of amounting to complete and full evidence. It is, however, a species of proof yet to be regarded with jealousy, and I, consequently, waited for the production of a series of letters, in order to ascertain what I think must now be taken as an ascertained and undoubted fact, namely, that a criminal intercourse has actually taken place between the Defendant Lord Blandford and the Plaintiff's wife, Lady Mary Anne Sturt. The language of that letter, in which he speaks of the child of which she had been delivered, I confess sufficiently indicates that a guilty connexion had been consummated ; but in the whole

whole of the correspondence, to every part of which I looked with equal anxiety, where, let me ask, is there a single passage in which there is betrayed the least idea of apprehension on the part of Lord Blandford at the discovery of the intrigue? or the slightest intimation that, if discovered to the husband, he would be rendered unhappy by it? You have not even had it inferred throughout the whole of the letters which have been read to you, except indeed in one of them, where he speaks of his coming only to the neighbourhood of Critchill, that he was in the smallest degree afraid of a discovery on the part of the Plaintiff, Mr. Sturt.

Is it usual, is it fitting, that a man who is bound by every duty to watch over the conduct of his wife, and prevent any improper familiarities towards her, should allow her a free license to correspond with another person, however that person may have been introduced into his family under terms of the strictest intimacy, or even of family connexion? Such is certainly not the conduct of a man who is watchful over the honour of his wife; but it is perfectly natural with regard to a man who knows what is the nature of her connexion with the man with whom she corresponds.

It appears, that for many years together Mr. Sturt was a man distressed in his circumstances; and, consequently, that he was glad of the acquaintance with Lord Blandford, who, though by no

means a man of fortune, yet, as the heir of a noble, wealthy, and powerful family, had great expectations, and; in all probability, in that future elevated rank and situation to which he was entitled to look forward, might have been enabled to have been essentially serviceable to Mr. Sturt. It is in this way, and under this idea, that Lord Blandford reasons, when he says, in one of his letters, that the husband is too cunning, and under too many obligations to him, to deny him himself; and therefore that he has employed another. Does he not state, in express terms, that Mr. Sturt knew all that Lady Shaftesbury was supposed to know respecting this criminal connexion? The whole of the language of Lord Blandford to Lady Mary Anne, at a time when there was no question of their criminality, imports, that this Lady knew of her attachment to him, and had set her on to refuse his visits and drop the connexion. Does he not state his conviction, that Mr. Sturt would not himself have ventured to come forward under the load of pecuniary obligation he was sensible he owed him?

Gentlemen, it has been repeatedly said by his Lordship, and no doubt you will hear it from him again, when it shall be his duty to address you, that a plaintiff who comes into a court of justice to complain of an injury of this sort ought to come with clean hands: he ought, in a case which so materially affects his own honour, and the decency  
and

and respect due to the public morals, not only to come into Court with clean hands, but also with a pure and unfulfilled conscience.

Before I proceed to comment upon the correspondence of the parties, which furnishes a variety of matter for observation, I shall refer to what has been the conduct of Mr. Sturt himself.

I have then to communicate to you, Gentlemen, that Mr. Sturt, who has thought proper to appear in a court of justice, to demand damages for the seduction of his wife, whose society, comfort, and assistance, in the terms of his complaint, he professes to have lost, lived for years in a state of avowed concubinage with a Madame Krumpholtz, a celebrated player on the harp. By this woman he had a child, who was named after him Henry Sturt Krumpholtz. I shall prove to you, that he has been seen in bed with her; and if this fact is made out, his Lordship will tell you, it does repel him from coming here with any claim to damages. How can he complain of the loss of the society of his wife, and the comforts of marriage, to whom that society never was a comfort; but from whom he was living apart with another woman, withholding those conjugal rites and endearments she alone was entitled to expect; lavishing his time and affections on a rival, and setting her an example of infidelity, which it is not to be wondered she followed?

With this woman was he living in a manner

H

notorious

notorious to all the world, at the time when he received the supposed injury, of which he has deemed it (unwisely, I think) necessary to his honour and character to complain; and I will venture to say, there never was so much surprize excited in the breasts of all who knew the circumstance, as when they heard that Mr. Stuart had chosen to prefer his complaint as an injured husband, for what all the world was convinced, he must have long known.

With regard to the correspondence which has been read, you see that many of the letters plainly import the Defendant conceived the husband himself would not give him any check; and you will find, in the sequel, that he had not any occasion to think otherwise.

Now I come to that which is the most material part of the case, and which bears down every thing that can be cast on the conduct of the Defendant, at least as arguments for requiring damages at his hands. What, Gentlemen, can you think of the man who, although six weeks before his wife's lying-in, he knew of her having been engaged in a criminal intercourse, yet continued carrying on a friendly correspondence with the very person who had injured him and dishonoured his bed? The very letter Lord Blandford writes to him, in which he says he will come down to him at the end of the year, is of itself a proof of the terms on which they were, notwithstanding

what

what had transpired, and elucidates one written subsequently on the 14th January, after the delivery of Mrs. Sturt, which I shall read to you. You will see, and you will, no doubt, be astonished at what this man writes from the bed of his wife, his adulterous wife, whom at the time he knew to be such. The letter to which I allude is in these terms:

No. 40.

" I TAKE up my pen to acquaint you of the safe delivery of Mary Anne of a little girl this morning; they are both very well. She had been unwell for some days. She desires me to thank you for your three letters, one containing a key; being so unwell, she begged me to say, she could not write. Indeed, I can answer for the truth of this, for I have been writing for her to her mother and Miss Calcraft. She is uncommonly well; so much so, that I am going to attend Blandford sessions to hear what can be done for the poor, poor indeed and miserable, indeed many they are. I am quite sick of Critchill, so much misery around me. You have heard of my poor keeper's accident. Believe me,

" Dear Blandford, yours,

" C. STURT \*."

" My horses are at the door.

" Jan. 14, 1801.

\* This letter was written in the presence of Mr. Allen, a friend

The answer of Lord Blandford to this letter is as follows :

“ MANY thanks to you, dear Charles, for your early and very pleasing intelligence. I most sincerely congratulate you on Lady Mary Anne’s being so well, and pray that she may continue so. I hope also that my little god-daughter will thrive, and shall be very glad to hear from you again soon that they are both going on well. Pray tell Lady Mary Anne, that I hope she will not think of writing a syllable to me till she feels herself strong, and assure her of my kindest regard and congratulations. As I suppose she may read letters, though not write them, I shall write to her in a few days. I was very sorry to find, by your last letter but one, that you was still plagued and harassed by your annuitants ; there is no time that one feels the want of riches so much as when an opportunity offers that one could oblige a friend in ! Pray give me one line soon, and believe,

“ Sir, yours, dear Charles,

“ *White Knights.*

BLANDFORD.”

“ *Sunday.*

Such is the way in which the Plaintiff and Defendant correspond together.

friend of the Plaintiff’s, and for the express purpose of preventing any suspicion of the correspondence having been intercepted, though certainly the fact did not appear upon the trial.

Now,

Now, Gentlemen, respecting the letter written on the 14th January, what pretence was there for it? He was in full possession of all the facts; he knew all the parts and circumstances arising out of the adulterous correspondence. Why did he still continue to wear the mask? What necessity was there for it? I will tell you why; it was because he had worn it before; it was because he had not made up his mind with regard to putting an end to that connexion between his wife and Lord Blandford, which had all along been carried on with his privacy. If he had really intended to have broken it off, would he not have called in some of his family, among whom were many honourable and respectable persons, and to whom he might have disburdened the agony of his soul, by which he would have you believe he was oppressed? No, Gentlemen, he had recourse to no such assistance, and for the best of all possible reasons—there existed no such agony. But this is only one of a series of letters he had been in the habit of writing during the period he knew of his wife's living in a state of adultery.

Now to give you a farther sample as to the Plaintiff's knowledge of what was going on, you shall have his own language, as it is contained in a letter from the Plaintiff to Lady Shaftesbury; in which he sneers at the character of Lord Blandford: and when you have heard it, I will put it to you, whether you can consider the Plaintiff in



any other light than that of a man who, from a motive of vanity, or some other cause easy to be guessed at, was contented to put his horns in his pocket. The letter of which I am speaking is to this effect:

“MY DEAR LADY,

“WE are not very gay here, but dress very fine: the Marquis, with his fingers loaded with rings; and my wife with trinkets, ear-rings, lion-clasps, and handsome gowns, which the Marquis constantly gives her. Whenever he comes he makes it up by his profusion of presents, which, in my opinion, would be more proper for the Marchioness; though, I believe, she is no great favourite. He is a damned odd fellow, and I do not know what to make of him. I forgot to add, that my ears are continually assailed with his woful compositions. The death of the wren is his subject now.”

All this he endures; even the woful sonnets of the Marquis, because, as he truly tells you himself, he made it up by his profusion of presents to his wife.

Here is another letter, written much in the same spirit; it is dated 12th December, and begins thus:

“MY DEAR BLANDFORD,

“I HAVE just received the account from town  
of

of the safe arrival of the madeira. Not to thank you for your kind present is impossible; it is what I *really* could not have expected from any one else, and I cannot express what I feel: however, I think you sincerely; I hope you will be as good as your word, and assist in drinking it out. Yesterday was Lady Caroline's birthday, and we all drank it in a bumper, not forgetting Lady Blandford and you."

You see, Gentlemen, the burden of this injured husband's letter is the madeira of which Lord Blandford had made him a present: he mentions not a word about any intinacy with his wife, the drinking out the madeira was a matter of more concern and importance to him than his wife's incontinence.

It appears afterwards that some offer of pecuniary assistance was made by the Defendant to the Plaintiff; upon which occasion he writes to him to this effect:

IT is impossible, my dear Blandford, to express how sensibly I feel your kind offer; all I can say is, I shall never forget it."

There is another which it is necessary to state to you; it is written on the 20th December to Lord Blandford by Mr. Sturt, in answer to one of his; and allow me here to observe, that it would be  
right

right for him to show when he first got this intercepted correspondence, after which I charge him to have written these letters. The contents of this letter evidently imply that the parties were upon the strictest terms of familiarity and friendship. The letter runs to this purport :

“ DEAR BLANDFORD,

“ MY intention is to be at Critchill on Sunday or Monday. I intended to have left this place to-day, but Mrs. Agar insisted on my staying with the Dowager. You know her way; I could not resist. Your letter says, you mean to go home on Sunday. I doubt by that, whether you mean to be at White Knights to-morrow or not. I can come to White Knights on Sunday. I shall be happy to see you before the end of the pheasant-shooting, should the weather be favourable. There is no news. I am so hurried about this Ferrol business, that I have not been able to write to any one.”

What this Ferrol business was, Gentlemen, is of little importance; it relates to something that transpired in another place; and it is unnecessary for me to detain you by any observations upon the subject.

Such are the terms of the letters written subsequent to the discovery of the criminal intercourse of his wife with the person to whom he was so familiarly addressing himself. Is there then, down

to

to the 20th of December, when this letter was written, any thing to show you that he was actuated by the least earnestness to resist what he calls the invasion of his bed? Has he offered you any proof whatever that he was in the least affected by the injury he had received? Why has he not produced the persons who composed his family, to prove what was the state of his mind? Why has he not brought forward evidence, if I may so express myself, *à secretioribus*? Why has he not produced to you those whose situations in his house best enabled them to observe his conduct? With regard to the proof he has adduced, it appears, according to the last account, as spoken to by one of the witnesses, that there did not appear to be any very great affection between the Plaintiff and his wife. His words are, There seemed to be a sort of coldness—not that warmth of affection he should have expected from a wife. After he had had that souling in the sea, which had nearly deprived the world of this illustrious person, the witness tells you his wife behaved towards him with coolness.

Are you surpris'd at it, Gentlemen? Could there be any affection on the part of a wife towards a husband who she knew was keeping this *harping woman*? and could that husband have any affection for a wife he had consigned over to the arms of another?

I do not know Mr. Sturt; I have seen him; and, what is worse, I have *heard* him;—but what-

ever his character may be in other respects, with which I have nothing to do, nor do I mean to depreciate it, let me ask, whether there is a man on earth who would retire to bed at eight o'clock, as I shall prove to you he repeatedly did, leaving his wife with one whom he had every reason to suspect, till eleven or twelve o'clock at night. Let me ask, whether it was the conduct of a prudent husband, as Mr. Sturt would represent himself, to suffer his wife to be driven out by Lord Blandford in his curricle, attended by his Lordship's servants only; to allow her to accompany him to balls and watering-places; and, while her passions and spirits were heated and inflamed by exercise and wanton amusements, to indulge with him in a *tête-à-tête* in a carriage, with none to observe or control their actions?—Why, Gentlemen, such conduct as this is as plain a license as ever was pleaded to an action of trespass.

Mr. Sturt is a man who ought to know the world; he has, doubtless, not been brought up in a way that should make him unacquainted, at least with the dissipated part of the world;—he is then far from being an object of pity. I pity more that respectable and virtuous young woman, Lady Blandford; I pity Lady Mary Anne Sturt, who has been the victim to her husband's neglect; I pity the Marquis of Blandford, who has been in a manner invited to forsake his own wife, and form an intrigue with the Plaintiff's;—but as to Mr. Sturt

Sturt himself, that *cold blooded man of madeira*, who has been *eating and drinking his wife* ! he is the object of no other passion, of no other sentiment, but contempt and detestation.

Yes, Gentlemen, I am persuaded you will say so too, when you have fully considered the case of this husband, who has been accessary in producing the destruction and misery of two noble houses, by his shameful negligence, in suffering such licentious conduct to pass unnoticed.

My learned friends tell you, these letters, which have been read to you, came enclosed in envelopes ; but how have they proved it ? Where are those envelopes, purporting to be the covers to the lurking adulterous letters ? They exist not ; they are the suggestions of my learned friends, who have produced no one particle of evidence in support of the assertion. Then you have it in proof, that this Plaintiff knew full well what was going forward between the Defendant and his wife ; and you will have it in proof from the witnesses which I shall call, that he was a man who, at the time he tells you he received the injury of which he complains, was enjoying himself with this Madame Krump-holtz, and her harp, and living with her in a state of adultery.

Gentlemen, It highly imports the morals of the country, that whenever a case is properly made out of a person's assailing the virtue of a married woman, the husband demeaning himself with pru-

dence and affection towards her, you should give exemplary damages. In favour of that doctrine I have ever been, and, I trust, ever shall be an advocate; but the interests of morality, of virtue, of religion, and of every thing that belongs to the well-being and security of social life, cannot be better served than by repelling a claimant for damages, who presents himself before you the author of his own disgrace, the patter of his own dishonour, the corrupter of his wife's virtue, and the prime cause of her ruin and misery, and that of every relative belonging to her. If the Plaintiff should appear to you to stand in this light, and yet if you should, under the direction of his Lordship, be obliged to give damages, they will, I am persuaded, be limited to the smallest denomination of coin the country affords. But if the fact of procurement, on the part of a husband, has ever been held sufficient for the rejection of damages altogether, and it has been so from the case of Cibber, who was proved to have placed the pillow for his wife, down to the present time; and if I show you that the present Plaintiff has by his conduct, not only placed one but two pillows, to aid the adulterous intercourse, I am sure I need not tell you, that you will best serve the interest of the public, of virtue, of morality, of religion, and of mankind in general, by dismissing him and his complaint with indignation.

