

*The Diary of Sharon Turner*  
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Sharon Turner (b. 1768, d. 1847), diary 1794-95

21 July 1794 – Monday

C – Went off yesterday to Berwick. He is going to indulge another theatrical whim, as an amateur of the stage, of acting in the Northern theatres where he will be unknown, under an assumed name, the characters he is fond of. He has nothing to do, likes moving about and thinks it will do him good.

In the evening before we had a conversation about *ma bien aimée*. He advised me to make my Declaration now lest I should be anticipated as some other were admiring her and would apply. I told him I was only kept back by insufficient means as yet for a family establishment and that I was going into the Country for 2 or 3 weeks immediately – he recommended me to write to her from thence at once and quietly wait afterwards for better times. I mentioned that as to her a personal avowal of my sentiments would be preferable to my own feelings, but my great difficulty was about her Father. He had brought her up and educated her from the time she was 5 years old and I was afraid would not part with her when it came to the real point. He let me pay attentions to her and I believed preferred me to any other. But though habitually courteous he was very stern, decided and unchangeable in any resolution he might form – and if he refused me his consent now it would cut off all intercourse between us and then I should be miserable and I thought him at present from some circumstances that had occurred very irritable and likely to be unfavourable to such a proposition.

C – who had known him longer than myself admitted this and I settled that on my return from Hampshire I would watch for an opportunity to break it to him. C – would then be back again and in case of any adverse turn might mediate between us. He thought this the safest course. He told me, that a lady, her oldest friend who had known her from her childhood had remarked to him that she was the finest girl she had ever seen, yet was the only person who never seemed to know that she was so. She (the Lady [Mrs. Matthews]) had known no one so totally without affectation or pretence or personal vanity. C – reminded me that others beside myself felt her value and that I had better take care but certainly 2 or 3 weeks, on the terms I was with her could not make any difference. After these words we shook hands. He flying off with glee to the Packet that was to sail that night and carry him towards his theatrical tour for which as a favourite pastime he was very eager and I turning to meditate on what he had said.

His observations and cautions were all just and friendly. Yet I could not perceive that I had acted otherwise than I ought under the circumstances to have done. I could not in common honour have made any express communications of my feelings to her without her father's privity. He had relied on me that I would take no advantage of the unusual fact of permitting me to accompany her in the walks which he saw benefitted her health and gave her the exercise and natural enjoyment which he wished her to have and which from his

confidence that I would not deceive him, he had allowed to become regular things. What state of feeling might ensue between us from this fraternal intimacy was a point he had to consider, but that all was above-board palpably within his clear foresight or anticipation. He chose with his eyes open to incur this rique. But that I should without his knowledge and out of his sight make use of the opportunity to engage her affections by a declaration of my own and to draw her to a secret engagement unsanctioned by him was what he expected I should abstain from. He would have deemed it treachery to himself and hence I felt that my direct communication on this vital point must be first made to him with his knowledge simultaneously to both.

This afternoon I called upon her and finding a friend with her desirous of a walk, I offered to attend them. It proved one of our most delightful. Her brother had talked at Mr. C-'s about our being very merry in our Water party. C- had begged him not to joke upon it before her father lest he should mistake it and forbid any more. The moment she heard this, she said we true and correct spirit, 'I beg my Father may know everything about it, for if I was so little able to take care of myself as to be too cheerful, I shall be much obliged to him to keep me at home'. It was the right feeling and came warm from the heart. I assured her that no lady could have acted with more guarded propriety than she did – and that I was much struck with her self-command.

We all rested in the shade of some trees on Primrose Hill and returned over the fields by Chalk Farm. I told her how greatly I felt indebted to Legumio for having occasioned to me the happiness I was enjoying. As the stars began to appear she asked me some questions about them and I gave her as she desired a sketch of the planetary system. She apprehended it with great quickness and made several pertinent remarks that tasked all my knowledge to answer.

When I mentioned Holcroft's visits, she said they must be formidable things. He did not mean to be disagreeable but he often was so, though he was very civil to her she could not avoid being in some awe of him. She knew his daughters were. When he meant to be most gracious it seemed awkward and unnatural to him to be so. Even Godwin, his chief associate, sometimes was afraid of him. At times when she was visiting his daughters, she had seen the two friends sit for a quarter of an hour together with their arms folded looking first at the floor, then at each other without speaking a word as if afraid to begin their arguing battle. When it took place both were sturdy – for both had their peculiar opinions; but Godwin was so cool and wary as to have great advantage.

22<sup>nd</sup> July 1794

The Gazette contains the account of our acquisition of Corsica which Boswell and his hero Paoli have made interesting to me.

Sir Gilbert Elliot our Commissioner has arranged this with General Paoli, M. Pozzo di Borgo and the assembled deputies of the island. He thus announces it in his despatch to the Cabinet from Caloi 21 June 1794 –

'I have the honour to acquaint you that the Union of Corsica to the Crown of Great Britain is finally and formally concluded. His majesty has acquired a Crown. Those who bestow it have acquired Liberty.'

The new Monarchical Constitution they have adopted is inserted at length after his letter.

24<sup>th</sup> July 15

New disasters from which large consequences are likely to follow have occurred on the Continent. The French have in severe battles of 2 days continuance entirely defeated the

Prussian Army under General Mollendorf on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> inst. and are driving the Austrians over the Rhine at Manheim.

They seem to have such an abundance of men as by attack and by reckless sacrifice of them to overpower any army that withstands them.

Lord Moira has landed with a new force in Flanders and is marching to join and rescue the Duke of York and our troops that are in danger of being cut off.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> July Robespierre made new denunciations at the Jacobin Club at Paris against those who were opposing the merciless Revolutionary Tribunal. So that this has his full support. He exclaimed – ‘Attack the National Justice in the Revolutionary Tribunal and you throw open the gates to Faction. Aristocracy will then carry all before it. They have had the audacity to assert in the Convention, that the Revolutionary Tribunal has been organized for the express purpose of murdering the Members of the Convention. Unfortunately this assertion has gained too much credit.’

So that he is supporting the wish and hope of repressing or stopping their cruelties and is planning and urging new executions to repress all better feelings. Can these things last?

27 July

The executions under the Sentence of this dreadful Tribunal in the first week after this speech as I find them stated in the Morning Chronicle, were

Paris July 13

On 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> insts. ....	72 Persons
On 6 <sup>th</sup> .....	30 Persons
On 7 <sup>th</sup> .....	78 Persons
On 9 <sup>th</sup> .....	71 Persons
On 10 <sup>th</sup> .....	44 Persons

Of these 23 on the 6<sup>th</sup> were Magistrates of the Ancient Parliament of Toulouse – one was 85 – another 80. On the 9<sup>th</sup> most were nobles. Ten were women and girls under 20 and two youths of 17 and 14. On the 6<sup>th</sup> there were in the Prisons of Paris 7502 to be disposed of in the same way. Surely this horrible – But in Poland the Prussians and Russians are succeeding against Kosciusko. They have driven him close to Warsaw and were preparing to attack him on the 15<sup>th</sup> instead. He had entrenched his whole force under its walls. This unjust oppressing of the Poles makes the chastisement deserved which the oppressors are suffering from the French elsewhere.