MARY

MARY OBY.—*Examined by Mr. GIBBS.*

Q. Did you ever live with Madame Krump-holtz?

A. Yes, Sir.

Q. Where did you live before?

A. I kept a house in Barlow Street; at No. 1.

Q. You left that to go and live as housekeeper with Madame Krumpholtz?

A. Yes.

Q. When did you first go to Madame Krump-holtz?

A. Five years last May.

Q. Do you know a gentleman of the name of Sturt—a jolly, good-looking gentleman?

A. Yes; I know him.

Q. How long have you known him?

A. Some years; I knew him before I went to Madame Krumpholtz.

Q. Have you left Madame Krumpholtz?

A. No; I am with her at this time.

Q. Where was you when you was subpoenaed in this cause?

A. At a house of Mrs. Sturt's in Buckinghamshire.

Q. How long had you been there before you was subpoenaed?

A. I do not know on what day I went; I believe I had been there about five or six weeks.

Q. Madame Krumpholtz spared you—did she?

A. I



*A.* I am not her servant.

*Q.* I beg your pardon. Then she did without your society during that time?

*A.* Yes.

*Q.* As you are a friend of Madame Krumpholtz, pray let me ask, Did you ever see Mr. Sturt at her house?

*A.* I have seen him in her parlour and drawing-room.

*Q.* We will get on by degrees, Mrs. Oby:— you have seen him in her drawing-room and parlour; how early was that after you went to live with her?

*A.* I cannot recollect.

*Q.* Have you ever seen him in her bed-room?

*A.* No, Sir; I never did.

*Q.* I am not asking you what you have seen during the last six weeks, you remember; but what you saw during the time you was with Madame Krumpholtz; and I ask you, upon your oath, whether you never saw Mr. Sturt in Madame Krumpholtz's bed-room?

*A.* No, Sir; I have not.

*Q.* Have you ever heard him while he was in her bed-room?

*A.* No, Sir; I have not.

*Q.* Do you not know that he has been in her bed-room?

*A.* Not to my knowledge.

*Q.* Will

Q. Will you permit me to ask you, What was the occasion of your going to Mrs. Sturt's?

A. I went for my health, Sir.

Q. Mrs. Sturt is the Plaintiff's mother?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you swear that was the only reason?

A. I went for no other reason.

Q. I wish to give you this caution, If you keep back the truth, or swear to what is not true, you will be indicted for perjury. Now let me ask you, Have not you given a different account of this business?

A. I never was asked.

Q. Without being asked at all, did you never give a different account?

A. No; I never did.

Q. Did you never say Mr. Sturt was in Madame Krumpholtz's bed-room, when she lay in?

A. No; I never did.

Q. When you was served with a subpoena, did you not say, You was afraid of this?

A. No, Sir; I did not.

Q. You uttered no such expression?

A. No, Sir; I did not.

Q. Will you favour me, Mrs. Oby, with an account of what you did say?

A. The young man pretended he came with a message from Mrs. Carey, and then he delivered me a bit of paper and a shilling; and when I opened it, I understood I was subpoenaed on Mr. Sturt's account.

count. He asked to speak with me in private; he asked me questions, which I could not resolve.

Q. Have you often seen Mr. Sturt at Madame Krumpholtz's house?

A. Many times.

Q. Was he a relation of hers?

A. I don't know; I don't know any of her relations.

Q. He might have been, for any thing you know?

A. I tell you I don't know any of her relations.

Q. He is an Englishman, and she is a foreigner?

A. I believe so.

Q. Did you not suspect, from their intimacy, that he was a relation?

A. I had no reason to think so.

Q. Then you did not understand they were related?

A. They never said so in my presence;—I did not know of any intimacy between them.

Q. I fancy by intimacy you mean a criminal connexion?

A. I never saw it.

Q. I fancy you mean the act of adultery.

A. I never saw Mr. Sturt even take hold of her hands.

Q. You have seen him at her house of an evening?

A. At different times.

Q. Did you not know he slept there?

A. Not

A. Not to my knowledge; I was not always with Madame Krumpholtz; I left her last May was three years.

Q. You was not her servant, you say; what then was your inducement for living with her?

A. To wash for her, or do any thing else;—she paid me for what I did.

Q. You swear you know of no intercourse between Mr. Sturt and Madame Krumpholtz?

A. I cannot; I never saw any thing of the kind.

Q. Where was her house?

A. When I first knew her, it was in John Street.

Q. You say you was at Mrs. Sturt's six weeks; what brought her acquainted with you?

A. I had an ill state of health, and had an offer from Mr. Sturt to go and see his mother—his wife was near lying-in, and I was to have been there if this had not happened.

Q. Who told you to keep out of the way; for you know you could not be seen till Mrs. Carey's name was mentioned?

A. I never heard I was ever asked for.

Q. I understand you to swear you had no reason to suppose there was any intercourse between Mr. Sturt and Madame Krumpholtz?

A. I had no reason to think so.

Q. You think, then, he only went there to hear her play on her harp?

A. There were many gentlemen who used to visit her, and I had no reason to suspect him in particular.

K

Q. You

Q. You know nothing of any children?

A. Madame Krumpholtz has five children.

Tell me their names.

A. Lewis, Melina, Philip, Henry, and Julia.

Q. Is not this Henry called Henry Sturt?

A. I never heard it.

Q. Was you not at his christening?

A. Yes; I was.

Q. Will you swear he was not named Henry Sturt?

A. Yes; I will most positively.

SARAH CAREY.—*Examined by the ATTORNEY GENERAL.*

Q. How many years is it since you lived with Madame Krumpholtz?

A. Between three and four.

Q. What was your employment in her service?

A. To take care of a little child.

Q. What was the name of the little child?

A. Henry.

Q. Any other name?

A. Krumpholtz.

Q. Any other name?

A. Not generally.

Q. What name at any time?

A. In joke he was sometimes called Sturt Krumpholtz.

Q. Who was the father of the boy?

A. I do not know.

Q. Have

Q. Have you seen Sturt often at Madame Krumpholtz's house?

A. Yes.

Q. When used he to come? was it mostly of a morning or evening?

A. At all times.

Q. Ever of an evening?

A. Sometimes.

Q. As you are now in the presence of God, tell me whether you have not seen him in her bed?

A. Yes; sometimes.

Lord *Kenyon*. Do you say several times?

A. Yes; several times, when I have taken the child.

Q. Have you not, when you carried the child to them, seen them in bed together?

A. I did not take the child to them, but from them.

Q. The child had slept with them, then?

A. Yes.

Q. Then this child had not the name of Sturt for nothing. How many times may you have taken the child?

A. I dressed it every morning.

Q. When Mr. Sturt slept there did you not regularly go to the bed-room every morning?

A. Not always.

Q. How long is it since you left them?

A. Five months.

Q. When you was not with her, who usually took the child?

*A.* A servant.

*Q.* Who?

*A.* Mrs. Oby.

*Q.* What! Mrs. Oby, the last witness?

*A.* No; it was not her—it was her husband's sister.

*Q.* Have you ever happened to be in the room when Madame Krumpholtz and Mr. Sturt have been in bed, and this woman was present?

*A.* No.

*Q.* Could she be ignorant of the manner in which they lived?

*A.* I should think not.

*Q.* Did they live as man and wife, in particular respects?

*A.* Yes.

*Q.* Have you never talked of this connexion to Mrs. Oby?

*A.* No.

*Q.* What was the reason of your leaving her service.

*A.* I did it because I did not choose to live any longer in the family.

*Q.* Was the manner in which they were living together the cause of your quitting them?

*A.* It was in part;—besides, I went to my mother.

*Q.* Was Madame Krumpholtz with child when you left her?

*A.* I believe she was.

MARY

MARY LAW.—*Examined by Mr. YATES.*

Q. Where do you live ?

A. At No. 21, Edgware Road.

Q. Have you lived there long ?

A. Eleven or twelve years.

Q. Then you lived there in 1796 ?

A. Yes.

Q. Did Madame Krumpholtz lodge in the neighbourhood ?

A. Yes ; at No. 20, next door.

Q. Did you take notice of any person who visited her often ?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you know his name ?

A. Yes.

Q. What was it ?

A. Mr. Sturt.

Q. Do you know his person ?

A. Yes ; very well.

Q. Did you see them very frequently together ?

A. Yes.

Q. Where ?

A. Upon the terrace and garden opposite.

Q. Walking arm-in-arm ?

A. Yes.

*Madame*



**Madame LA TOURNEUR.**—*Examined by Mr. GIBBS,*  
who informed the Court, she had been a lady of  
considerable quality prior to the revolution in  
France.

I had the honour of knowing yourself and Mon-  
sieur La Tourneur, and I scarce need ask you,  
whether you are a native of France?

*A.* Yes.

Q. Since you have been in this country, have  
you taken in children?

*A.* Yes; *pensionnaires* (boarders).

Q. Do you remember a child of Madame  
Krumpholtz?

*A.* Yes; she gave me one to take care of.

Q. How long ago?

*A.* Not quite a year.

Q. What was the age of the child?

*A.* Something more than three years. She was  
about two years old when she came to me.

Q. Do you know who was the father of the  
child?

*A.* No; certainly.

Q. Have you ever seen Mr. Sturt?

*A.* He has been twice at my house; but not on  
account of the little girl.

Q. How long did he stay?

*A.* Not long—about five minutes.

Q. Did Mr. Sturt take notice of the child?

*A.* Not particularly; the child was in the room.

SAMUEL FELLOWES.—*Examined by Mr. YATES.*

Q. You are a servant to Lord Blandford?

A. Yes.

Q. Have you lived with him some time?

A. Yes.

Q. Was you with him at Critchill last autumn?

A. Yes.

Q. Was Mr. Sturt there?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you wait on them frequently at supper?

A. I do not recollect whether I waited at supper.

Q. What time did Mr. Sturt usually go to bed?

A. Generally about eight o'clock.

Q. Who was Lady Mary left with?

A. I suppose Lord Blandford.

Q. Was there any other company in the house?

A. Sometimes.

Q. Have you frequently known Mr. Sturt go to bed and leave Lord Blandford and Lady Mary Anne alone?

A. I have noticed it often.

Q. At what time did they usually go to bed, after having been left together from eight o'clock?

A. About eleven o'clock.

Q. Did you go with Mr. Sturt on any of his sailing expeditions from Brownsea?

A. I went once or twice.

Q. Was Lord Blandford left behind at Brownsea?

A. Yes.

Q. Who

Q. Who was left with him?

A. Lady Mary Anne was there.

*Cross-examined by Mr. ERSKINE.*

Q. Do you mean to say, you have been sailing with Mr. Sturt when Lord Blandford was not of the party, but left behind with Lady Mary Anne?

A. Yes.

Q. You say Mr. Sturt has gone to bed at eight o'clock, leaving his wife and Lord Blandford together?

A. I have been told by the other servants he was gone to bed.

Q. You have only heard, then, that he has been gone to bed?

A. I have been told so. I have inquired, and wondered he went to bed so early.

Q. I understood you to have said, you have seen him go to bed?

A. No.

Q. Then you do not know the fact?

A. No farther than I have been told.

Q. Did you ever see him retire in your life, leaving Lord Blandford and Lady Mary Anne alone at supper?

A. No; I did not see him.

Q. Was there not generally some female with her who was visiting the family?

A. I do not recollect.

Q. Was this after Mr. Sturt's accident at sea?

A. Yes.

A. Yes.

Q. I would ask you, whether you ever saw Mr. Sturt go away in your life, leaving Lady Mary Anne and Lord Blandford together?

A. No.

Q. And you only know the fact from information?

A. Only from the information of other people.

Mr. *Erskine*. Does your Lordship think this can be evidence?

Lord *Kenyon*. Why, it is hardly worth contending for, but I rather think it is evidence, what one servant said to another, at least to explain other facts. It is part of the *res gesta* of the family, during the time.

JAMES BROWN *examined*.

Q. Was you a servant in Mr. Sturt's family at the time Lord Blandford was there?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you wait at supper?

A. Sometimes.

Q. Do you know of any time when there were no visitors in the family but Lord Blandford?

A. I do not recollect.

The letters referred to by the Attorney General were read by the officer of the Court, and concluded the evidence for the Defendant.

L

REPLY.

## R E P L Y.

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Mr. *Erskine*.

GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY,

**D**URING a considerable period of the Attorney General's opening of this case, on the part of his client, the Noble Defendant, I felt a greater degree of emotion and surprize than is customary with me in this place, even upon occasions of this delicate complexion, because it did appear to me extraordinary, to suppose that any man would have presented himself voluntarily, and not upon any compulsion, before a jury of his country, and in the face of the public, to have made so ridiculous an experiment as the Attorney General would infer has been made by the Plaintiff this day.

He would have you believe, that the Gentleman whom I represent, knowing from the beginning the circumstances of his wife's criminal intercourse with the Defendant, had himself consented to and connived at the adultery; that knowing it was  
done

done under his own roof, and under his own eye; he was content his wife should be dishonoured; and that, nevertheless, acquainted with the law upon the subject, as he must be supposed to be (for there is no one principle upon which it is founded that can be brought in question), he should have had the folly to come before a jury to publish his own dishonour and disgrace.

Gentlemen, I shall divide what I have to address to you by way of reply into two parts: first, that which relates to the charge of the Plaintiff's being privy to his own dishonour, and the pander to his wife's lust; and secondly, his own conduct with regard to Madame Krumpholtz, which is a distinct part of the case.

My learned friend might take this case either as it appears upon my opening as counsel for the Plaintiff, or from the evidence, or both as connected together. If he takes it from my opening, he must do so with reference to the whole of it as it stands opposed to parts of the evidence, or as that evidence is disavowed by the Plaintiff's counsel.

My case was this: that Lord Blandford was an intimate friend of Mr. Sturt's, and had been so for a great number of years; that their friendship had been increased by a family connexion, the brother of the Plaintiff's wife having been united by marriage with a daughter of the Duke of Marlborough, sister of the Defendant; that in consequence of this family connexion, Lord Blandford

spent a deal of his time at the house of the Plaintiff in the country; that, so far from there being any thing to enable the Plaintiff to hear through the medium of his servants, that his wife and the Defendant were engaged in a criminal intercourse, we were obliged to have recourse to that species of correspondence, by which this unfortunate gentleman found out he was not the father of the child of which his wife was on the point of being delivered. I stated to you, that when it evidently appeared from the intercepted letters that a criminal connexion had taken place, this gentleman, actuated by his honourable feelings, considered that he could not, consistent with humanity, disclose the secret to the woman who had injured him; but that he suffered her to remain under his roof, allowing her sufficient time afterwards to recover from the consequences of her illness; and this brings it to the six weeks which I mentioned as the period subsequent to the discovery of the correspondence, and the disclosure of it to the lady. You will recollect, I did state and restate, that from the moment he discovered the letters he had no intercourse whatever with this unhappy woman, but determined to bring this action.