Kosciusko’s forces are about 50,000 men and will fight their patriot battle desperately, but I fear must be overwhelmed.

27 July 1794

I have resumed my violin and practice two hours every day. It is a pity that it demands so much time, for it is more than I can give to it consistently with my other improvements.

Mr. W – has just taken his tea with me. We have had an agreeable conversation on a great variety of topics, as he darted in his vivacious manner from one subject to another. I made the opportunity to lead the talk to the great point I wished to put to him. Happiness being mentioned I said. I now proposed to myself 5 main sources of it – Reading, Thinking – a few chosen friends – but with these, Marriage and hereafter the education of my children. He commended and strongly recommended the three first and urged me to cultivate them – but would say nothing on the next subject and turned purposefully from it, not gave me any

opening or encouragement to make an overture as to his daughter. When I tried to lead to this, he rose to take his leave and prevented my pursuing it.

As I am going to Lymington and he has asked me to write to him, I will make this subject a part of our correspondence and endeavor to bring on the decision so essential to my happiness before I leave that place.

I will not sag with doubt nor shake with fear. But why may I not before I go make a little Lady's party again at my chambers and invite some of her friends who will bring her with them without any offence to her delicacy. Her Father has not objected to this before. It shall be done and then before I leave Lymington I hope the conclusion will have come prosperously on.

28 July

I continue my violin, I was about to give it up from its abstraction of my time. But playing last week a part of the Messiah it so interested me, that I went on till I tired myself. This however made me perform it easier next day and then I continued it till both my fingers and my neck were sore. Nut I am so far rewarded for my labour, that I can play off easy airs and melodies at sight in nearly true time.

31 July

I have played through every air in Judas Maccabeus in the last 2 days with great enjoyment. But here two pleasures are in conflict. This gratification – and that from my books. If I take the one – I lose, for the time, the other and I have so much knowledge yet to acquire that I grudge every hour taken from it. But I will persevere a little longer – for I love the music of sound and when as in Handel it is connected with feeling, it awakes that feeling in me while I bring out from the notes the melody which expresses it.

1 August 1794

My Party has made and took place last night. She came with her elder friends. We were all very happy; I, supremely so. She was as usual all I could wish and approve. She has taken my fine old Cat and chamber companion home with her to be under her care while I am absent, the he may not suffer from the neglect of the Laundress. I saw her home and left her with regret but hope in 3 or 4 weeks to be in a position of being still more happy. Such was the state of things on this interesting evening. Neither of us suspected the changes – the sufferings, that were to follow. But the interval of my excursion was taken advantage of by those who were lying in wait to disunite us for the promotion of their private objects. Their contrivances and machinations and willful misleading both her and her Father and through him, myself and put us at variance with each other to the near destruction of the peace and happiness of both. These I will not detail but only mention the distressing results.

On the morning after our party I set off for Southampton and thence in the Mail to Lymington, where I established myself in comfortable lodgings dining every day at the family table d'hote at the Angel where I met some intelligent and agreeable persons. To refresh myself and recruit my strength I bathed occasionally in the salt baths there and I strolled in the corn fields and passed my time very pleasantly with my books and music and exercises in composition or reflections but with no particular work in view and found out several pleasant rural walks.

At the end of the first fortnight I wrote a familiar letter to Mr. W – on the place and the topics of the day – as I had promised and added a particular postscript for him to mention to his daughter – meaning it to be a preliminary intimation to him of what I desired to express in a formal letter to him; I put this in the Post and the next morning at my breakfast sat down to write to both her and him. To her avowing my deep attachment – to him stating what I had

done and soliciting his approbation and consent, leaving the proper time of Union for a subsequent arrangement.

While I was thus occupied the post brought me a letter from him which had crossed mine to him – and which I read with an overwhelming with a most unnerving consternation.

If the Postscript of my letter to him had been communicated to her it would have prevented all the disturbance and misunderstanding which took place. She hearing that a letter had come from me asked him what I said and he instead of showing it to her or stating what I had written, unfortunately answered – that the letter contained nothing that concerned her.

His letter which crossed mine and reached me about the same time as mine would arrive at his house was dated ‘Titchfield Street August 13 1794’ and was received by me on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

‘Dear Sir,

I did not imagine I should have had any particulars of a domestic nature to communicate to you in so short an interval. It has however happened otherwise.

It has been hinted to me several times that Mr. S – had made overtures to my daughter of a serious nature, to which I paid little attention. He has not fully explained his intentions and solicits my permission for an immediate marriage.

You, my good friend! Know my sentiments pretty fully upon most matters and consequently you will not be surprised of my having expressed my disapprobation, not indeed abruptly, but that I considered it as a matter of considerable importance and as such required time for deliberation. This has not proved satisfactory though I have required but 6 or 8 weeks and I am strongly urged to an immediate compliance.

This is fruitless as I seldom take any resolution without a previous consideration of the consequences; and having determined am not easily dissuaded.

I am not, however, pleased with the business. It convinces me at heart of my daughter’s silly conduct. I could not have supposed her serious in such a choice of so lasting a nature as this must be to her – and where so little appearances of happiness are visible.

The only reason I can assign for her conduct is that my prospects and consequently hers, being of an unpromising kind, she wishes for some kind of an establishment.

Instinct they say teaches rats to quit a falling house and James daughters probably were determined by similar motives. I can hardly murmur at being treated like a monarch.

In short though, I dislike the business and think it will prove delusive to them both, I say but little, unwilling to have any additional vexation from an authoritative interference at a time, when it is not in my power to assure her a subsistence for 12 months – she will therefore act as she thinks best.

I am impatient for your return and although I like fine weather, was in hope it was gone, so it might have hastened that event. It is now summer weather again, so I do not yet expect you.

Let me know how you do and what C - is about. Favour me with a line and as I impatiently expect your return do not unnecessarily postpone it. I might have indeed said WE, as all here wish to see you equally with myself. Therefore please consider that as an additional reason. Compliment and respects by the score, so receive them sans detail.

Remaining dear sir

Your obliged friend

W.W -

I am to tell you Charles is well.

It was on the 14<sup>th</sup> August 1794 that I received this letter. It gave me a shock which I cannot describe. I was feasting myself upon the recollections of my past enjoyments and on the symptoms I thought I had seen of her growing attachment to myself and for me not to learn on a sudden that she was urged to marry another and that she was against her father's wishes going to do so of her own accord – I was startled into an agitation that almost overwhelmed me. My first impulse was to go to London and to learn from herself if she had so decided and I went to the Coach Office for that purpose but found that none would move in that line until the morrow. I therefore returned to my rooms to think again of the distressing subject.

If I had gone as I thus intended, a few words would have dispersed all the gathering clouds and prevented the mutual sufferings which followed from my continued absence.

If I had even written to her inclosing her Father's letter or giving her the substance of it and asked her if she had accepted or was favouring Mr S-'s proposal or meant to acquiesce in it I am sure now she would have given me a frank answer that her father had misconceived and misrepresented her intention. That would have satisfied me as to her and then I would have avowed to her my attachment and would have solicited her permission to mention it to her father and her acceptance of my hand. All would then have gone on straight forward to a happy termination.