Gentlemen, it was in consequence of such determination he wrote that letter which has been so much commented upon by the Attorney General: it was written, not because he was indifferent to the dishonour of his wife, not because he still continued

tinued upon terms of friendship with her seducer, but in order, by not appearing to have discovered the intercourse, he might extract something from him on which he might build his case in a court of justice; for he well knew, that, except the intercepted correspondence, other evidence he had none.

Now my learned friend tells you, that Lord Blandford's whole conduct was such, that it was impossible for any man to be deceived by it for a moment. It was imputed to us, that we were ourselves so conscious Mr. Sturt's conduct would not bear examination, that we had avoided calling the different persons in his family, fearing lest their evidence should have detected it. Was it not equally open to the Attorney General, to have called those who had been in the habit of visiting him for years? Was it not in the power of the Defendant to have shown, that Mr. Sturt knew Lord Blandford was engaged in a criminal connexion with his wife? On the contrary, so far from Lord Blandford imagining the Plaintiff was privy to his guilty commerce with Mrs. Sturt, and was indifferent to it, you learn from one of the letters of Lord Blandford, that he would not even come to Critchill, but only in the neighbourhood, under the apprehension of this business being discovered. There is nothing to show you Mr. Sturt ever consented to it; if he consented to overlook the conduct of his wife and Lord Blandford, satisfied



fied with the free enjoyment of the company of Madame Krumpholtz, why were those letters intercepted? why has he come into Court to cover himself with disgrace and shame? They have not been able to prove any one instance of Mr. Sturt's having been able to discover his wife and Lord Blandford under circumstances of suspicion, or in any indelicate situation. You have only the evidence of a servant, whose knowledge is founded upon the mere information of another servant, not upon oath; so that you have, in fact, no circumstance whatever before you that can, or ought to induce you to believe, that Mr. Sturt was privy to the criminality of his wife, or acquainted with her dishonour. Surely then Lord Blandford stands before you a proper object of reprobation and punishment by exemplary damages, except as regards the other part of the case.

You will not cease bearing it in your minds, that the Plaintiff having discovered this criminal connexion, he wrote the letter to Lord Blandford, stating the birth of the child, not as a letter of friendship and congratulation, but merely to draw from him something in answer to it, that might furnish him with additional evidence, with a view to the present action. Since then there is no evidence of his having been in the slightest degree connected with Lady Mary Anne Sturt; on the contrary, he had resolved, at that time, to bring his case before a jury.

It

It is not probable, that Lord Blandford's family should have been desirous of bringing such a subject as this forward for public investigation. It is one which must be most afflicting to every individual of that family, not only as it regards the man who appears before you as Plaintiff, but as it affects his unhappy lady and their infant children. It is one which that rich and noble family would at any price have wished to have kept out of Court.

We frequently hear, in places not far distant from this in which I am speaking, of agreements between a husband and wife for the purpose of obtaining a divorce; and it is often a question with the Legislature, whether, under all the circumstances of the case, they will pronounce a sentence of divorce or not. We know perfectly that some persons are willing to make any sacrifices, in order to keep from the public the particulars of their misfortunes; and innumerable instances have occurred of men receiving that compensation by the adjustment of damages privately, which ought only to be given publicly, and in the face of the world. If Mr. Sturt had consented from any dishonourable motive to have had his wife clothed by Lord Blandford, and dressed out in these trumpery trinkets, if he had meant to have made a prey of this young nobleman, can you suppose that he would have prevented their intercourse as he has done? No, Gentlemen, he was above being actuated by any such idea; he was above compromising

promising his honour by the acceptance of any sum given privately in the shape of damages. Whatever weakness of conduct, with respect to Mr. Sturt, has come out in the course of this trial, it may be matter of regret; but as far as it relates to any privity, on his part, to his own dishonour, to the debauchery of his wife, or to the adoption of the child of another man, there is no circumstance that can in the least degree justify your giving credit to it. It is not within the verge of probability, that a man who is married to a beautiful and lovely woman, the offspring of an honourable and noble family, should so far degrade himself as to consent that his wife should be with child by another man, and that such child should inherit the property settled upon her and her children by her marriage settlement.

You are to try this cause, Gentlemen, on your oaths, and are not to be biassed by mere assertions, however respectable the quarter from which they may proceed. I was prepared to have spoken of my client with the detestation he would have merited, had the facts, as stated by the Attorney General, been corroborated, or at all supported, by the evidence; for, though it is our duty to protect those who trust their interests in our hands, we do not stand here to throw a shield over guilt, or defend the cause of immorality and vice.

I expected my learned friend was about to have laid before you proofs of this gentleman's having permitted

permitted the Defendant to have visited his wife, conscious, at the same time, of the criminal motive of his visits. I expected he would have shown, that he had seen, that he could not but have seen the adulterer's course, and that he connived at those attentions and familiarities which must naturally have been supposed to lead to a guilty connexion. If he had done so, I should have contented myself with throwing down my brief, retiring from this place with disgust, and leaving you to express your abhorrence of the Plaintiff's conduct, by pronouncing your verdict against him.

Let us see what the evidence is, and what it might have been, if Mr. Sturt was really open to the charge made against him by the Attorney General. Might not all the friends of this unfortunate lady have been produced to show the negligence and connivance of her husband? might not the Earl of Shaftesbury, Lady Shaftesbury, and Mr. Ashley, her brother, who were in the constant habit of visiting him, have been produced in evidence against him? Might not all the noble relatives of the parties have come forward to show that she was the victim of her husband's indifference? Where would have been the difficulty in adducing such testimony, the most satisfactory that could have been offered? We know they were constantly visiting in the family. We, on our part, called persons, who were in the habit of  
M visiting

visiting at the Plaintiff's house, to speak to the affectionate manner in which he behaved towards his wife; and the harmony that subsisted between them.

As far then as relates to any evidence of Mr. Sturt's having consented to the criminal intercourse, I ask, where is it? My learned friend expressed a wish, that the period of the discovery of this correspondence should have been stated. How is it possible for me to ascertain the particular hour when it was discovered? who can tell the precise moment? If I had said, the Plaintiff had come full of grief upon the discovery of the letters, to whom, it would have been asked, did he unbosom himself? How am I to satisfy you he discovered them, on such a day, or at such a time, but by his corresponding conduct? I date then the discovery from that period when he resolved to have no further intercourse with his wife. Had he been capable of being actuated by that apathy which is attributed to him, and of concealing such a correspondence after he had discovered it, would he not, do you think, have continued his house open to the visits of this adulterer? would he not, instead of commencing the present action, have pursued that line of conduct which would have justly been a reproach to him, and to any man? and what is there except the letter of the 14th January 1801, that can be urged even as an inference, that he continued to deport himself with the same

marks

marks of friendship towards the Marquis of Blandford he had been accustomed to? I stated to you, and I state it again, that for a few weeks after he had made the discovery of his wife's criminality he suffered her to remain under his roof, and that at the moment when he wrote this letter, he considered it would neither be acting a manly nor a generous part to publish the disgrace of a woman who but a fortnight before had been delivered of a child, and perhaps by that means destroy the mother and her infant. He adopted that conduct which every honourable man in his situation would have done: he informed Lord and Lady Shaftesbury of the discovery he had made, and of his determination that his wife, after her recovery, should quit his house, and never have any farther communication with him. What is the answer the Attorney General gives to this? He says, that although six weeks before Mr. Sturt was perfectly acquainted with his wife's infidelity, he yet continued to address the Defendant Lord Blandford as a friend whom he honoured. It is impossible to deal with such contraries; you must either adopt what a counsel states, or you must reject it altogether. I stated to you, that he had acted with tenderness towards his wife, in not having sent her away from his house the moment he discovered her illicit correspondence. Surely then the Noble Lord is not to stand exculpated for that which is a meritorious act on the part of the Plaintiff; you

ought rather to feel a greater degree of detestation at his conduct, in endeavouring to avail himself of such an argument. I can conceive, therefore, no reason why the rules of evidence should be distorted in favour of such a Defendant; and certainly it is, in my opinion, of the greatest importance, that Mr. Sturt should stand protected upon this part of the case. There is nothing to show that Lord Blandford ever acted indelicately towards Mrs. Sturt in the presence of her husband.

If Lord Blandford had come down to Mr. Sturt's house as a perfect stranger, and presented his wife with these ornaments, or if Mr. Sturt had written this letter, no connexion of a family nature subsisting between them at the time, I should have said, he had not conducted himself with prudence; though I should have contended, he had not thereby lost his right of action. It certainly would not have been the conduct of a discreet and prudent husband; but is this the situation in which he stands? Was Lord Blandford one of those dashing young men of fashion, against whose seductions it was necessary to be guarded? on the contrary, he was the father of a beautiful family, and related to him by the marriage of his sister with Mr. Ashley, the brother of his wife. He might, without impropriety, have suffered a familiarity on the part of Lord Blandford towards his wife, which would have been highly unjustifiable with regard to any other person not connected with the family as he was.

was. Had he suffered it under the conviction that it was criminal; would he, do you think have written this letter to the respectable and honourable Lady to whom it is addressed?

We do not wish to divulge the names of persons we may find in our briefs, and by so doing subject them to the taunts of the world, unless it is absolutely necessary to the interests of our clients; but it was impossible to avoid introducing the name of Lady Shaftesbury; and I would refer to the honour of the Attorney General himself, whether it is possible such a letter as was sent by the Plaintiff to this lady, could have been written if he had been conscious he was doing a thing that was dishonourable; or could he have supposed that Lady Shaftesbury would have sanctioned such a conduct on his part. Is it possible to suppose that this gentleman would, in addressing a letter to a relative of his wife, have acknowledged that he was allowing Lord Blandford to dress her up with presents, though he could not be ignorant of his designs upon her virtue? Is there any thing extraordinary in such a letter having been written to a near relative upon the subject of a familiarity between parties connected by ties of a family nature? This letter was not addressed to a stranger to the family, but to Lady Shaftesbury, the near relation of his wife, and to whom he afterwards imparted the discovery of the criminal correspondence. It was this lady whom you subsequently find



and lecturing Lady Mary Anne upon the impropriety of her conduct, at a time when Lord Blandford was urging her the other way, and persuading her not to attend to the admonitions she gave her to break off the connexion with him. The part she took upon the occasion is sufficient to show you she was the last woman on earth who would have received a letter written from the dishonourable motive imputed to the Plaintiff.

I have already stated to you, that the first thing Mr. Sturt did after he was satisfied of his wife's guilty intercourse, was to discover it to Lord and Lady Shaftesbury, and to express to them his determination to quit her society. Lady Shaftesbury conducted herself in the most honourable manner; she communicated what she had heard to Lord Blandford, who, in return, calls her, in one of his letters to Lady Mary Anne, a devil. It results, therefore, from the whole, that it is not possible the Plaintiff could have written the letter with the view which is supposed; or, if he had been capable of it, that Lady Shaftesbury would have deigned to have received it: she was aware, doubtless, that it was not written with reference to the attentions of a young stranger of rank, who had introduced himself into the house of the writer of it, but of a relation, the father of a family himself, and connected by marriage with the lady to whom his civilities were directed. Surely, then, it is too much for the Attorney General to consider  
 himself

himself entitled to make the observations he has addressed to you on this part of the case, which he seems to have so much relied upon. Is it possible for any man to have been profligate and weak enough to have written such a letter as this, if he had been certain that the presents made to his wife were for the purpose of seduction? Would he have said to so near and respectable a relation, Here am I a contented cuckold, suffering the mother of my children to be clothed at the expense of Lord Blandford; but I am willing to bear it, because he gives her ear-rings, lion clasps, handsome gowns, and such other insignificant presents?"

Notwithstanding, Gentlemen, what has been imputed to the Plaintiff on account of Madame Krumpholtz, can you believe that such a connexion could have made him capable of throwing his wife into the arms of lust? If you cannot believe this, it does appear to me, that the case is entirely destitute of evidence.

We have had many, too many cases on this melancholy subject, so deeply interesting to the morals of the country; but I confess I never recollect a case supported by such favourable evidence. Let me suppose you had never heard of Madame Krumpholtz, and you was called upon to decide upon the other evidence produced to you; what damages a man conducting himself as Lord Blandford has done ought to pay. There is no proof, you observe, of the precise time when  
this

this correspondence between Lady Mary Anne and Lord Blandford was discovered, except, as the fact is to be inferred from the conduct of Mr. Sturt; we say, that it was about a fortnight before Christmas-day; that immediately after this he communicated it to Lord and Lady Shaftesbury; that as soon as his wife recovered she was expelled his house; and that Mr. Sturt instantly resolved to come into a court of justice with the letters he had discovered as proofs of his wife's guilt. Such would be the facts on which you would have to found your verdict, but for the other part of the case, on which I will now say a few words.

No man, I trust, standing as an advocate in this place, will ever be heard to assert, that the marriage duties are not reciprocal; no one can ever be allowed to say, that it is not an immoral act for a man to have an intercourse with any other woman except his wife. I admit the Attorney General has proved that which Mr. Sturt has much, very much to lament; but has it been shown to you, that Lady Mary Anne has been provoked to the commission of that act which has ended in her dishonour and disgrace by any criminal neglect on his part, or by his living in a public state of concubinage, the last provocation a woman of feeling and delicacy can receive? I admit, that a man keeping a woman publicly, and having children by her whom he acknowledges, is the greatest of all possible provocations a virtuous wife

wife can receive. Nothing can destroy her affection so much as such a species of conduct on the part of her husband; because it wounds her in the tenderest part; it hurts her pride; and no man of honour would so deport himself, especially the husband of a beautiful and accomplished woman. If Mr. Sturt had lived in an avowed state of concubinage with Madame Krumpholtz, and his wife could not have gone forth into any public place without the risk of meeting them together, and without imagining that people were looking at her, pointing the finger of scorn at her, and contemplating her as an object of pity, deprived of the affections of her husband; in such case she might have been held justified for availing herself of the protection of another man; and that man would have had no right to have been called upon in a court of justice for affording it. But has such a case as this been proved? what witness has been called, who has ventured to assert any thing like it? Mrs. Oby was the first; has she proved it? quite the reverse would be the fact, if there was no evidence but hers.

Gentlemen, there are degrees of guilt, and we are considering to what extent the Plaintiff is culpable by his conduct with regard to Madame Krumpholtz, as it affects his wife. It is proved, I admit, that a criminal connexion subsisted between them. I can no more deny it after the evidence that has been produced, than the Attorney General could

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deny,

deny, after the letters I read to you, that there had been a criminal connexion between Lord Blandford and Lady Mary Anne Sturt. At the same time, though such conduct on the part of a plaintiff is censurable in a moral point of view, and justly goes in mitigation of damages, it has never been considered to strike at the foundation of an action of this sort. It certainly does remove a plaintiff from that claim to exemplary damages he otherwise might have had; and I am ready to run before you in the admission of that fact.

Thus it stands, then; I say Mr. Sturt had no knowledge of his wife's infidelity till just before her delivery of a child; that as soon as he did discover it he made it known, and determined to bring this action; that since the letter by which it has been endeavoured to cast the imputation upon him of his having been privy to his dishonour, he has never communicated either with his wife or her seducer; that such letter was written with a view to extract farther proof of his wife's guilt; that, subsequent to it, he expelled her from his house; and that, while she was under his roof, there is no evidence to prove he ever observed any indecent act that could awaken suspicion; that with regard to his suffering her to accept articles of dress from the Defendant, it was justifiable by the family connexion that subsisted between them, and takes off the edge from the observations of my

my learned friend respecting the imprudent letter to Lady Shaftesbury on that subject.

I have thought it my duty, Gentlemen, to make these observations to you; I do not vindicate the conduct of Mr. Sturt, but it does not strike me that Lord Blandford is entitled to say, because he has been guilty of adultery with another woman, that it therefore amounts to a license to invade his bed, and protects him in that invasion, or justifies him in the seduction of this lady; and in endeavouring to palliate his offence under the specious pretence of religion. His conduct in this respect ought to excite your indignation; but I admit you are bound to use your discretion, under all the circumstances of the case, as to the damages Mr. Sturt has a right to expect at your hands. It does not appear Lady Mary Anne ever knew of his connexion with Madame Krumpholtz, or that a principle of revenge for her husband's infidelity induced her to yield to the seductions of the Defendant. I shall trespass no further upon your attention; the case of the gentleman whom I represent is before you, and I am persuaded your verdict will be such as will reconcile the injury he has received, with what is due to virtue, morality, and public justice, of which you are the guardians.

## CHARGE TO THE JURY.

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Lord *Kenyon*.

GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY,

I PARTOOK a good deal of the feeling which was expressed by the learned gentleman who has just sat down, in prefacing his first address to you. I have tried so many of these causes, that one feels to one's heart that the same picture should so often be exhibited to juries. With the assistance of juries, I have done all I could to suppress offences of this kind; but it seems to me, that we are in the condition of the strong man, who, when he had cut off the serpent's head, found that others grew up in the place of the one he had cut off. Cases of this sort, I am sorry to say, multiply beyond measure. Whether by applying the searing iron, we may at last put a stop to them; whether, by holding the parties up to contempt and infamy, and by putting one's hands deep into the purses of defendants, they may be at last suppressed, is more than I will venture to promise.

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In the course of this cause, different kinds of characters have been exhibited: some there are whose conduct justly excites the highest degree of indignation, others who are entitled to praise and admiration, and others who are the objects of our pity and commiseration.

When we are told in one of the letters of the Noble Marquis; the Defendant, wherein he says "that Lady Blandford is quite alarmed about him, that he bursts into tears constantly, and talks so in his sleep, that she is quite frightened;" who is there that must not give a compassionate look towards that poor unhappy and ill-treated lady? I have not the honour of being personally acquainted with her, but I know that the Earl of Galloway, her noble father, has, by the education he has bestowed upon his children, endeavoured, as far as depended upon him, to make his daughters chaste, and his sons valiant. Those qualities are among the legacies which the records of a neighbouring place \* inform us have been left them by their illustrious ancestors. The family of Lord Galloway has exhibited to this country, and to the world, the brightest examples of manly patriotism and courage, and of female virtue and chastity. The present race, if I am rightly informed, has not degenerated from any of the former: I have been told by one of the greatest admirals of the

\* Westminster Abbey.

British



British navy, that there was no father who might not be proud of such a son as Lord Garlies; and with regard to the character of this lady, the wife of the Defendant, there is no one who has attempted to cast the slightest imputation upon it. I hope her misguided husband will repent his behaviour towards her; and return to her arms with that gratitude which such affection and tenderness deserve.

Having said thus much, let us now see what this case is:—Mr. Sturt comes here to complain of one of the greatest of all injuries; he tells you, I have formed a connexion, a religious connexion; not merely a temporal connexion—I have entered into a contract of marriage with this lady; I have faithfully discharged the duties of that institution, in abstaining from all other women, to keep myself to her alone: all those duties I have performed, and now my feelings and honour have been wounded in the tenderest part; I have lost the society, comfort, and affection of my wife, and I come to you to make me satisfaction. I do not say these are the precise words of the Plaintiff, but I mistake the case he has laid before you, if he has not in short hand, if I may be allowed the term, expressed what I have stated to you more in detail.

From different situations in life flow different duties, and from your situation as husbands, for all or the greater part of you I take it for granted are married men, you must be sensible, there  
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 results

results a duty to be kind and affectionate towards your wives, not to wound their feelings in the tenderest part, by deserting them and becoming the debauched paramours of worthless women; and, by such abandoned connexions, importing infamy, and too often disease, into the bed of virtue and chastity.

If this case simply turned upon the question of the proof of the adultery on the part of the Defendant, I think it is proved beyond all possibility of doubt, by one of the letters, in which he speaks of the child of which Lady Mary Anne had been delivered, as his child. The Plaintiff, for the injury sustained by such adultery, claims damages at your hands: his claim is resisted on two grounds; namely, first, That he has consented to his own dishonour; and I shall not conclude upon that point, but submit to your consideration what appears upon the face of the correspondence you have heard read to you. Mr. Sturt, in one of his letters written to Lady Shaftesbury, says, they are not very gay, but that his wife was richly dressed with trinkets, ear-rings, and handsome gowns; and that he made it up by presents which the Noble Marquis gave her; but which, he thinks, would have been more properly bestowed upon the Marchioness. He adds, he believes she is no great favourite. Why was she no favourite? Why was this most amiable of women to be considered as no favourite of her husband? What could the Plaintiff mean, or intend

intend to infer, by such a passage in his letter, if not that he considered his own wife as a favourite with the Marquis? And what was he to expect by suffering his wife to receive such presents? But it has been said, What! shall not the wealthy son of an opulent family make presents innocently to the wife of one with whom he is connected by marriage? Is that the case with regard to Lord Blandford, whom you find, in one of his letters, speaking of himself and Mr. Sturt as the children of adversity? Was this to be permitted by the son of the late Mr. Sturt, a gentleman of large fortune, and many years Member of Parliament for the county of Dorset? I do not know what the circumstances of the present Mr. Sturt, the Plaintiff, may be, but I remember his father coming before me to justify bail to an immense amount.

There is a circumstance which has been stated by the learned counsel, which would merit your attention, if the witness who speaks to it had proved it from his own knowledge and observation, and that is Mr. Sturt retiring to bed at eight o'clock, leaving his wife and Lord Blandford together for several hours after he was gone. I think it would have been more prudent in him to have sat up with his visitors, whom he had invited down to his house, than to have left them behind with his wife, after he had himself retired.

There is one other point which remains now; and I am desired, as it is my duty, to inform you  
what

what I take the principle of the law to be, which is to govern this case. I have considered the subject again and again, and upon the point of law I never had but one opinion; and, undoubtedly, whatever opinion may be put up in opposition to mine, I shall obey it as far as it affords me a rule to act upon, but my mind never will be convinced.

However profligate and debauched a man may have been prior to marriage, none of these things ought to be imputed to him afterwards by the woman who has taken a rake for her husband, and undertaken the task of reforming him. But if, after the solemn contract of marriage has been entered into, a man lives in a course of open prostitution, such a one may appeal to a court of justice for damages for the adultery of his wife, but he shall appeal in vain. If I follow up this principle by referring to the practice and opinions of other courts, I find myself intrenched up to the teeth;—for instance, in the Spiritual Court, if a lady who is brought there to answer for conjugal infidelity can show that her husband has been guilty of the same offence, there is an end of the business. I do not know whether it may be regular to speak of what is done up stairs; I would use the utmost respect in adverting to the proceedings of Parliament; but if an application is made there for a divorce for the cause of adultery, and the party accused can recriminate, there can be no bill.

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On the cause before you, I have no doubt. I have often said, that the administration of the law of the land never answered its purpose better than when it was made subservient to the cause of morality and religion; and it is essential to the preservation of morality and religion, to say to a man appealing for damages, Keep yourself pure, and we will hear your story; but come not with polluted hands, and desire us to do your dirty work for you. I think then that religion would cry out against the law of the land, and the interests of morality would be injured, if this case should be supported by your verdict. I am clear, supposing you believe the fact of the adultery on the part of the Plaintiff, and it cannot be controverted, he is not entitled to damages. With these observations, I am to leave the case to you; but in leaving it to your better judgments, I am bound to say, that this action, as it appears to me, is not supported by the whole of the evidence.

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The JURY, after consulting a very short time, returned a verdict for the Plaintiff. Damages

ONE HUNDRED POUNDS.

APPENDIX :

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# APPENDIX :

CONTAINING

COPIES OF SUCH LETTERS

FROM :

LORD BLANDFORD, LADY SHAFTESBURY,  
MRS. STURT, MR. BOUVERIE, AND  
MR. STURT, MR. SMITH,

*As were not read in the Course of the Trial.*

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No. 1\*.

*Half past Eleven o'Clock, Tuesday Night.*

I CANNOT employ a few minutes so agreeably, my dearest dear, as in writing to you; this you will say you knew before; but I like to repeat it; it is a truth which cannot be too often repeated. The plant you sent

\* The envelope to this letter (marked No. 2) is inserted in Mr. Erskine's opening Speech, p. 8.

to me, by Fellows, I keep in my room, and put it out at the window every day, and take it in in the evening: I value it more, ten millions of times, than my whole collection, and shall let no one have the care of it while I am here, but water it and foster it myself. You tied it up with pink cotton; I have taken off the cotton, and keep it in my box, with every thing else which you ever gave me: I would not lose it for worlds. Tell me you tied it up: I am almost sure though that you did. † To-morrow will bring me a letter from my ever dear Mary Anne: how happy shall I be if I hear she continues well! Good night, my love; I hope I shall dream of you; indeed I do.

*Thursday, Eleven o'Clock.*

I HAVE two letters of my dearest M. A.'s to answer: one came yesterday and the other this morning, besides the other this morning, besides the one she wrote to me to Weymouth. I am glad you thought I did right in coming home. I have just heard from Thornton; he is at Blenheim, and comes to me next Tuesday. You may depend upon it, my dearest Mary Anne, that I will endeavour to amuse myself (occupy is the word) as much as possible; and, if the weather continues open, I shall be out of doors all day, planting, &c. This is such a day as I never yet beheld for Christmas; as warm as May. I hope you will be able to walk a little: I wrote to Charles yesterday, and told him I should certainly be with him the end of January. You see, by his letter, he says he shall be glad to see me, shooting or not. I wish he had come here.

† Part written the 23d, and finished the 25th December 1800.

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Oh!

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Oh!  
 no; I am sure you could not. Let us then have done with the subject for ever, for though I have strong passions, they are pure ones, and only exist with love. My love, they are framed, and all directed to one dear object; and when she is not in a state to partake of them, I must learn to master them. But I will promise you, that, if I find my health requires it, I will be slyph at home; this is as much as you can ask or wish, my dear girl. In neither of your letters, my angel, do you say you look forward to the end of January with pleasure: now pray don't have any more whims, my love, but tell me you really hope to see me then. Charles certainly thought I was at Critchill, or would not have directed to me there\*. Pray, pray, my love, take care of yourself; indeed, my dear, you must, for you know how much my comfort depends upon your health: tell me, in your next letter, that you will. I am so glad you have not had the heart-burn, and that you take magnesia for it. I wish you would let Mr. King feel your pulse now and then; because I know so much depends upon there being no feverish symptoms beforehand. Do, my dear, to oblige me; make a point of doing it, and let me know what he says. I should like a brace of pheasants, when you can send any. You *may depend* upon my taking every possible

\* I did not think Lord Blandford was at Critchill in my absence; I knew he could not; but I understood he left some things behind him, that he was to take up in his way to White Knights; I therefore directed my letter to him at Critchill, as he acquainted me he should pass Sunday and take up his things. If he did not call, I directed his letter to be forwarded.

It was his Lordship's intention to have slept at Critchill, but Mrs. Sykes remonstrated with Lady Mary Anne on the impropriety; he therefore went to Lord Shaftesbury's.

care



care of myself; indeed, my love, I will, because you desire it. Don't read the Children of the Abbey: I shall like to read it to you when you are getting well. How odd it will seem to me to be two or three days at Critchill without seeing you; I hope it will not be more. If you wish for any thing I can send you, or get you from Town, do let me know, my dear girl; you know what a pleasure it is to me to be of use to you. Adieu, love.

Most sincerely,

Affectionately, and

Unalterably yours,

BLANDFORD\*;

No. 2<sup>th</sup>.

DEAR LADY MARY ANNE,

AS I wrote to Charles yesterday, I deferred answering your letter till to-day. I was much disappointed, indeed, at not seeing Charles here; if it was not so long a journey for him, who is just come off a longer, I should almost ask him to come first to me, or perhaps he can't come later, and then I would return with him. At all events, I am very sorry he did not call on me. I expect Colonel Thornton on Tuesday: they are very gay at Blenheim, he says; a ball to-morrow, and another on Monday next, at which he will perform a principal part, I do not doubt: I do not envy him any part of it. Have the Shaftesburys fixed what they do, or when they

\* This letter was in answer to one Lady Mary Anne Sturt had written to Lord Blandford when he was at Weymouth. I was at that time in London.

† This is the envelope to the letter dated One o'Clock, Tuesday, inserted in p. 11.

go?

go? if they come here, I really wish Charles would meet them. God bless you.

Sincerely yours,

BLANDFORD.

Cliffden and William Spencer come here to-morrow.

[N. B. The letter marked No. 4, in p. 11, is the envelope to No. 3, in p. 9.]

No. 4\*.

DEAR LADY MARY ANNE,

I WROTE to you on Thursday last (Christmas Day), and enclosed it to Charles; I am afraid, as you say nothing about it, that you have never received it. Your last letter to me, franked by Charles, passed; I ought to have received it on Sunday, and I did not get it till Tuesday. I will write to Mr. Freeling about mine: this is the third letter of mine lost within a month. Remember me to Charles.

*White Knights,*

*Thursday.*

Sincerely,

BLANDFORD.

[N. B. The envelope to the letter marked No. 10, p. 20, which is the next in order, is missing.]

\* This is the envelope to No. 7, p. 15. That letter is an answer to the letter Lady Mary Anne wrote to Lord Blandford (which I could not intercept through the mistake of my servant), in consequence of some conversation that passed between her and Lady Shaftesbury on Sunday evening.

No.

No. 6.

DEAR LADY MARY ANNE,

I AM shocked to see in the papers the accident which has happened to one of Charles's keepers: I hope it is not poor Farley. Shaftesbury's adventure, at Salisbury, is ridiculous enough. I had a letter from your mother yesterday: she says he called on her, in his way to Hindon, and that Lady Barbara was so tired with her journey she could not dance.