But unfortunately though both these steps occurred to me I did not take either of them. Resentment at such an unlooked for possibility of her vacillation overcame for the moment my affection. I read the letter again, till the phrases made me feel that their import was that she had decided. I construed it to mean, that though her father had expressed to her his disapprobation of it and had required time for deliberation this had not proved satisfactory to her as well as to Mr. S – and that when he said, though I have required but 6 or 8 weeks, I am strongly urged to an immediate compliance, I thought that this meant that he had been urged by her as well as by her lover – especially when I read also that he was convinced of her silly conduct and that he could not have supposed her serious in a choice of so lasting a nature. All these words seemed to me to amount to the fact that she had seriously chosen Mr. S – and had accepted his offers against her Father's wishes.

Under this view both my affection and my pride took alarm. There could be no regard for me if she had chosen Mr. S – and for me in that case to be a competitor for her favor with him of whom she had repeatedly expressed a determined aversion and contempt would be a degradation to myself and make a change of mind back to me again no longer desirable nor productive of happiness to me. I therefore resolved before I made any further overtures myself to inquire of her father what the state of her mind really was as to Mr. S – and whether she was attached to him and had decided to unite herself with him. After much self conflict as this was a point on which I felt I must for my own sake have satisfactory information – I wrote him this answer on the same day I received his letter.

14<sup>th</sup> August 94'

My dear Watts,

I amused an hour of leisure yesterday by writing to you. I suppose you received my letter about the same time that I was favored with yours this morning.

I am much obliged to you for your communication. It is to me an additional proof of your friendship and I feel it in all its importance. I could indeed have wished that on some delicate, but to me very momentous particulars, it had been a little more explicit for my ignorance of them embarrasses me very much in returning you my opinion on the subject.

I could not but observe that Mr. S – appeared to have an attachment to your daughter – but I have fluctuated much in my opinion of her sentiments with respect to him. I have at times seen what I could not but think indications of a decided partiality in her behavior to him

– but then, her occasional expressions of dislike to him have made me again uncertain how to reconcile the seeming contradiction.

Your letter has much renewed my doubts on this point or rather, your expression that you could not have supposed her serious in a choice of so lasting a nature as this must be to her and where so little appearance of happiness are visible, seem to me to intimate that she has chosen for herself and that her choice is for the offered establishment.

It seems likewise to me that Mr. S – would not have been so pressing to you, if he had not been sanctioned by her, or if he had not, from some reason, been sure of her acquiescence and that if his proposals had been unpleasant to her, she would have dictated to you an immediate refusal, for I own I shall find it difficult to believe that mere motives of present convenience could have obtained her compliance to a step which concerns the happiness of her whole life.

My doubts on this import point throw me into a very great embarrassment and perplexity which prevent me from knowing how to settle my opinion, or to return you that answer, which in the present circumstances you have a right to expect – and which I am anxious to give.

It would be impertinent in me to question her on this point. But I hope I may use the privilege of a sincere friendship to appeal to you for your candid and impartial sentiments upon it. For I confess myself to be deeply interested in the communication with which you have favored me. I will therefore request that frank information which I believe no one will ever ask of you in vain, what you have observed of her state of mind with respect to Mr. S – If she favors his proposal from partiality, or if she has been induced to listen to it from motives of convenience – in a word, how she has received it.

I am sensible that I am here asking a very delicate question, which would be more likely to offend than to please common minds – but my apology to you and to her for it must be your own words – ‘I seldom take any resolution without a previous consideration of its consequences.’

My object in common with others is that of happiness, and I find it to be so rare in the world, that I think whoever mean to attain it, cannot look too far, not too thoughtfully forward.

With the sincerest friendship to you and your family I will after again requesting the favor – which I have already ventured to ask, subscribe myself your obliged friend.

Sh. T’

Lynn. 14 Aug. -94

It was a great pity I did not write to her instead of to her father. But the fear of marrying a lady in love with another and without a preferring attachment to myself and the apprehension also lest her pleasing vision had so blinded me as to be totally mistaken in her real character; withheld me from committing myself to her until I knew what her sentiments and conduct were on this proposal. I thought I could trust her Father above all persons on this subject – both as to her Father and from his avowed kindness and regard to me. But as it turned out under the delusion practiced on him, I could not have referred to a more misleading source for this information I desired.

My agitations after sending this letter were extreme. I found I could do nothing. My peace of mind was gone, only agitating doubts and uncertainties came upon me. I could not touch my violin – I could not read - I could think of nothing but this unexpected letter. Thus passed the day and I went exhausted to bed. There I could not sleep. It was 4 in the morning before my eyes closed and but for a brief interval. I rose and walked out to recruit myself

with the freshness of the morning. I took a book but could not open it. The absorbing subject alone engrossed my thoughts. I could take but little breakfast. Yet all my reasonings ended only in this – ‘Why need I rear – it is impossibility that any mind could change so totally in ten days. She must have rejected him. I shall certainly hear tomorrow that this has been her decision and then the cloud will vanish.’

This seemed certain, yet still I could not be tranquil. I passed the day in walking languidly and feverishly about the fields and towards the sea – but I had not strength to reach it. In the evening my uneasiness increased. The hours to the next days post seemed to crawl on most heavily. I sought rest in vain – sleep again forsook me. I was realizing in myself what I had read of the bodily affection of some Arabian lovers which I had thought extravagant. I bathed the next morning to cool my burning frame – but I was too weak to swim and could scarcely walk home, nor could I touch my breakfast.

At last the post came in to the town. The delivery man passed my door but no letter for me. My anxieties redoubled – what could have taken place. This silence was inexplicable. I was still more perplexed and disquieted. I thought the office must have made some mistake and I pressingly inquired there. But they had no more letters – what now should I do. What could I do but wait the next days post. I must now learn how things are before I can stir.

The day was another day of fever and misery to me. I regretted bitterly that I had not gone up at once and ascertained for myself how things really were. That misjudgment had brought these sufferings on me – at night, no sleep again. I left my bed at daylight to move languidly up and down my room – and then out of doors. I sipped a little breakfast scarce tasting it, till at last the long expected letter came – but – when I opened it such a letter! In the very first words destroying all my hopes – even every prospect of what I wished. I threw it from me as an incredulity – till I became able to read it more calmly. It began with stating that the subject appeared to be completely settled between the parties – I was thunderstruck – and paused again – the next sentence amazed me still more – ‘My daughter’s motives, I am certain, are interest. She is dazzled with the magnificent offers he has made her – she is deluded. I have told them they are acting in the most impudent manner and that I can see very little hopes of their being happy.’

Except that this was from himself – his serious answer to my direct questions – from her own father to me, it was so contrary to all I had seen and known of her that I could not have believed it. I read it again and again to be sure that the words were those and that it was his handwriting. They were overwhelming. From any other person I should have fancied some mistake or misstatement had been possible. I regarded him as a second father to me and had a confidence in his veracity and uprightness which no other human being nor even she had created within me. It never struck me that by my questions I had put a card into his hands which enabled him to arrest my purpose and to keep his daughter to himself. Yet I had never found him act on such motives – nor did I reflect that others might for their purposes had told him falsehoods of her – or to her of me or made mischievous contrivances to deceive him that he might send me such a letter as to put an end to my pursuit. The letter was as follows.

Titchfield Street  
August 16 – 94

My good Friend,

I was prevented from paying attention to your favour of yesterday by a bad headache which I am this morning wholly free from as usual.

The subject of your letter is more the topic of conversation that heretofore and appears to me (disclaiming authority) not to be completely settled between the parties. I shall

not interfere, as I am determined not to encounter the reproaches which I expect, if I occasion their disunion.

You know my sentiments of S-. It has been chiefly to the entreaties of a lady in this house that I have permitted his visits from the supposition that I had frequently expressed myself with such impropriety in his presence as might put me in his power in some measure, as there is little doubt of his being totally opposite in his principles to myself.

My daughters motives I am certain are interest. You may say everything is interest that we seek – but I apply it to its simple meaning property.

She is dazzled with the magnificent offer he has, I hear, made her of various articles of dress and other female nick-nackery, many of which were to have been sent here – but I have put an absolute negative upon a single shillings worth being received.

We are at best but children of a larger growth and I am not much surprised at the effect these baubles have upon a young mind especially in her situation, for which great allowance is to be made. We have lived for 12 months past upon a very narrow system, such as the most rigid frugality cannot surpass and I see no prospect of its mending. So that it is not only ‘mere motives of present convenience’ as you state, but of future which have influenced her in this business, at least that is my decided opinion.

With respect to your observation of its concerning the ‘happiness of her whole life’, we must consider how few look one year before them in life, especially blinded by impetuous passions.

Upon the whole matter I am clearly of opinion that my present situation, or hers in consequence of mine, is the real cause of this Union, as she would have rejected the idea of such a connection with a thousand pounds in her hand – but ‘scared at the picture of page poverty’ as Pope expresses it and besieged on the other hand by a (supposed at least) superfluity of glittering and fascinating baubles, she has concluded with Shakespeare’s Apothecary ‘My Poverty &c.

I have mentioned to you that I have declined interfering and my reasons. I have however gone so far as to tell them in the very few conversations on the subject that I am firmly persuaded they are acting in the most impudent manner and that I can see very little hopes of their being happy. S – stares at me and wonders how I can suppose such an absurdity. I believe he thinks I am either, like Quid nunc, a little deranged with political discussions, and of course pays but trifling regard to my observations.

I am glad to find you are in good health and spirits and sincerely wish you a continuance to the evening of life as you term it – but here again my croaking predictions interrupt your golden dreams. From the agitated state of Europe, I see nothing but approaching convulsions without the least probability of a speedy termination. The present generation will not see the end of the furious contests and struggles for power for they seem little else, which are in training all over the world.

Indeed the present race of men are wholly unfit for and unworthy of liberty; narrow-minded, prejudiced, and void of every idea of benevolence in private life, how can one expect such an heterogenous [sic] mass to act in concert for the public good; words they do not know the meaning of. I allude chiefly to the recent events in France. We may expect a succession of struggles in which the successful usurpers will be the heroes of the day. Far, very far from us is the state we so much desire. Hope is the great imposter in life; for tho we are hourly convinced of his cheats, we still place a foolish reliance on him.

Believe me to be dear Sir  
Your W- W-

I am enjoined to present respect which I had like to have forgotten – am sorry you have not heard of C-

This letter cut off all hope and prospect as to myself.

It gave me no choice – no alternative – no opening for making any effort, it left no room for doubt. I tell me that the matter appeared to him to be completely settled between the parties, - and that he should have to encounter reproaches if he should occasion their disunion and that she had concluded upon it – and had been dazzled by the gentleman's magnificent offers and persisted in it tho he had told them and of course her – that he saw very little hopes of their being happy – and that her motives he was certain were interest, meaning property, - and that she would have rejected the idea of such a connection if she had nay fortune. All of this was so decisive that the matter seemed to me beyond my power of alteration. And yet such a total change of things have occurred in a fortnight – within 2 weeks after I had parted from her with a kind of interchange of mutual feeling so astonished me that I felt I must have entirely mistaken her character and not less misinterpreted her sentiments.

To have believed her still to be what I had thought her and thus to lose her would have been a misery that would have destroyed my health and poisoned the rest of my life. But such a portrait given to me by her father the man whom I most esteemed of all that I knew satisfied me that I must have misconceived her altogether and that she was only a pretty girl valuing trinkets and fine dresses and taking the first offer which presented these to her.

Such a woman could not make me happy. I therefore rejoiced that I had discovered my errors of judgment in time not to suffer more from it and I resolved to repress and extinguish all feelings which had attached me to her.

I had been very happy before I knew her – why could I not be so again, after this conviction of her unfitness to make my matured life that scene of happiness which I had projected. It was but the forgetfulness of what had occurred between her and me in the last 8 months and if I could obliterate this or cease to recall it to my mind – I should be again as I had been and should again seek my comfort and pleasures and obtain them from my studies, my compositions – my interest in the public events of the day and in those social gratifications from a few selected and intelligent friends which were always ready for my enjoyment. These occupations with my professional business could make me as happy as I could expect to be.

And yet her father's account of her conduct towards Mr S – and of her immediate acceptance of is proposal was so contrary to every sentiments that she had expressed to me and to all that I had observed in her, that the sudden transformation into this new sort of character was a wonder and myself which I could not fathom. No less evidence than her father's positive statements to me could have made me believe it. From any one else, I should have thought it a most slanderous calumny.

But the affair being so according to his account, I had but one conclusion to come to, which was to root her out of my mind for ever. The more I reflected on his letters, the more strongly I became convinced that I had deluded myself, and that we were quite unsuited to each other. My tranquility of mind increased with this conviction and I had no doubt of being able to resume my previous serenity.

It only remained to consider whether I should break off all further acquaintance with him, in order to avoid seeing her. At first I was inclined to this. But my attachment to him was so strong, that I thought if it were possible, I should not deprive myself of his society. In the rapidity with which the matter was proceeding, she would be married by the time I reached London if I delayed my return a little, or at least soon afterwards. In the mean time she would be occupied with her preparations I could easily avoid speaking to her, or looking at her in case she should be there when I called – and therefore under the influence of my

own reasons for disliking and disesteeming her – and from my usual firmness of purpose when once excited on rational grounds – I thought I could prevent myself from being disturbed if I should again be accidentally in her presence. Hence I resolved not to renounce her father's acquaintance and to be as distant to her, as if I had never known her.

Having formed these determinations – I wrote to her father in reply to his communications stating how much it had surprised and agitated me – avowing the attachment I had felt to her – but that since she had of her own accord and against his wishes chosen another and a person he disapproved of I must have mistaken her and should now suppress entirely the regard I had been indulging – but would hope not to be obliged to discontinue his society. I sent this by the post – resumed my Country Walks, and my books and even my violin. But as one motive for this, the pleasure and hope of accompanying her, was not ended, I began to question the advantage of continuing to practice on it. It took up a portion of my time very pleasantly, but this was so much deduction from my studies and improvement. It also tended to remind me of her and this effect caused me to lay it aside.