Adieu! Remember me to Charles kindly, and believe me

Sincerely yours,

*White Knights,  
Sunday.*

Dear Lady M.

BLANDFORD.

No. 6.

*Saturday.*

“ BY him we love, offended,

“ How soon our anger flies!

“ One day apart, 't is ended,

“ Behold him, and it dies.—

“ No scorn those lips discover,

“ Where dimples laugh the while,

“ No frowns appear resentful,

“ Where Heaven has stamp'd a smile.”

Will you, my ever dear Mary Anne, be an example against this general rule? Will you foster rancour in a heart, where I know that malice cannot dwell? Will you, but I will not suppose it: you will not wound your own nature so much as to destroy, beyond recovery, one, who

who you know only exists because you do, and who you should pity and not condemn. Remember the Scripture says, "Judge not, lest ye be judged." But with such a judge as my most truly beloved Mary Anne, I feel I should be sure of an acquittal; especially when my crime is "loving her too much." Are not jealousy and suspicion proofs of violent love? Yes, my adored; they are, and have ever been esteemed as such: By all the mutual love we have professed each other, and by all that we have conceived, I conjure you, my dear, to heal my heart, which my descriptions have not exaggerated; it is wounded almost unto death: write me a kind letter, a very kind one, in the style you have so often written, and which will be a comfort to me, and save me from utter despair; for, my dear, you don't know how near it I am: but I know you can cure me, and I feel certain, that you will. Adieu! love, adieu! You cannot *wear the picture and dislike the original!* no, my dear, it is impossible.

Pray, pray, my ever dear Mary Anne, bestow some kind expressions on me; tell me you have not forgot me, and tell me that I am still dear to you, for my existence depends upon it; and indeed, indeed, I adore you! I am more miserable than *you can imagine*, at not knowing how you are: pray tell me, my dear, my adored, delay not informing me about yourself, and even if you cannot spare me any kind expressions, at least inform me how you are; pray do, my dear.

*Sunday.*

No letter again to-day! I sent yesterday and the day before to Bagshot, and no letter. Oh! Mary Anne, I am convinced you are not aware how much I love you, and how deeply I am interested in your welfare, or you would not keep me so long without hearing from you:

it is worse than death to me, my dear, it is indeed! For Heaven's sake, then, my dear, save me from utter despair, and write to me as you used to do. Put yourself, my angel, in my situation, and you will then judge what my feelings must be; did you really know them, you would say, that all your kindness could scarcely repay me for them. Adieu, love; remember me, pity me, and relieve me. For I am ever unalterably,

Yours, &c. &c. &c.

BLANDFORD.

[No. 7, Lord Blandford's letter to me, of the 24th December, in answer to a letter of mine, from London, dated the 20th of December, before I had the smallest suspicion of any criminal intercourse. It is in p. 30, and marked No. 41. My letter is in p. 56.]

No. 8.

*Copy of a Letter dated the 14th January, but written the 15th.*

I TAKE up my pen to acquaint you of the safe delivery of Mary Anne, of a little girl, this morning. They are both very well.—She had been unwell for some days. She desires me to thank you for your three letters; one containing a key. Being so unwell, she begs me to say, she could not write; indeed, I can answer for the truth of this; for I have been writing for her to her mother, and Miss Calcrafft. She is uncommonly well; so much so, that I am going to attend Blandford sessions, to hear what can be done for the poor—poor and miserable indeed they are. I am quite sick of Critchill, so  
much

much misery around me. You have heard of my post  
keeper's accident.—It was Moses.

Believe me,

Dear Blandford,

Yours,

C. STURT.

My horses are at the door.

January 14, 1801.

To Lord Blandford, White Knights,

This is a copy of a letter sent 15th January 1801,  
14th January crased out.

(Witness)

E. S.

B. G.\*

No. 9, Lord Blandford's answer to the above letter  
No. 8, is in p. 52. Mr. Sturt never wrote another letter.

[N. B. The letter to Lord Blandford, p. 54, 55, was  
written two years before any discovery whatever was  
made, or any suspicion. The Attorney General read  
only the date of the letter, but omitted the year; and  
having read a letter of Mr. Sturt's, of the 20th of De-  
cember 1800, and this first letter being of the 12th of  
December 1798, the Court, from the year being omitted,  
might have reasonably imagined they were written at the  
same time.]

No. 10.

*White Knights, Friday.*

DEAR LADY MARY ANNE,

I SEND you some Parmesan cheese, as I know you  
are fond of it: I hope it will be as good as the last. I shall

\* I took the precaution of having my servants witness this let-  
ter, that it should not be brought against me in the event of a  
trial that I was bent upon.

be very happy to hear from you that it is good. I have not heard from the Shaftesburys this long while; I know not where they are. I hope Charles will write me word when you are confined. The season is uncommonly fine: wheat fell fifteen shillings a quarter, at Reading, last Saturday. Remember me to Charles, and believe me,

Sincerely yours,

BLANDFORD.

I wrote to you last Sunday.

No. 10.

*Friday.*

MY astonishment and misery at not hearing from you, my dearest Mary Anne, passes all bounds; *tell me, I conjure you, what I can do to regain your lost affection, and I will do it, should it be worse than the rack.* My senses are nearly gone; but still it is in your power to relieve a fellow-creature; so pray, pray spare me, my dear: I fear to say more, though I could write volumes. Adieu!

All you can wish,

BLANDFORD.

No. 11\*.

*White Knights, Friday.*

DEAR LADY MARY ANNE,

AS I imagine you are by this time allowed to read a little, I venture writing a few lines to you. I sincerely hope you continue going on well, and that the little one is thriving also. I shall be really very happy to hear that it is so; and I wish you would allow Mary Anne to write me a few lines, to say so; for Charles, I know, has other things to do.

\* This is the envelope to the letter marked No. 18, p. 27.

I am

I am afraid of transgressing by writing too long a letter,  
so conclude with assuring you that I remain

Very sincerely yours,

BLANDFORD.

Hampson is with me, and desires to be kindly remembered to you and Charles.

No. 12\*.

*White Knights, Thursday Night.*

MY DEAREST MARY ANNE,

AS I think you can by this time bear being read to, I send you a novel, which is just published, and well spoken of. If I meet with any thing tolerable in Town, I will send it. I shall certainly go on Monday se'nnight. I shall take my horses to ride out every day on the King's Road, and think of all I submit to life for. These will be the only tolerable moments I shall pass in Town, till my dear Mar. comes. Oh! my dear, could you read my heart, you would convert all your blame into pity. You would allow, that what I have suffered more than atones for what I have committed; but I leave my cause with God: it is he who must incline you to read my heart right; and, as you know my constancy, to pardon my other failings. God for ever blefs you, my dearest girl, from the bottom of my soul I pray it. I wish I was worthier of your love than I am; but as you have taken me for better for worse, I must still hope that you will never reject me. Adieu!

Most truly affectionately yours,

BLANDFORD.

\* This letter was sent with a box of novels without any envelope.

I am



I am now going to pray for my dearest Ma. and I hope to dream of her afterwards. The night before last I dreamed you kissed me and forgave me: what joy!

*Friday Morn.*

I have been with you the whole night, my beloved girl: this even you cannot prevent, and I trust would not wish it.

I have mixed some of the snuff you used to like, my dear girl, and I send it with the books. Oh! that I could see you take it, as I used to do.

No. 13\*.

DEAR CHARLES,

IT is so long since I have heard from Critchill, that I am induced to trouble you with this, by way of inquiries after Lady Mary Anne and her little girl. I was in some hopes that she would have permitted Mary Anne to write me a line, to say how she went on; but as she has not done that, I can only trust to your giving me a line, to say they are going on well, which I shall be very glad to hear.

My house in Town is not yet quite finished, and as it has been painted all over in the inside, we think it hardly safe to try it yet. How much longer do you mean to shirk the Imperial Parliament? The weather is quite delightful—like June. God bless you. Pray write me a few lines.

*White Knights,*

January 29, 1801,

Yours sincerely, &c.

BLANDFORD.

\* This letter was forwarded to Mr. Sturt in London, written for the purpose to ascertain whether he was at Critchill or not; he returned no answer to it.

No.

No. 14

HONOURED SIR,

*Cashmoore Inn.*

I AM almost frightened to death ; another letter came to-day, which I have enclosed in this: if my Lady says any thing to me about stopping the parcel, what can I say? for I think the next plan will be to call on Dowager Lady Shaftesbury ; as he got no answer, and put no letters in with her enclose. I should be sorry to do any thing to hurt you: I am unhappy about the business on both sides, and for all parties. The shepherd goes tomorrow: does Bacon know what ground is to be ploughed? Faltham is not at home ; but I think nobody has called for the letter.

I remain, honoured Sir,

Your dutiful Servant,

EDWARD SMITH.

No. 14\*.

DEAR LADY MARY ANNE,

I HAVE not pestered you with letters, as I know that reading is not reckoned good for ladies during the month. I must own though that I am almost inclined to be cross at not hearing about you indirectly, as I know I could not directly ; and though no news is good news, I should be very happy to see it on black and white that you are going on well, and the nameless young lady. I wrote to Charles yesterday, and I hope I shall soon hear from him ; as among your numerous friends, there are none who more sincerely wish your welfare than myself. Adieu.

*White Knights,*

Very truly yours,

*Friday.*

BLANDFORD.

I hope you have received the carpet.

\* This is the envelope to the following letter.

No.

No. 14.

*White Knights, Friday, January 30th.*

I THINK I may safely write you a private letter now; I know not how to address you, but rather than to put any thing ill-natured or cross, I shall put nothing at all. You may safely fancy whatever will give you most pleasure; for to give you pleasure is, and always has been, the study of my life; and I can say more, always will be. Judge what my feelings must be, interested as I am about you (for this you know), to be kept in total ignorance about you. I that am uneasy, when you are not in a critical situation like the present one, if I do not hear often about you; how much more acute my feelings must be now! Surely I gave a very good opportunity for your daughter to write to me, and surely she might have said how you were in her letter: it is a fortnight to-morrow since I have heard from Critchill. Oh! dear me!

If this letter remains, like my former ones, unanswered, I cannot help it; I shall however have one small consolation (and small indeed in comparison with having lost your affection), I mean that of having omitted nothing which could possibly bring you to a right understanding respecting me: me, who, let what will be your sentiments, have never ceased (and to the loss of my peace perhaps I say it), never can cease having any other sentiments for you, but the greatest love and truest affection, grafted upon near ten years acquaintance, and now strengthened by the nearest and dearest of all ties. I need not explain more; I cannot really say more, and believe me I feel more than I utter. Give me not up there, dear Mary Anne. Pray, for the love of God, do not take any thing amiss in this letter; for, so help me God, I wish it to convey to you only what can and must be  
pleasing

pleasing to you, if you still love me, or have ever done it; and how can I doubt that? All my sentiments, dear Mary Anne, arise out of you, and all my wishes spring towards you; how can I then live without your affection, and now form a new route of life, apart from you? No, Mary Anne; it is impossible. Remember, dear Mary Anne, you have no proofs that I do not love you, and ten thousand that I do. My crime is loving you too much; a crime which any one may accuse me of, except you. Now and ever, dearest Mary Anne,

Most sincerely,

And truly affectionately,

BLANDFORD.

No. 15.

HONOURED SIR,

THE enclosed is the first that has been received, since you have been in Town, and that came out of the bag to-day.

I remain, honoured Sir,

*Critchill House,*

Your dutiful Servant,

*February 7th, 1801.*

EDWARD SMITH.

No. 15\*.

MY DEAREST DEAR MARY ANNE,

PRAY, pray forgive me, my dearest angel, and burn all my letters, which have given you uneasiness; pray, pray do, my dear: was I with you I would ask your forgiveness on my knees, and I know you would give it me. I know that you love me even now that you are angry, I am sure you do; I am sure you are unalterably mine, my beloved Ma. and you know I adore you; yes,

\* This was the first letter directed to Lady Mary Anne without any envelope. Mr. Sturt was in town,

Q

you

you know it well, my dear. Pray then, my sweet Mary-Anne, forgive me, and rather endeavour to pity than to condemn the frantic state I was in sometime ago; return me to your heart, my dearest, if you have ever erased me from it; but I do not even believe this: I am sure you have never ceased to love me, and was I to die now, you would shed a tear of pity over my grave; yes, my own dear girl, do, pray my love, only write me two lines, to say you still love me and forgive me, and I shall be in heaven, for I am now in hell comparatively. I assure you, my dearest girl, I have been hurrying on the house in Town on purpose, because I know you wished me to go soon; and really hope we shall be able to go to settle by next Monday se'nnight, and it will not be quite finished even then. I see he is in Town, so I shall direct this to you. I am so glad to hear you have got Miss Bingham with you. Why have you stopped the biscuits coming to you? not because I sent them? I hope not, my dear, my ever dear and eternally beloved Mary Anne, I am sure that was not your reason. I know you long to forgive me, my dear, I know you do; pray my angel do, pray put me in heaven, for you don't know what I have suffered; and I really believe that, had not your mother, who wrote to thank me for some plums, very kindly told me you and your little girl were going on well, I should not have survived the suspense. Not one night, my dear girl, have I failed praying for you; and I am vain enough to think that my prayers have contributed to your welfare; at least the idea is so pleasing to me that I cannot give it up.

Pray forgive me, my dearest girl; I will do any thing you desire. I own I should wish to stand in person, upon many accounts, for your little girl; but perhaps you can defer it till you come to Town. But even that will I give up

up if my own dear Mary Anne will only forgive her once dear, and I hope still dear, Blandford. God eternally bless you, my dearest, and may he incline you to forgive me, who am; and, whatever happens, can never cease being

Most unalterably,

And most affectionately, your

BLANDFORD.

P. S. Tell me what you wish me to do, and I will do it. So help me God. Give me one line, my dearest Mary Anne.

*White Knights, Wednesday,*

No. 16.

*London, Four o'Clock.*

RISING from dreams of a most detestable kind, with my imagination heated even to the frenzy of love, I called in vain upon my Mary Anne; vainly indeed, for, like the bird of night, she is only visible to me in those hours. Another post, and yet no letter! not one word of comfort in present, nor even a hope held out to me of ever receiving it! Alas! poor Yorick! am I then, my still adored Mary Anne, to be the only one whom you will not forgive, nor grant even a conditional pardon to? Am I to be the rock on which your natural forgiving temper is to split? Am I, who am what I am, and you know what that is; and I, I say, to be excluded from your forgiveness for ever? Has no interval come across you, in which you have thought of forgiving me? Have you experienced none of those delightful sensations of forgiving in my favour, which are so pleasing to one we have a regard for? Have you checked no rising sigh, no starting tear of pity, in my favour; and have none appeared to plead for me? Oh! Mary Anne, my most

Q 2

loved

loved Mary Anne, you must be at variance with your own heart, or you would forgive me. A heart like yours is formed for pity and forgiveness! How much more inclined then must it be to forgive one it has lately so truly loved?