Again my mind fluctuated into a doubt whether all these things were really as her father had represented but my estimate of his moral integrity was so high that no suspicion of any wrong from him was possible to me.

Incomprehensible as it was, it came upon me as a melancholy certainty from the most trustworthy witness.

Here was not only a complete acceptance of another – but in persisting opposition to her father's will, against his warning and judgment and from the most unworthy motives.

Such truths communicated to me – made me say to myself that I had been deluding myself with a phantom of my own creation. I had mistaken pleasing manners for kinder feelings. I must have been blinded in my judgment by my own sensibilities and fancied that to be mind and thought which was only pretty features and a pleasing voice. Hence what I had admired and loved and wished to be united with, did not really exist.

These considerations operated like a resorting cordial to me – for I have lost nothing, I said to myself. The reality I have been pursuing does not exist. I have been therefore cheating myself and am happily disabused before it is too late. Is not this a good instead of an evil? It makes a blank in my life, but that is better than to be wedded to a perpetual disappointment. I have no right to be angry with her for my own mistake. She has chosen what suited her better than I should have done, she being what she has turned out to be. It is clear that we are neither of us adapted to the other.

When I put this letter in the post I felt as if part of myself had been wrenched away – but now considering it as something not myself, but of a different kind, the wound became less painful. As my mind settled in its new determination it became calmer. The fever that was shaking me subsided, my pulse which had risen to 100 degrees (beats) became lower. My headache was less severe and when night came she seemed so transformed from all that I had admired to what I most disliked, that I began even to rejoice at my escape. Yet I could not subdue all my agitation – but at last I got a little sleep after 2 night total absence of it and I awoke more comfortable and more resigned to the deprivation of a treasure I had so valued.

Sweet gentle creature! How greatly I injured you in these unjust imputations. How greatly I was myself deceived! But I had no notion of what had been really taking place.

On the same day on which Mr. W – received my letter, he wrote to me the following answer –

My good Friend!

Your letter of this day has filled me with surprise and I will add given me much uneasiness. I am concerned to hear your health and speech are injured, but particularly so as it seems to be the effect of the circumstances I have communicated to you, which I had not

the least idea would have occasioned any other emotion in your mind, than those of an ordinary nature.

You will conclude that I must have possessed but little discernment to have so totally overlooked, in a matter of so much importance, the profusion of civilities I have ever received from you. Indeed my faculties are benumbed by the weight which I have long borne – and I own I have considered your kindness as the result only of your philanthropic disposition. I ought to stand excused therefore in some degree for my blindness.

For my daughter, I do not know what to say. She ought to have considered your kindness and marked attentions you have paid her as something more than compliments perhaps; but this I only guess as she never mentioned anything in particular to me, but at all times seemed to consider you, in the same light with myself, as a young man of an excellent disposition.

When your first letter came I was eagerly solicited to know how you were in health – but I have not communicated any particulars of the latter ones. Indeed the gloom throughout the house visible. I have been so reserved since the business of S -, that I hardly speak to my daughter, but by the monosyllables Yes and No. Mrs M – says the house has more the appearance of an approaching funeral, than a wedding. I own I am much hurt tho I say but little, as I must nearly renounce the connection, should the marriage take place, that I have no idea of so soon dissolving, for assuredly I shall never pay any visits, where he is the principal party in the house.

I must assure you however my dear Sir, that I think great allowance is to be made for a girl of my daughter's age, situation considered. And I have the greatest reason to conclude that she had not the smallest reason to expect the honor you intend her. If she had, the present business would, I think, never have taken place.

For myself there is not a circumstance could have given me equal pleasure, but as I before observed, I had not the least idea of the kind – for altho I think you possess the most generous disposition, yet I think I know you possess equal prudence and I should not have made you a suitable return to your friendship by encouraging any ideas of such a union, even if I had perceived my daughter so disposed, unless I had a certainty of my property being restored. In that case I should with the most heartfelt satisfaction have given ever assistance in my power to have mature it.

You say you hope still to possess my friendship. I assume you, my dear friend I shall consider myself as singularly unfortunate if I should ever be deprived of the esteem and friendship of a man of your merit and benevolence. And it is with great concern I find you so much agitated. I would however wish you to remain persuaded that there is not a single circumstance in which it is or ever may be in my power to add to your happiness which I would not gladly embrace.

Your obliged and unalterable friend

W- W-

Titchfield Street

Monday – in haste – the postman rings –

Mr S – was a young man about my own age and size, but stouter and darker – good natured and cheerful in his way – rather vociferous, yet entertaining on what he knew and not unwilling to oblige. Tho we were seeking the same object, we were never uncivil to each other nor had any personal difference. He was thought shallow, and so he was to all books and cultivated knowledge – but he was a shrewd and active man of the world and sufficiently acute, ready and sensible in all its usual transactions. His father was understood to have left him a good property and a thriving business. Hence in pecuniary matters he had the advantage greatly over me. In politics he professed to be a violent admirer and partizan of the

French Revolution and especially of the Mountain and Jacobin party. His predilections or secret motives led him to be often at Paris in his flying visits and when there, always in the Tribune of the Convention where he became acquainted with those prominent leaders who were striking terror thro all Europe. He visited their clubs and became much acquainted with their plans and politics. As he was often passing backwards and forwards between the 2 countries he was full of amusing anecdotes of what he had seen and heard at Paris – and sometimes gave us among these some important facts which on other sources supplied. This made his conversation at times very interesting to me.

He was frequently at Mr. W-'s tea table and I found him there long before I had any suspicion that he was thinking of the lady. She was always civil to him, and at times more so than I was quite easy at (but her manner was very obliging to every one and to me only had she been more so,) but so indifferent and distant that I had never apprehended any danger from his attentions.

At the time the Crown and Anchor Association against republicans and levelers had become fully established and was thought to be very busy and inquisitorial. It had been designed by Mr. Reeves under the first Earl of Liverpool's sanction or suggestion. It was formed in November 1792 and in the next month issued addresses to the Public, calling upon all 'good citizens to detect and bring to justice such persons who appear to plot and continue against the peace and good order of this happy Country.' He exhorted all Masters of Families, Wine Taverns and Coffee houses to discontinue and discourage all disloyal and seditious newspapers. They recommended associations to be formed everywhere on the same principles and with these their committee maintained a constant communication. In 1793 and 1794 they had become an important political organ – and in very zealous but private and concerted operation.

They professed in their circulated resolutions to be a Society for suppressing seditious publications; for supporting due execution of the laws and for explaining those topics of public discussions which had been so perverted by evil designing man. But they added what alarmed all who, without thinking of any conspiracy or confederacy, were conversing with the usual freedom of Englishmen on the exciting events of the day. 'This Society will receive with great thanks all communications that shall be made to it for the above purposes'. and they 'recommended all friends to the established law to form themselves in their different neighbourhoods into similar Societies.'

I will not say that such a Society was useless or ineffective but it was of a dangerous and abnoxious [sic] character and was convertible into an instrument of tyranny and of much private malignity and mischief.

It was considered to be a process for making one part of Society, and organized body of spies upon the other and for opening so many avenues for secret information and charges in imitation of the Venetian Lion head from every one who chose to give anonymous or other accounts of the private feelings, conversations and connections of their neighbours – friends and acquaintances.

It was believed that this association received the information they thus invited, from all quarters without being very scrupulous as to the source and that servants, visitors and others were encouraged to disclose the private conversation and conduct of families and individuals who had strong feelings on public liberty and on the French Revolution – or who did not approve of the measures adopted by our Government.

This was most probably a calumny – but it was fully credited in some of the circles I visited and by my dear Lady and her family. It was supposed and circulated that prosecutions were preparing against many who in their private homes freely expressed their political opinions. This idea was never verified by any fact of the kind, but it was asserted and dreaded. The Indictment and verdict and sentence against John Frost for what he had said at

the Percy Coffee house – merely words – nothing done – confirmed these suspicions and spread much alarm.

No one was more credulous of these aggravating reports than Mr. W – tho no one could be more innocent or more incapable of Treasonable projects of seditious movements than he was. He would not have stirred a yard from his fireside to give them the least favor or assistance. But he loved to sit in his chair and criticize whatever was going forward. He was a Diogenes in his talk – but nothing like him in his manners. He had a keen sense of what was wrong and expressed vivaciously what he felt and saw it wherever it existed. But this was confined to no party, government profession or Country. He exposed what he thought erroneous in the measures of the French Convention as earnestly as in those of our own Parliament and Ministry. He was a skirmishing Utopian waging war with defects and evils whenever he perceived them, but he kept clear from all Societies and public meetings or places of general resort and only indulged his acute fluency and well meaning fault finding, seldom without some good grounds among his particular friends in his own hospitable parlous.

But under the influence of these rumoured inquisitorial proceedings, and from that impression of our own importance which we all partake of, Mr. W – thought he was a marked man. Mr. S – ‘s account which was true that any man at Paris might be arrested on suspicion and in the middle of the night seized and taken to prison from which there would be no exit but to the Guillotine and that the only charge was ‘d’etre suspect’ – completed his apprehension. He thought the same thing in a few weeks would be done here from the increase of public discontent requiring securer measures to repress its outbreak. By degrees he conceived the idea that Mr. S – was a spy or organ of Government and watched his words and actions in order to denounce him to the association or to some other channel of the administration and if he should offend him, would certainly do so. He was therefore afraid to forbid him the house or on his proposal to his daughter to reject it as he wished.

I do not know whether his suspicions had any real foundation, but there was something mysterious in Mr. S – ‘s going backward and forward to Paris so easily and so confidently when all intercourse was forbidden and when the Revolutionary Government was in its most fierce and jealous operation there. His extravagant Jacobin talk was also unusual. Danton was his idol, yet when Robespierre destroyed him, he did not less praise Robespierre. From his facility of moment if he was for were an agent of one Government he must have been so of the other, for he always seemed certain that neither would molest him. He went with confidence and came back with triumph, yet his trading concerning could not have led him there. I could not make him out, but as I had then no fear of him as to the Lady and got much information about the chief actors at Paris and the events there from his conversation, I was never averse to meet him.

But others were also practicing on Mr. W – ‘s mind – I had never walked out with Miss W – alone. One or other of her chief friends always accompanied her and one most usually. As I felt the value and had the benefit of her doing so, I paid her the attentions I thought right.

These caused some mistaking ideas of projects to arise in her mind or her Mothers and it began to be imagined that if I could be separated from Miss W – my notice would then be drawn to her. On this the schemes and contrivances were founded as soon as I went to Lymington and were put into operations concurrently with Mr. S – ‘s proposal.

Of all these things I was then wholly ignorant and it was meant that I should be kept so, but their machinations were put into full action on the minds of Mr W – and his daughter. His apprehensions were worked on that his daughter might be forced to take Mr. S – for his safety and she was led to believe that I had deserted her and that she could only save her Father from a Prison by accepting the offer. This deterred her from rejecting him at once as

she had wished. She declined it with a mildness which made him more peremptory with her Father and more pressing to her. False statements were taken to her Father before he wrote his account to me. His own fears and motives made him even sacrifice his own veracity in order to turn off and put an end to my pursuit.

At that moment I had not the least notion of these delusions, plots and underplots. I relied upon him with the most absolute confidence and thus renounced from the deception the dearest hope I had ever formed.

[Notes on Revolutionary activities:]

14<sup>th</sup> August

Accounts from the British Army mention that reports had arrived there, that Robespierre had been arrested by the Convention and had shot himself on 27<sup>th</sup> July.

No attack had been made on Koscuisko on 25<sup>th</sup>.

15<sup>th</sup> August

The report of Robespierre's downfall continues but with variations. It is not said that he was executed with St. Just on the 1<sup>st</sup> instead.

16<sup>th</sup> August

An American ship has arrived from Calais whose Captain states that it was reported and believed that Robespierre, St. Just, Couthon and some others of that party had been put to death.

Letters from Flushing confirm this intelligence, but with variation in the circumstances.

The Morning Chronicle says –

‘Men well acquainted with the characters and connections of those who have governed France since 31<sup>st</sup> May 1793 declared on the execution of Danton, that the survivors of his party would soon revenge his death. All the political contests in France are not for power only, but for life’.

18<sup>th</sup> August

The full account of Robespierre's overthrow and death have now arrived. The interesting particulars are in this morning's papers. He was arrested and rescued and only 2 hours before he was retaken, the victory seemed doubtful.

The reign of blood and terror I hope is now over, whatever else may take its place.

On the last 3 days only of his power and life the Revolutionary Tribunal sentences to death 135 individuals. His downfall will save some thousands from the murdering Guillotine.

The contest was really between Robespierre with his 2 friends St. Just and Couthon against the 2 Committees of General and Public safety. His plan was to get all the power which the Convention had delegated to these into his own hands. He would then have been the master of France. The presidents of the Revolutionary Tribunal and of the Jacobin Club – The Commandant of the Armed Force and several other perished with him. Surely a great deliverance for mankind as well as for France.

I was never more astonished than at this sudden overthrow and destruction of Robespierre. I had been repeatedly told by those who had visited Paris that the Revolutionary Tribunal and its atrocious proceedings and executions were the actions of Danton of the Committee of Public Safety of the Salons and populace of Paris and of the general sense of their necessity, more than of Robespierre and that he only acquiesced in what all classes of the Patriots there required and supported. I saw by his public speeches that he was the only

man in the Convention who professed to act on any normal grounds and thus led me to hope that something better than their horrible system of blood – continued bloodshed would at length be established by him as his influence preponderated. But unhappily for France every thing of this sort were but words never acted and soon forgotten. Parties destroying each other were all that the world beheld as the dire and unprincipled result.

The denunciation and execution of Robespierre broke the spell of the French Revolution on the thinking mind. It was the last of that series of murders by which the republican and Jacobin leaders at Paris had been destroying each other and whom else they pleased after their destruction of Royalty and of its Swiss defenders on the 10<sup>th</sup> August 1792.

The events of that day had been followed by the Massacres at the Prisons in the first week of the next month September which Brissot charged to have been deliberately determined on by the Mountain Party and executed by its agents.