What can equal the satisfaction, the delight, the ecstacy of feeling the heart reconciled to forgive an injury in one we love? Remember, my adored Mary Anne, I am saying all this, supposing you still love me; for I cannot believe that, however grievous an injury may be, one can so soon get rid of a passion of ten years duration. Had I a thousand hearts, you should have them all, and could I convert every other passion into love, I would do it, and all to love you more!

I have just seen your mother, and have one pang the less, at hearing you are well. She mentioned something, which, though it was a *sbanderbalt* to me, I shall not dwell on, but assure you that I acquit you of having any share in it. God forever blefs you. I am now settled in Town, No. 21, Portman Square. Lady B. comes on Monday or Tuesday. Adieu, again and again, and spare a sigh for

Your devoted eternally,

BLANDFORD\*.

[The letter next in order of time is that inserted in p. 39; it was intercepted by my servant, and forwarded to me in town;—it had no envelope.

The allusion to the christening was in consequence of Lord Blandford having solicited to be sponsor, which I had accepted of at the time; but recollecting Lord Radnor

\* This letter had no envelope; it was directed to Lady Mary Anne, intercepted by Mr. Sturt's servant, and forwarded to him in Town.

had

had been so obliging to offer Lady Mary herself, to be sponsor to the infant, I wrote to his Lordship, as well as to Mrs. Smith and Mrs. March Phillips, who had offered the same; I took no notice of Lord Blandford. On my intercepting the correspondence, and taking professional advice how to proceed, I wrote to the Noble Lord, Mrs. Smith, and Mrs. March Phillips, declining their kind offers.]

No. 18\*

*Saturday, February 21.*

NOTHING can equal, my dearest Mary Anne, the horrors of my situation: I fear to take any step, for I wish only to do what you would wish me, and you will not tell me. Tell me only, in charity tell me, and by the God of mercies I will do it; and if I do not, let me for ever forfeit your affection. What is it you wish me to do, and what not to do? how can I expiate my offence? Let me only have a chance of being forgiven, before I die, and I shall be comparatively happy. In my idea of going abroad, by God, I only thought it would please you. I have now an idea it would not; speak one word, and I will abandon any thing or undertake any thing you can wish: nothing shall come amiss to me, your wish shall constitute all the pleasure in my actions. Tell me I must wait ten years for forgiveness, and I will wait, and at the end of that term my love will be unimpaired. Tell me you wish me not to write, or not write my sentiments so freely; whatever you tell me, I shall draw pleasure from your very telling it to me. Surely no one ever loved as I do! but, alas! an impetuosity in my

\* No envelope. Intercepted by Mr. Sturt's servant, and forwarded to Town.



temper has destroyed me : I confess it : You are perfect ; I know you are, I feel you are, and your love effected a change in me, which none but yourself could have done. Oh ! my most adored Mary Anne, tell me only that you ate of the prunellos I sent, or that you read a line in the books I sent you ; this alone will now give me happiness ; a very nothing will give now a comparative heaven. Were it possible for you to tell me you hate me, the very sight of your hand-writing would bear ecstasy to me. I have ten thousand misgivings of ill, and I know not which to pitch upon. God grant that you may never feel what I now experience, and that I may always bear whatever weight of misery is intended for you. Could I purchase any thing like happiness for you, there is no pain, no misery I would not willingly and cheerfully undergo. But still am I vain enough to think that you with me well, and that my misery would rather aggravate than lessen your sufferings. Alas ! perhaps I am the cause of them ; but for me you might have been still comparatively happy. If any thing is wanting to complete my wretchedness, it is the idea of my being the cause of your unhappiness : oh ! God, teach me to think otherwise ; teach me to think that I am not the cause of misery to one, who, next to thyself, I adore.

I send some music for Mary Anne ; I flatter myself that you will let her play it, I was going to say, although I send it. Could I but know your wishes ; could you but transgress the rule you have, I fear, made to yourself, not to answer any of my letters, how comparatively happy shall I be ! One line, one word, would be a delight to me. Alas ! I know not what to do, or how to act ; but if I act wrong, it will be my head, not my heart, that is in fault. Pity me, surely I may be entitled to some ; pity the man you once have loved. You said once you  
wished

wished me not to leave the kingdom : I will not do it nor think of it, unless you show me you wish it. Oh! and learn how I am punished ; but I know that one kind word from you would be a heaven to me. Mercy, mercy, what have I lost, and by my own folly ! I abhor myself ; oh ! grave, grave, open for me !

God for ever bless you, and heap endless bliss upon you : though I am doomed no longer to share it with you, I fervently pray that you may still enjoy it ! Amen.

Unalterably, under whatever circumstances may arise,

Yours,

BLANDFORD.

No. 19.

HONOURED SIR,

I HAVE just received a parcel for my Lady ; the enclosed letter was in it ; the parcel I shall keep till I hear from you ; it seems to me to be a gown. I said to Mr. Allen, I wish you was come down ; but it is for nothing particular, any otherwise than I always wish you here. Kaile is moving the elms out of the park.

I remain, honoured Sir,

Your dutiful Servant,

EDWARD SMITH.

No. 19\*.

*London, Friday.*

GRANT me one indulgence, my dearest and most beloved Mary Anne. Let me have the satisfaction of still obliging you, and of being of use to you in the trifling way I have been accustomed to do ; and when at any time I know I can be of service to you, still continue to

\* This letter had no envelope.

accept

accept my services, and do not refuse the trifling testimonies of my everlasting love for you. I ventured, relying upon this, to send you some books and some prunella; and I still venture further now, to send you a gown, which is quite new. Alas! new or old, formerly it would have pleased you; perhaps it may still. I ask no thanks, perhaps I may deserve none: I only ask you to allow me to hope that time, which smooths all things, may (should we both see its progress), perhaps, soften your sentiments in my favour, and retrieve me to your friendship, if not to your love.

May the God of all mercies for ever bless you, and incline you to believe that I am

Your eternally devoted

BLANDFORD.

No. 20.

HONOURED SIR,

THE enclosed came in a parcel for my Lady, which is books. I hope you have received all the enclosed letters that I have sent. Would you wish for me to send the contents of the parcel to you? I begin to get uneasy about them. Shepherd and Moses shall go next Monday to Brownsea: one of his boys has met with a bad misfortune—broke his thigh, but is going on as well as can be expected.

I remain, honoured Sir,

Your dutiful Servant,

*Friday Noon.*

EDWARD SMITH.

No. 20.

SUFFER me, my eternally beloved Mary Anne, the little time I shall be within reach of you, to occupy my  
leisure

leisure moments in your service, and reject not the trifling offerings I send you, for it sooths my woe to be employed for you, and I have now and then illusive moments, when fancy persuades me that they are grateful to you. Alas! how transitory these moments are! Forbid me not writing to you occasionally, the little time I have to remain in this country; for by permitting it you perform a real act of charity upon one who never can cease being

Your most faithfully  
And invariably attached

*London, Thursday.*

BLANDFORD.

No. 21.

*Old Burlington Street, March 5th, 1801.*

MY DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED, yesterday afternoon, a note from my sister Shaftesbury, to say she wished to see me early in the evening, and that Lady Mary Anne Sturt was just arrived. I accordingly went after dinner, and there saw Lady M. A. in a situation of distress beyond my power to describe. She lamented exceedingly not having had an opportunity given her to see you; or that you would not acknowledge the receipt of her letters, as she had constantly written to you; much did she say to me, but what I fear can be of no use for me to repeat, as you declared to Lord Shaftesbury and myself your resolution was taken. What I have been saying is rather a digression from the purport of my letter; which is a request I have to make from Lady M. A. of such a nature, and so entirely accords with my feelings, and, if I am not greatly mistaken, in yours, will immediately have your acquiescence. She left the two children at St. Giles's, there to remain until your pleasure is known. Lady Shaftesbury, who never

R

enough

enough can be commended for her good nature in this, and upon every occasion that offers, proposes the children to remain at St. Giles's until the family come to Town after Easter, when they shall be brought to Portland Place.

I am sure you will comply with this offer, so handsomely made, and which will be of such benefit to the children, especially the girl; and as it is not in your nature to do what would not have the appearance of good nature, you will consent that Lady Mary Anne shall see the children, both in Portland Place and at my sister's. As I have heard you express yourself satisfied with Lady M. A.'s attention to her children, and which I am sure they bear strong marks of, as no children can have been more attended to; let me entreat a compliance as soon as possible to my request, in full; as by it some alleviation may be obtained for a very suffering and an unfortunate mother.

I am, my dear Sir,

Your faithful humble Servant,

E. BOUVERIE.

*Charles Sturt, Esq.*

No. 22:

MY DEAR SIR,

BELIEVE me, when I assure you, language cannot describe how deeply I lament this sad business; no man can tell what my mind has undergone for these last two months. Indeed I feel for Lady Mary Anne; my heart is still susceptible, still alive to the feelings of humanity. I cannot forget that I have been happy with her; from my soul I pity poor Lady Mary, and my mind is almost distracted when I reflect on her situation, and the sad misery entailed on myself and family. It is my intention

tion to bring my children to Town immediately, and I have arranged every thing at the hotel for their reception, that my daughter may have the advantage of her masters, Lady Shaftesbury's kindness and attention I have always experienced, and undoubtedly can never be uneasy when my children are with her. In regard to their being permitted to see Lady Mary, whose conduct, I with sincere pleasure acknowledge, has ever been exemplary towards them, I cannot refuse, any more than their seeing the Dowager Lady Shaftesbury, whose attachment and love for them I know to be equal to their mother's. Be assured, my dear Sir, whatever I can do, under the present circumstances, to alleviate the sufferings of Lady Mary Anne, I will; but to be diverted from pursuing the steps I have been advised to against Lord Blandford, is impossible, I am determined to punish him with the utmost rigour. His treachery, his black ingratitude deserves no mercy from me, nor will I show him any. Sincerely desirous to lessen the sufferings of Lady Mary Anne, I send this as a packet, as Saturday we have no post to London.

Believe me, my dear Sir, to remain

Yours very sincerely,

C. STURT.

My children are both extremely well.

I am sure you can explain why I did not answer any letters. I really acted under advice. To add to distress, I trust, is not my disposition.

*Critchill House,*

*Friday, March 6th, 1801.*

*To the Honourable Edward Bouverie.*

No. 23.

March 19th, 1801:

MY EVER BELOVED MARY ANNE,

IF you can forgive one from whom all your wretchedness now springs, for his sake give attention to what I have to say.

I entreat, I conjure you not to add your displeasure to my other misfortunes; the latter are to be borne, the former is not: life may linger on with the latter, but dissolution must accompany the former. May that God, before whose tribunal we shall all stand to answer for our transgressions, may he witness what I swear, that death alone shall destroy one particle of the affection I bear you, and that I have the conviction in my own mind, that no creature ever loved more than I love you. You know that my love for you is not a sudden thought; you know that it is grounded on near eleven years intimacy; you know that I married to get the better of it, and that that failed; you know that I tried an absence from you for four years, and that that failed also. I think, I hope, I need not say more to convince you of the nature of my love for you, and the certainty of my constancy. If, therefore, you are convinced of this, my most adored Mary Anne, you will immediately be aware of my complicated misery at this moment; a misery which I can neither describe, nor have I ever conceived that the heart of man was capable of bearing: not misery though on my own account, but misery at being chosen by fate as the instrument (though innocent one) of affliction to her whom I adore, and before whose welfare my own life appears as nothing, and for whom I would suffer tortures worse than were inflicted in the cruellest days of the Inquisition: my love would bear me up and carry me through

through all. I know you love me ; I have proofs of it ; and the dear picture, which I have now before me, seems to assure me I am right. Having, I trust, substantiated what we neither of us wish to deny, that no two mortals ever loved each other more, I will come to the point ; can you, my dearest Mary Anne ; can you renounce the world for my sake ? do you feel that you love me well enough to relinquish what we have long ceased to care for, and seek with me for happiness, in the certainty of possessing each of us all we have cared for, now care for, or can ever care for in this world ? Could I love you more than I have done, I should do it now ; but that is impossible : words have hitherto principally predominated ; but, oh ! let me nourish the ecstatic hope, that you will ere long allow my actions to prove my attachment ; an attachment which time has ripened into maturity, and reason strengthened into indissolubility. Let us, my adored Mary Anne, taking with us our dear and beloved —, grasp at the only happiness now within our reach, and seek in our own bosoms what we are denied the enjoyment of in the world. I should use you ill, my dearest Mary Anne, if I did not assure you that I believe that my very existence depends upon your decision ; but how can my life be in better hands ? Frequently you have talked of my strong feelings, and even have spared them ; judge of them now, and judge of what I am deprived. But here, my adored, lest I should be thought to work too much on your tender feelings, let me assure you I do not mean that this letter should press you to any sudden resolution ; I wish you to be assured that, though every minute of separation from you is torture to me, still a hope of its not continuing long will buoy me up, and the pain will lose a part of its poignancy, when I can know that it is borne in order to spare your feelings, dearer to me than my life.

Never,



Never, my dear, shall you find your —— consider his own feelings, but when he thinks that the connexion between yours and his are so close that one cannot be wounded without the other: never will he urge you to take a step for his sake, but when he thinks that the consequences of your not doing it will involve both in wretchedness! I have long, my dear, found a pleasure in acting under your guidance; continue to direct me; but when I chance to see a spot of azure appear in our clouded hemisphere, suffer me to endeavour to persuade you that we should avail ourselves of it.

Could I have five minutes conversation with you, which I know is impossible in the present stage of things, I could make it clear to you that on every account my proposal is eligible. I hope you are convinced, my dear Mary Anne, that there is nothing possible which I have omitted, in order to bring this business to an accommodation, and that there is no sacrifice which I am not now ready to make to accomplish it. All other considerations vanish before it; for, after all, what are they in comparison with the welfare of my Mary Anne?

Suffer me then to hope, my dearest Mary Anne, that my unalterable love for you will soon be rewarded by you, and that you will soon put an end to a misery, which it is not in the power of any one ever to soften the rigours of but yourself; and may God in his infinite bounty, before whom our attachment appears in its true light, so soften your heart in my favour, and so divulge to you my most secret thoughts, that you may be convinced that I am desirous and able to sooth those sorrows which I cannot heal; and, by an unremitting affection, sweeten the cup of bitterness, which I have, alas! been so accessary to the preparing of. Could I for a moment, my dearest Mary Anne, doubt that you would write me a kind word

in

in answer to this, I should scarcely have life to subscribe myself,

Unalterably yours, in all situations ;

I glowing with the warmest affection,

Need I sign \_\_\_\_\_ ?

If you permit me, I will send you, by the same mode of conveyance, a plan, with such good reasons for the adoption of it as cannot be controverted.

Upon reflection, I think I had better send you in my letter the plan I mentioned in the postscript, and I hope I shall not risk your displeasure by doing it.