On 10<sup>th</sup> March 1793 – the Mountain or Jacobin party on receiving intelligence of the Dumourrier's defeats excited the people not only to a strong patriotic enthusiasm to defend their country but also to an extraordinary movement at Paris which was followed by the fatal establishment of the Revolutionary Tribunal on the suggestion of Danton. This was decreed on 11<sup>th</sup> March by the Convention to extend to every one. 'Whether the accused by civil or military Functionaries or simple citizens'. It was called 'an extraordinary Criminal Tribunal which shall take cognizance of all counter revolutionary enterprizes, of all attempts against liberty, equality, the Unity and indivisibility of the Republic, the interior and exterior and safety of the state, and of all plots tending to reestablish royalty or any other authority endangering liberty, equality and the Sovereignty of the people'.

The Motion of Danton was modified by Isnard into this shape and thus established became a complete and irresistible instrument in the hands of the ruling faction of the day, for the instantaneous destruction by the rapid Guillotine of everyone whom the dominant party for the time chose to get rid of.

On the motion of Levasseur it was also decreed that the Tribunal should be without appeal and without recourse to any other Court of legal jurisprudence. Hence its deadly sentences were absolute and final.

At this period the Brissotins or Girondists had the Majority of the Convention – having Roland Servan and Claviere in the Cabinet Administration they were Masters of the executive powers and had been so since the deposition of the King on the 10<sup>th</sup> August which had been mainly their work. They had called up for this object bands of Federe's from Brest as the Mountain party had got also a number of the same sort from Marseilles. Brissot and his Party planned the attack on the Tuilleries on that day and on the Swiss guard and Royal party there for the express purpose of overthrowing the Monarchy and of establishing a republic. He boasts of this exploit as what 'sera a jamais le plus beau jour de fete par le France.' He says 'I preside at the extraordinary Commission

[Note made: It has since computed by Chateaubriand that 18,613 persons were guillotined – of these 2217 were females and 13,635 of the middling and lower classes.]

which prepared the immortal decrees of the 10<sup>th</sup> of August'. He ascribes its success to the joint operation of the Feder's and Marseilloise. So did Louvet – 'It belongs to the generous warriors of Brest and to the intrepidity of the fierce Marseillois'. Petition in his discours, talks of it as a day 'for ever memorable which raised liberty on the ruins of Tyranny and changed the Monarchy into a republic.' He denies that the Mountain party or Robespierriens were entitled to the glory of it. 'This is due to those who prepared it' and he ascribes it to his Girondot friends. 'It is due to the brave Federe

s ad to their secret directors who had for a long time been concerting the plan of the insurrection.’

St. Just charged Danton with running away while it was preparing and with coming back to Paris only to go to sleep while it was executing – ‘you went to bed on that terrible night. Your section which had named you its President, waiting for you a long time. You were roused out of a disgraceful rest. You did preside, but only for an hour. You left the Chair at midnight when the Tocsin sounded. Soon after the Satellites of the Tyrant entered and bayoneted him who had taken your place – yours, who had then again gone to your rest.’

Tho the Royal party hastily assembled at the Tuilleries were attacked by this conspiracy without being provided with an adequate force to resist it, yet Petion admits that one part of the struggle – ‘le succes fut incertain’ – and Dumont truly says that ‘if the King could have assumed that firmness in which he was ‘always deficient, he might have then reconquered his Throne and have put an end to the Anarchy. That day would have restored his constitutional author to him.

Robespierre in his answer to Louvet also admits that the ‘Federe’s had assembled to conspire against Tyranny and to prepare among themselves la sainte insurrection du Mond’ Aout 1792’.

I have noticed these statements because till I read them, I had thought that the attack on the King on the 10<sup>th</sup> of August had been a sudden popular insurrection of the Parisians against him – but from these I learnt that it was the direct but secret conspiracy of the Brissotins and Robespierriencas for which each faction got armed bands to Paris – one from Marseilles and the other from Brest to carry it into violent execution.

Brissot also approved of the establishment of the Revolutionary Tribunal – ‘Il est cependant un coros auquel je dois rendre Justice. C’est le Tribunal Revolutionnaire’. I have elsewhere spoken of the evil it has done. ‘Je dois dis civi le bien que depuis, il a fait.’ This he wrote on 22 May 1793 – and nine days afterwards, the Revolutionary Tyranny – which he had chiefly contributed to establish – was directed fatally on himself and his party by their Mountain Opponents. On 31 May this faction excited a tumultous movement of the Parisian populace headed by the Commune to intimidate the Convention into a decree for arresting the Girondist members. Some fled – the others were afterwards voted Traitors to their Country. Those who escaped endeavoured to raise the provinces in their favor but failed and most perished miserably. The rest were kept in prison till the following October when the Queen Marie Antionette was put to the Bar of the Revolutionary Tribunal on the 15<sup>th</sup>, condemned and the next day guillotined. On 24<sup>th</sup> Brissot, Vergniaud and nineteen others underwent the same fate and 42 more in the week afterwards, among whom were Madame Roland and Égalite the celebrated Duke of Orleans, who Robespierre said ‘had first expounded the flag of Patriotism to overthrow the Court’.

In 1794 the triumphant Mountains began to decimate themselves. On 13<sup>th</sup> march St. Just obtained a decree that the Revolutionary Tribunal should cause suspected persons to be arrested and judged – and two days afterwards the violent Herbert, Ronsin, Vincent, and others were arrested who were heading the Cordeliers and whom Couthon denounced in the Convention as endeavouring to destroy the popularity of Robespierre. The next day Chabot, Bazere, Fabre d’Eglantine and others were ordered into custody and on the following morning Herault de Sechelles and Simond both also deputes were seized in the same manner. Danton applauded these measures in the Convention and then declared – ‘The Convention and the people will take care that all Conspirators be brought to punishment.’ The Guillotine soon accomplished his wishes and the armed force of Paris filed thro the Legislative Hall with their Commandant Herriot at their head expressing their satisfaction at these proceedings. Danton on the 10<sup>th</sup> March had expressed his supporting approbation – but to this own astonishment on the 30<sup>th</sup> was himself in the same lawless manner taken into custody

with 3 others and a decree of accusation was passed against him and against Camille Desmoulins, Phillippeaux and Lacriox who had all distinguished themselves among their Jacobin friends.

This arrest must have been more poignant to Danton, as he had been passing the day with Robespierre in festivity at the house of a mutual friend's 12 miles from Paris and had returned with him in the same Carrigae. So the atrocious Billaud de Varennes stated afterwards in the Convention and also that on the same evening Robespierre consented to abandon him. The next morning Robespierre and St. Just made violent speeches in the Convention against him. He was taken to the Revolutionary Tribunal and from thence as rapidly to the Guillotine.

Within less than 4 months afterwards Robespierre, St. Just and Couthon as they were about to immolate others of their confederates were themselves, after a perilous struggle overcome by those whom they were intending to destroy and on 27 July the next day they perished under the same Guillotine by which they had murdered so many.