Should my beloved Mary Anne consent to share and share alike with me, and unite her fate to mine, I would take refuge in Switzerland, where I am sure to find more friends than I shall ever want again ; and, as my dear Mary Anne was once so kind as to say that she was pleased with the offer I made once about Switzerland, I hope she will forgive me for now reverting to it. For my own part, I most solemnly renounce the world, let what will happen, so that I must own that the sacrifice to me is nothing, and the regrets I may receive by going, will, I know, be confined to one person ; to one who certainly from her merit deserved a better fate, than that of being united to a man who loves, who adores another ; but she has friends, and though I am aware she would suffer on the first surprise, yet she is prepared for all that can happen ; her reason will soon show her that she could look for no happiness and little comfort in the society of a man so much attached to another, as she knows me to be ; and I am sure also, that, when she hears I am happy, she has regard enough for me to be glad that I went. I now come to the distribution of my income, which I shall state at 2500*l.* per annum. I shall order 1500*l.* to be paid

paid to Lady B. for her use and the children, and the remaining 1000*l.* per annum I shall reserve for myself. Lady B. will continue to live on at White Knights, with the children; and when she wishes to come to Town, she has many relations who can accommodate her. I know that every thing will go on better when I am gone. Pray, my dearest Mary Anne, do not imagine that this plan is formed in consequence of irritation, passion, or hurry; no, it is on mature reflection and sober reasoning, and on firm and unshaken principles that I am going. I am quite aware of all I give up and all I obtain: I know that I give my enemies subject for their malevolence, but I despise them all. I know my heart, and strange would it be if I did not; I know that it is attached to one object, and that its happiness or misery depends entirely upon it; and I know the nature of that attachment; I know that time will strengthen it, and I know that, if I must pity, I must love in proportion: for pity was the first bluish of my attachment.

It may be urged against me, that I abandon my wife and children, following the dictates of passion only; but will not this bear an explanation? First, how I abandon them; and next, if I have no motive but passion for doing it. I will first show how untrue the first assertion is, and I will then proceed to show that I have other motives of action beside passion. When a man leaves his wife friendless, and his children without means of subsistence, he may then be said to abandon them; but when he leaves his wife surrounded by her relations, and leaves her, knowing that his presence can neither procure her happiness nor comfort; and when he leaves his children amply provided for, and a plan of education laid out for them to follow, he can scarcely be said to abandon them. I will now proceed to the motives for this separation, for

I think I have proved that it is not an abandonment; passion, that is, an unconquerable attachment for a beloved object, certainly forms a part of my motive; but even were that insufficient, it is strengthened by humanity, and by a propelling impulse of never quitting, while breath remains in my body, her whom I have brought into affliction, her whom I have injured, but her whose sorrows I will soon sooth, and her whom I will never abandon; for if I forsake her, may God forsake me! This is the true way of stating the cause and its consequence; and if I am judged upon this explanation, I am not at all uneasy about the decision.

Remember, my dearest Mary Anne, that I am supposing that your attachment to me is as strong as mine is towards you; I know it was, and, till you tell me that it is not, I must conclude that it is.

No. 24.

MY DEAREST MARY ANNE, *Wednesday.*

IN addition to what I suggested in my first letter, I wish you to reflect seriously on some other circumstances which I am sure you will think consequential.

Can you bear the idea, my dearest and kindest Mary Anne, of never seeing me again, and can you renounce me for ever? one who has so faithfully loved you, and so long; one who you are convinced is second to none in loving, and one whose constancy you cannot doubt: what is to become of me if you do? Have you thought of that, my dearest Mary Anne? Could you bear to hear of

\* This letter was sent by the penny post, directed to the Right Hon. Lady Mary Anne Sturt, No. 18, Lower Seymour Street, Portman Square, by Mr. William Spencer.

me a wanderer, a single pin in the world without a companion but my misery? for never can I live on with —; I cannot, I ought not: I must be an everlasting scourge to her, was I to continue with her; I would do any thing to serve her at a distance, but to live with her is impossible. I know, I am certain that she would, after the first change of habit, find pleasures and comforts without me, which she could never experience with me; for she not only knows that I adore another, but is perfectly convinced that my sentiments will never change, so that she would not have hope even to build upon. I know that she is prepared for whatever can happen; and though she could not be expected to recommend the measure, I am sure she would not advise against it; for she is convinced that I never can enjoy a moment's happiness or comfort without it. Consider then well, my dearest Mary Anne, has my conduct been such hitherto towards you, as to warrant you to place reliance in future upon it? Have I ever given you cause to think that I am fickle and inconstant, and that you run a risk of my attachment for you not continuing? Has report, or has your own observation, ever accused me of the slightest predilection since I was first acquainted with you? or has my love for you ever been guilty of the most trifling aberration from the faith it has so often sworn to maintain? Can you for a moment imagine, that if the whole world were all of one opinion, and that that opinion blamed you; can you, I say, imagine for a moment that that would influence my opinion of you? No! Mary Anne, I know your virtues; I admire them: my love for you is founded on more than your beauty. I know that it will always be a sincere regret to you, that we did not first meet when we were both single; but was that from our fault, and are we to impute to misconduct what was owing to misfortune?

Did

Did we intentionally keep away from each other? Are we to be blamed for the faults of our parents, or of chance? and are we to give up the only thing which can make life desirable, because unexampled events kept us from knowing or seeing each other at a moment when we were free, and when there can be little doubt we should have felt the same interest, and built our happiness on the same object as we do at present? Can you doubt for a moment that we were born for each other? and does not Providence seem to have specially interfered to bring us together again, by the marriage of my sister? reflect for a moment how many extraordinary events led to that connexion; running from her father's house, &c. &c. Have not you yourself, my dearest Mary Anne, frequently said you built hopes on these extraordinary occurrences? If we feel that we were born for each other, I must revert to what I said before—was it from our faults, in any way, that we did not originally marry? Were we ever acquainted and not attached? Did our parents ever wish us to marry each other; or did any instinct, any inspiration, or any vision direct us to become acquainted at that time? If any did, we may now blame ourselves for not listening to its directions; but if it can be proved, as we know that it can, that not only we were never advised, either by worldly or spiritual intervention, to marry, not only we never resisted an attachment to each other, but that we had never seen each other: I say, if this can be proved, no blame can attach to us on that head. But very short was our acquaintance when our partiality first took place, and then we found the misfortune not to have met sooner. All conduct, my dearest Mary Anne, is right or wrong according to the motive which produces it, and the degree of injury it may do to others. First, I will examine into our motives for this measure, and I will

next point out the injury which persons concerned may sustain in consequence of it. Our motive is clear, it is in order to procure to us something like happiness and comfort in this world, which we know we cannot accomplish by any other mode of action; and we have the best grounds to build this assumption upon, which is, that as our happiness depends upon living with each other, no other event can produce it to us, separately or collectively. This then is our motive, and I appeal if there can exist a stronger motive of action than this, the peace and comfort of our whole life! How few have half as good reasons for their actions? Now with respect to the injury it may do to any persons who are connected with us, you must judge on your side, and I will take my own. The only persons who could possibly sustain an injury, or that the world, with all its malevolence, could fix an injury upon, would be Lady —— and the children. I have already said, that, with respect to her, what at first would appear an injury, would, I know, turn out in the end a favour. I have already settled a tutor with my children, who I have known long, and who will certainly more than supply my place to them; so that in fact all idea of injury must be done away; and as fate has ordained to come to pass what has come to pass, the measure is not only pleasing to our feelings, but becomes rational and advisable.

I must repeat, my dearest Mary Anne, what I said in my first letter, that, till you tell me it is not so, I must believe that you are as much attached to me as you ever were: I have every reason to suppose it, and, thank God, none to suppose otherwise. For surely our attachment cannot be lessened because it is known; on the contrary, our interests are become more connected, and our hearts forming a common cause together, are become more inseparable;

separable : for of what nature must an attachment be that exists only as long as the world remains ignorant of it, and whose duration depends not on itself, but on the world not having cunning enough to discover it? Our attachment to each other I have ever conceived to be of a very different nature from this, and I trust I have not been deceived : I have ever considered it as grounded on a conviction of our sentiments never changing, whatever might arise ; not a slave to circumstances, but a defiance to them ; an instinctive impulse of the mind, sweetened on real affection, and founded on a perfect knowledge of the hearts and dispositions of each other. This is what I have ever conceived our attachment to be ; and if it is so, it should be rather strengthened than impaired by all that has happened : as adverse parties unite when the common enemy is at the gates of the city, so should our interests, our hearts become cemented, in proportion to the obstacles which present themselves to our attachment. This will stamp a character on our love, and gloss over those aberrations which necessity, and not choice, has occasioned.

It is impossible, after an attachment of near eleven years, that one can say to one's self, I will now cease to love ! and have I committed a crime which can cancel so long, so true an attachment? Surely nothing short of breaking the faith I have so often sworn to maintain, can so soon turn love into indifference. Philosophy has done wonders ; but never, never was there an instance of so sudden a change, even in one of her most zealous followers ; and how can I suppose that affection like yours can have so long existed in a philosophic mind? Surely my misfortunes are not to be brought against me as faults, and I am not to be told that my misery is my own seeking, and that I have wilfully brought into affliction  
the



the darling of my heart. Gracious Heaven! this is all that is wanting to fill the cup of my wretchedness!

But if I am to be told this, I will kiss the hand that strikes the blow, for it will be the last, though deepest wound which I can ever receive in this world; and when Providence shall in his mercy call me from this world of woe, at the closing gasp of my existence, while misery is cutting through the last thread of my life, should nature ebb for a moment, my dying words will be, "God preserve Mary Anne!"

*Friday.*

I cannot proceed with any thing till you are kind enough to write me for what you wish. Pray, pray let me know soon, for we have no time for delay\*!

No. 25.

*Sunday, Nine o'Clock, 22d March.*

I HAVE at length, my dearest Mary Anne, opened a communication with you, and one which B. himself recommended, and assured me through W. S. that I run no risk of any sort, provided W. S. directs to you the outside cover, and you direct to him. I thank Heaven for having allowed this plan to succeed, for I really feel at this moment an absence of misery, which I have not felt before for very long indeed. Judge, my dearest, of what I must have felt, even long before this unfortunate business; for I have not heard from you since you wrote for a key of your drawers, before you was brought to bed, and I thought you was very very angry with me, and I wrote over and over again; to beg you to forgive me; but, alas! I fear you never got my letters: I little

\* Directed to the Right Hon. Lady Mary Anne Sturt, No. 13, Lower Seymour Street, Portman Square, by Mr. W. Spencer.

guessed

guessed at the reason I received no answer; the villain, the monster, the liar! I have not had one moment freed from misery, my dear, since you was brought to bed. I thank God, my dearest Mary Anne, I have been able to hear a good deal about you lately, through B. and W. S. I know you are suckling your child, which I was very glad to hear, for I knew you would not if you was ill; but I want to know now from you, my beloved dear, how you are; pray tell me, and let me have one happy moment among so many bitter ones. Tell me if you ever go out in the carriage; you know, in short, my dear, what to tell me, for you know that you can tell me nothing about yourself which will not interest me. For my part, my dear, I am pretty well in health; but my mind, my dear, is very bad indeed. I loath the day-light; I never go out of the house till eight in the evening, unless it rains violently and the streets are all clear, and then I run down Lower Seymour Street and back, hoping to see my dearest Mary Anne, by chance, at the window. On Friday I was obliged to go to W. S. at Somerset House; I went in a hackney coach, not to be seen, and entering by Seymour Street, I saw you at the nursery window, and I call God to witness that I never was so agitated in my life. Yes, I saw you, my dear, looking ten thousand times more charming than ever, you was all in white, in a loose dress; to my dying day I shall never forget it: by God, my dear, I do not mean to flatter, but I never saw any thing so beautiful as you looked in all my life. Oh! that Mary Anne would allow me to possess all I then saw, and to call it and know it to be mine! Every evening, from eight till ten, I walk up and down Lower Seymour Street; your mother's window-shutter is always a little open, and I watch, hoping that some accident may bring you to the window: three nights I have

have seen you for a minute, but that moment was an ecstasy for a moment. I see no soul but W. S. I hate the sight of all the world. Ah! my dear, if you condemn me ever so much for imprudence, you must pity me, in reflecting on the cause, and knowing that my sufferings are not to be described; to have caused affliction to the only being in God's world that I care for, and to have been the promoter of ill to one whom I all but worship; surely, my dear, for a heart which never was accused of want of feeling, this is punishment enough. Sooth me a little, my dear, in your answer, for my heart bleeds very much, and no one can remove an atom of my wretchedness but yourself; cherish me, my adored Mary Anne, and love me, or I sink under my miseries. A cold answer to this would destroy me now; but why should I dispute it, and doubt? I don't, Mary Anne, indeed I don't. Lo, you know I adore you, and will pity me. There is another, my dear Mary Anne, another whom I am deprived of seeing, one who has also claims upon my affection, and who will also share them with its adored mother; could I get a glimpse of her, it would give me great pleasure. Alas! to be deprived of counsel is being very miserable indeed. If you have any thing kind to say to me, my dear, do say it, it will be a styptic to my bleeding heart. Tell me all you wish, but tell me you still love me. You run no risk now, I assure you, my dear; you may safely unbosom yourself to me; do, do, my dear, once more sign yourself "Your unalterable Mary;" for unalterable, my dear, means "never to change, let what will be the situation and circumstances." Could you, in your answer, fix an hour that you would come to the window with your little girl, I would be walking by, and I could then see you both; but don't be uneasy,

uneasy, my dear, I would not stop: but do only what you like about it.

I must now from necessity, my dearest Mary Anne, enter upon the unpleasant subject, in order that you may know it clearly, and give me your sentiments upon it; which sentiments can be a law to me, my dearest love.

Our plan now is, for my solicitor to see Mr. Sturt's, and for them to settle the damages between them, and whatever they settle I agree to pay, and for the matter to be then adjourned to the sheriff's court, in the county of Dorset; which will avoid the publicity of a regular trial: and if they agree to damages, my solicitor will then represent it to Mr. S. that "he may as well (as they are agreed upon the sum) take it at once, and not run the risk of having the same lessened in the event of a trial." If he agrees to this, we shall even avoid the sheriff's court, and the matter is settled by a separate maintenance. Now I wish to know if you approve of all this, as I cannot act at all comfortably till I know it.

On the other hand, if you do nothing but let the business go on; should you wish to prevent a divorce, I understand he has no chance of it, for the least recrimination on your side (and God knows you might recriminate largely if you chose) would prevent it. I must add also, that in case the trial is suffered to proceed, whether I am to defend it or let judgment go by default (which is pleading guilty and making no defence at all), I am certain I could easily prevail on ——— to take out a bill of divorce against me, should Mrs. Addison succeed in getting hers, which is now pending before the House of Lords. Whichever way you decide, my dearest Mary Anne, I trust, I entreat you to consider yourself entirely, if there is any thing I can do, command me; there is no sacrifice under  
heaven

heaven which I am not ready to make, and even wish to make to serve you. So help me God.

Put two sealed covers on your answer, and send it by the penny-post, directed to Mr. Gall, No. 36, Curzon Street. He is a German servant of William Spencer's. I thought this better than the name of Spencer; but as you like best\*.

No. 26.

DEAR CHARLES,

IF you are disengaged on Monday next, we shall be very happy in your company at dinner, at half after five. I should not have written you this formal note, had I been able to meet with you.

Yours, &c.

Friday.

BLANDFORD.

Don't trouble yourself to send an answer: we shall not wait for you after half after five. Fincastle and Thornton dine with me†.

\* Directed to Lady Mary Anne Sturt, No. 18, Lower Seymour Street, Portman Square, by Mr. William Spencer.

† Left at Dorant's Hotel. Lord Blandford had often called: I gave directions to refuse him. On the Saturday before I met Lord Fincastle, who asked, if he was to meet me at Lord Blandford's on Monday, I said, No, I would see him d—d first, I never would put my foot in his house.—This does not look like a man who felt he had connived at his wife's infidelity. Lord Blandford was served with a notice that very day (Monday) by Mr. Sturt's solicitor.

[The

[The following letter was omitted to be put in its proper place; it is inserted here, to make the whole correct.]

*White Knights, Tuesday.*

DEAR LADY MARY ANNE,

DID I not rely upon Charles letting me know when you are confined, I should suspect that it was the case now, from your long silence. I have not heard from Charles neither for some time. I should be sorry you should hurt yourself by writing much; but I own I shall be glad to receive a line from you, to say you are both well. I hope Henry got his camp I sent him by ——: Colonel Thornton leaves me to-morrow. Sir Henry Dashwood comes here on Tuesday. I hope the carpet is arrived, and that you do not dislike it. Remember to Charles.

Unalterably yours, &c.

BLANDFORD.

*White Knights, Wednesday, January.*

DEAR LADY MARY,

I HOPE you are still up: you will not refuse to answer me one question, which is, did you receive a letter from me *last Tuesday se'night*, another *last Saturday*, and another yesterday? I am anxious to know, because I suspect a most shameful negligence in the Salisbury post, and I am now in correspondence with Mr. Freeling, the secretary, about it; and I received a letter from Charles to-day, which I ought to have received yesterday. I should be really much obliged to you if you would answer this part of my letter, about the post, as it is unpleasant to lose a letter, however indifferent the contents may be.

I enclose you your key, which I am sorry I took by mistake. I have not been at all well lately, and at times

so nervous, that I cannot refrain from crying: I dare not trust my thoughts for a moment, for the least uncomfortable idea oversets me. I don't know what is the matter with me; but I suppose it will either wear itself or me out: I know it is very foolish, but I never had any resolution in my life. I appear to some people in a situation to be envied; God knows how much the worse it is in reality. May you, my sister, never feel what I feel, is the prayer of an *old friend*,

BLANDFORD.

As the sooner this business is cleared up the better, I should be much obliged to you if you would direct your answer to me at the *post office, Bagshot*, as I shall then get it a day sooner. I shall send to Bagshot for it.

No. 27.

YOUR cruel, dishonourable, and notorious conduct, my Lord, compels me to forbid your putting your feet in my house. My servants have received positive orders to refuse you admittance, and to take every step, however disagreeable, to prevent you.

*Thursday,*

Yours, &c.

22d January 1801.

C. STURT.

I am called to town suddenly, and shall be back on Saturday or Monday, and have left orders to send express to me, if you should dare to come to Critchill House.

THE above is an exact copy of a letter given me by my master, to deliver to Lord Blandford, should he come to Critchill in my master's absence.

EDWARD SMITH.

No.

No. 28.

MY DEAR SIR,

I DISCOVERED, in the end of December, with the greatest horror and astonishment, a criminal correspondence between Lord Blandford and Lady Mary Anne, my wife: and I have most melancholy and decided proof, besides, that the child of which she has been delivered lately was his. I was compelled, at the time, to conceal this shocking discovery, from Lady Mary's advanced state of pregnancy; and have delayed the communication to the present moment, in order to be allowed due time for her recovery, not wishing that even my wrongs and sufferings should supersede the feelings of humanity. But I need hardly add, that I have had no connexion with her since my acquaintance with her misconduct, and that I never can see her again, or suffer her to remain any longer under my roof. I desire, therefore, that you will have the goodness to represent me upon this unhappy occasion, and that you will take every proper means to carry my wishes into effect. It gives me great pain to request this of you; but having no friend in the country now, and advised not to have an interview with Lady Mary, I am, distressing as it is, obliged to solicit your friendship on this melancholy occasion.

I remain, dear Sir,

Your faithful and obliged friend,

February 23, 1801.

C. STURT.

*Dorant's Hotel, Albemarle Street.*

(A copy.)

After having consulted counsel what steps I should take, I sent the above letter to my friend the Rev. Mr.

Marsh,



Marsh, who at first declined communicating its contents to Lady Mary Anne. I left Critchill the day Lady Mary was able to move from her bed, and have never seen her since.

No. 29.

MY DEAR LADY SHAFTESBURY,

LADY Mary continues wonderfully well, with the infant; she is removed into the dressing-room. I am under considerable difficulty about the christening; under all circumstances, knowing what I do, it is extremely painful, mortifying, and distressing to ask my own relations; Mrs. Smith offered, Lord Radnor the same, and Mrs. Phillips—how can I desire the one and accept the others? I know not what to do.—The sea is not near so troubled as my mind has been these three weeks. God knows how I shall act, what I shall do in this cruel situation; in respect to the diabolical wretch himself, I am fixed and inexorable. I have detested more of his abominable letters—more impudent, more disgusting than any. I am truly miserable; all my arrangements, all my views destroyed and overturned for ever. I am on my way to Town;—Miss Bingham will be at Critchill to-morrow; she is friendly and kind. The affectionate conduct of Lady Mary hurts and distracts me more than I can express. I am almost at times led to believe it is all a dream—a delirium—that it is a scheme. But, alas! reflection convinces me of her cruel guilt, and that all this affection is meant to deceive me; for she knows I am in possession of his picture, his hair, his dirty baubles, and more than suspects I have stopt all the correspondence. I can write no more. Burn this.—Give my kind love and sincere affection to Shaftesbury,

your

your dear daughter, and yourself; and believe me, whatever may be my fate, I shall be

Your obliged and

Faithful humble servant,

January 26th, 1801.

CHARLES STURT.

*Dorant's Hotel, Aldermarle Street.*

Should this deluded man take advantage of my absence, I have left orders how to dispose of him.

*To the Countess of Shaftesbury,  
Stindon, near Arundel, Sussex.*

(A copy.)

No. 30.

January 7th, 1801.

MY DEAR LADY SHAFTESBURY,

THE agitation of my mind about prevented me from personally taking my leave of you, although I wished very much to do so; however, Shaftesbury, I am sure, will convince you that it was from no other motive. Indeed, I ever most gratefully acknowledge, I have invariably met with the kindest solicitude for every thing that concerned me from you both: and be assured, whatever may be my fate, I shall retain the liveliest remembrance of it. The unfortunate correspondence I have detected, hath, indeed, overwhelmed me with grief, astonishment, and indignation: the villany of that ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ staggers my senses; I can scarcely credit what I read. And, oh! Lady Shaftesbury, when I consider that this intrigue is not of recent date, but only again renewed in 1798 (after explanation), I own the compassion I felt for Lady Mary Anne's situation is much, much lessened;

lessened; it is almost turned into disgust and contempt. I have indisputable proof of this cruel connexion existing when I thought I alone shared her affection. On the word and honour of a man, and I call the Supreme Being's anger and vengeance upon my head if it is not fact, she alone then enjoyed mine—she shared every thing with me, and I fondly thought she fully merited it.—To be deceived, after entertaining such sentiments, I own, rouses every feeling of manly pride, of indignation and resentment. I have, under the ———'s hand, what wounds me still deeper, and what I can neither forget nor forgive: I dare not mention it—but, my dear Lady Shaftesbury, I did venture to intimate to you what I saw your soul and generous mind shuddered at; it is true, and the ——— is weak, unguarded, and mad enough to declare it; he even presumes to reason on that account, the folly and impropriety of his not being allowed to be present at the christening. Much of this four letter, which I received on Saturday, upbraids her for listening to you, and animadverts on you severely for giving the advice you did. This letter is in answer to one she wrote unknown to me, on her return, on Monday, in consequence of the conversation you had on Sunday night. This very day, 6th of January, I have detected another letter, entering more seriously into the nature of the conversation that passed; more strongly abusing, and very seriously upbraiding Lady M. for being persuaded by you to give him up. In this letter, the ———, under his own hand, has the folly and weakness to prove his own guilt: he proves the foul connexion, and confesses he married to break it off. Like a ———, he says, in June 1798, after explanation, it was renewed. Good gracious! my mind is overwhelmed with grief, with horror, at the art, at the abominable deceit of Lady M.

—Only,

—Only, Lady Shaftesbury; picture to yourself the torture of mind I must suffer, to stifle what I, so deeply feel; picture to yourself my breakfasting, dining, and sitting alone all day with a woman, who has so transgressed every principle of religion and morality; who has, under the cloak of religion, been led to commit this most abominable crime; who has forfeited, not recently, but years ago (at a time when I thought I enjoyed her entire affection and confidence), all claim to my protection. Picture to yourself, my dear Lady Shaftesbury, what my mind must feel, when I see my two own dear children daily caressed by her, with all the fondness of guiltless innocence; her kind attention to me—all, all this is more painful, more distressing than I can describe. Humanity tells me to suppress my feelings, and bury in my own bosom the wrongs and injuries I have received. It requires almost more than human fortitude to do it; I have hitherto (any farther than appearing low, and out of spirits, which I cannot help) avoided giving her the smallest hint I am acquainted with it, no soul but yourself and Shaftesbury knows it; the letters I have received, I have had the initials of my own servants' names put to them, without communicating to them the contents, or in the slightest manner hinting the subject; at present, therefore, this atrocious business is only known to yourself and Shaftesbury; and I rely on your discretion and judgment, as well as Shaftesbury's, not to suffer the smallest hint to escape you; of this be assured, my dear Lady Shaftesbury, I will not take a step without being advised, nor indeed without both being informed of it first by me. My mind is made up in regard to this — —; but still I shall not suffer my own feelings, my own opinions, absolutely alone to direct me. My mind is not calm  
 U 2 enough

enough to allow me to judge coolly and dispassionately. My conduct on this unfortunate occasion I wish should be manly and correct, and such as I hope and trust will meet with the approbation of all who feel the smallest concern about me. I do not like to send you even a copy of the correspondence, since you have left St. Giles's, by the post. If I knew any of your servants going to Slindon, I would trust them to his care. I most sincerely hope you receive benefit from the air of Slindon, and that you feel yourself daily re-establishing your health. You must, my dear Lady Shaftesbury, take care of yourself;—very little attention will do, for you are blessed naturally with an excellent constitution.

Yours affectionately,

CHARLES STURT.

No. 31:

THE result of the sad conflict in which you have cruelly and deliberately involved me, can be no longer a secret; nor can it be unknown to you, that your very criminal indiscretion has exposed me to imputations which, if well founded, would deservedly exclude me from the society and commiseration of all mankind. I have been branded by the ——— of a lawyer, with having connived at your prostitution, and been an accomplice in that guilt which dishonours you. My allowing your servant, and those of Lord Blandford, at your earnest entreaties, and in opposition to my most strenuous objections, on account of the severity of the weather, to accompany me in the yacht, coupled with the gowns and trifling baubles which, unknown to me, you improperly received from Lord Blandford,

Blandford, have been construed into proofs of my being privy to your intrigues.

I do not mean to make you responsible for the calumny and falsehoods of a lawyer, whose interest it may be to defame and misrepresent; I only mean to impress strongly on your mind, if it is vulnerable to sorrow and remorse, the infamy which professional trick has endeavoured to extract from circumstances trifling and innocent in themselves. Oh God! that all my prospects should be so suddenly blasted, and in that quarter from whence I fondly expected comfort! You, as well as all those who know me personally, must feel the fullest conviction, that it is not in my character to have connived at your baseness: and I call God to witness, that your connexion with Lord Blandford was entirely unknown, and even unsuspected by me, until your correspondence with him was intercepted on the 26th of December 1800; and this discovery, late as it was, would not even then have been made, but for your having secretly taken a letter of mine from my letter-bag on that day.

Distressed as I am, by being robbed of all domestic comfort, without the most distant hope of its returning, without an home as it were, and beholding before me what I fondly considered as the sweetest pledges of your undivided affections deprived of the fostering care of a once virtuous and amiable mother,—I leave you to judge what my feelings must be, under such afflicting circumstances; and to estimate the poignancy of that heart-rending grief which you have imposed on me during the remainder of my life. But it is not only my home, and of all those domestic comforts which render home desirable, which you have deprived me of, I complain, but of being forced, by your guilt, to vindicate my character from charges of the grossest and most infamous nature.—

It

It is an aggravation of your crime, that Innocence should be put upon its defence; and as I do not know what impression may have been made in the minds of men by this attack, I beseech you to reflect seriously on the multiplied injuries I have sustained from a man whom gratitude should have taught, if honour could not bind him, a better conduct. You know that when the doors of Blenheim were not so accessible to him, mine were generously thrown open to him, as they have been at all times to my friends, and that he came to me, and was hospitably entertained, with an establishment nearly as great as my own, for several months at a time, and at different periods. I will not add to your distress, by going into a detail well known to you, and too fresh in your memory not to stand foremost in your recollection at this moment; but allow me to ask you, what was my conduct when the correspondence was made known between my brother, his wife, and yourself—did I desert you? did I on that occasion give you up? You know I did not; I defended you with honest warmth; I did so, because from my very soul I thought you was grossly injured; that it was a foul and wicked attack, arising from private pique, without the smallest ground whatever; I firmly believed you loved no other man than myself. Can you forget your weeping on my bosom, and thanking me for my resenting the supposed outrage offered to your reputation? have you forgot your solemnly invoking Heaven to witness your innocence and your sincere attachment to me? Time has revealed the perjury, and that this was all a shameful delusion; that you had been in long intimacy with this ungrateful object, excites at once astonishment and disgust.

I return you your picture, which I would willingly keep, were it possible for us ever to live together again.

—But

—But, alas! it is not. The die is cast; an interview will only distress us both; my heart cannot bear to see affliction—and in one whom I loved, it would overwhelm me. I dare not trust myself with you; I am irrevocably fixed to decline the meeting you wish, and can only say, God bless you.

May 30, 1801.

CHARLES STURT.

*Dorant's Hotel, Albemarle Street.*

*To the Rt. Hon. Lady Mary Anne Sturt,  
No. 18, Lower Seymour Street, Portman Square.*

THE END.

S. GOSNELL, Printer,  
Little Queen Street, Holborn.



(York Street, St. James's Square,  
30th June 1801.

J. RIDGWAY

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