These horrible transactions, these successive accusations and slaughters of each other as abominable criminals while they were each loudly pretending to be the regenerators of the world increased my alarm and aversion to all political agitations and commotions. That the long vaunted and incorruptible Robespierre, the idol of the Jacobins and of the French populace should be now reviled and destroyed as a guilty Traitor, like all those whom he had denounced and cut off seemed so conclusive a fact against the possibility that such principles and systems and conduct should benefit Mankind and bring into the world that Utopia which had been so long and so loudly predicted and with such fond credulity had been expected that the hope of any good resulting from the French Revolution expired in my own mind and in most of those with whom I had any intercourse.

The last catastrophe settled me in my prior determination to steer my life clear from all politics and parties and to confine it wholly to my profession as my channel of subsistence and to my literature and my studies for my intellectual enjoyment and improvement.

Robespierre always disclaiming so strongly on VIRTUE and being allowed to be incorruptible by many and the only one who took no share in the spoils of those he destroyed made me for a while expect something better from him. But it was not obvious that Virtue in his Mouth, like Truth in Holcroft's, and Justice in Godwin's was only a word which they put at the head of their several theories as their standard or battle cry under which all their vague notions [notions?] were comprised and pressed forward. Neither of these words were used in its common meaning and had no real relation with the system of which it was made the stalking horse [note made: Bailleul's remarks on Robespierre's 'Virtue' in his Examen critique des Con of Mad. De Stael concurs with my own feeling.

'Robespierre, full of the idea of his own conceptions differed from the rest of the Revolutionists as they felt that the fever which agitated them should cease with its cause while he was calm and in his element. He contemplated Virtue in the people and he regarded all that was struck down right and left as conducing to establish this Virtue of his.

The Sentiment which guided him was therefore more fatal than Hypocrisy would have been. He regarded himself as a privileged being, placed in the world to be its Regenerator, the Instructor of Nations.

Thence arose that self confidence, that decent demeanor and that something mysterious which Mad. de Stael finds about him. Considering as enemies of the Revolution, not only the principles it has consecrated but the Enemies of Virtue! As he understood is he gave the Revolutionary action an indefinite range, causing it to strike without distinction all classes of Society. Thence the terror he had created in the terror, as Mad. de Stael remarks.

Robespierre having the word VIRTUE always in his mouth; speaking always of the people with respect and representing it always as the focus, the centre of all virtue without anyone precisely knowing what he meant by the People had gained a great popularity.

What had yet added more to it was the ardor with which he persecuted all whom he termed Enemies of the people, intriguers, hypocrites, knaves, and as all those he so designated attacked Virtue – they attacked and therefore the Principle of the Government; they were therefore Conspirators.

By this construction is appeared that  $\frac{3}{4}$  of Frenchmen were in a state of conspiracy. Nobody knows whether he intended to become Dictator as Mad. de Stael thinks – but he became so in fact, because he himself was probably the sole being in France of whose virtue, he felt perfectly certain.

He launched therefore his Denunciations at all Classes and all heads and it was then that all the horror of his plans was perceived. As they were now fully unveiled and formed the extreme point of Demagogue practice, under the name of Virtue, they formed also its National close.

Bailleul  
West. Review '70  
April 1841

[End of Revolutionary notes]

My first idea was to break off all connection with Mr. W – that I might not incur the shame and danger of seeing her again. I stayed a week more at Lymington after these distressing letters and then moving onwards to see the Military encampment and the Election of Southampton where I heard Bryan Edwards if I remember right, the West Indian historian, deliver his speeches. I passed over to visit again the interesting ruins of Nettley Abbey. Here I could have long lingered indulging the imaginations, the sympathy, and almost the regret for the old times, which they excited. Some of my studies had made their period and costumes and incidents connected with them a part of my mental self, and I could hardly draw myself from them. But night coming on compelled their ivied remains and to get into the track for London.

It became necessary that I should settle the plan of my conduct there – as I had not dropt all thoughts and even wishes of any further intimacy or acquaintance with my friend's daughter. Should I or not also relinquish all further intercourse with Mr. W - . My mind was now at rest and as she was lost to me and was already or soon would be another's, I had no wish to see her again. Yet the sight of her might revived feelings that could be only unavailingly disquieting to myself. I was not tranquil. Why take the chance of wounding the peace for which I had forced or brought myself.

At first I said I will see him no more. He will understand the cause of my withdrawal and most probably expects it. But then my esteem for him was so great and his conversation had been so amusing and interesting to me that I hesitated to give it up. Her marriage would remove her. She would only be there occasionally. Not at all if he disliked her new husband, and therefore when I called it was not likely that I should have to confront her.

It was happy for myself that I at last resolved not to renounce him, for if I had the sequel could not have followed and the whole tenour of my life would have changed and I should have been a very different man.

I reached my Temple Chambers on the Evening of the 26<sup>th</sup> August. My diary thus describes my subsequent moments.

‘I went that next night after my Tea to Mr. W- . I found there Dr. Toulmin and my rival and some female friends. Contrary to my expectations she was there. I shook hands with the gentlemen but to the others I said hastily and slightly ‘How do you do Ladies!’ How do you do Miss - . I did not look at her except with a rapid glance as I caught her figure on my entrance and bower – for I was afraid of the power of her smile. I then took my seat facing her on a vacant chair but for 2 hours and a half neither looked at her nor spoke to her. I heard Mr. S- address her in a tender voice, but she scarcely answered him. She worked on some muslin for about half an hour after I was seated, then suddenly dropping her needle, she went hastily out and was absent for some time.

As I turned my head towards the door when it opened on her re-entering the room, I saw her face and thought she looked poorly and seemed to have been crying. This considerably affected me and soon afterwards as Holland and the March of Lord Moira were discussed, I asked her father for his map of it that I might trace the movements. He desired her to get it for me. This took me unexpectedly – but from natural politeness at the moment I could not help saying as she rose – ‘I am sorry to trouble you Miss W - ’. ‘It will be no trouble I assure you’ was her reply and she soon put it into my hands. I had by that time collected myself and simply and coldly said as I received it – ‘I thank you’ – but did not attempt to raise my eyes to her face. I remembered its magical power. I felt stout and determined, but was afraid of being shaken. At last I got up to go. She rose with her former civilities, but I felt unable to notice them and hurried past her merely saying ‘Good night’ in an unfriendly manner, while I took up the cat I had left with her and tossed it into the coach without even thanking her for her care of it. This was rude – but how could I act otherwise?

I congratulated myself as I went home that I could bear the first interview so well. I had purposely exerted myself and had never conversed with others with more spirits. This was meant to show that I had overcome my disappointment. But it was really an unnatural inflation. It was not my usual self. However it was clear that they had not yet married.

Four days afterwards I went there again – she was not at home, but Mr. S – was there. About 10 she came in, a simple salute passed between us as she entered. I did not help her at the supper, but attended to the others who were there. She had been with an old Lady who much esteemed her and she had come back cheerful. I meant not to speak to her but when I offered her father some books I could not avoid saying to her as she sat by his side, yet with rather an ill-natured tone and emphasis – ‘Shall I bring you any? Do you read ‘still?’ Without noticing any ill-humour she answered in her kind and gentle manner, that ‘she had read all I had left and would be much obliged to me for others’. I started at this – my tongue faltered, agitating feelings arose as I looked at her but I subdued them and made no reply. On my retiring she curtsied to me in the same friendly manner she had always done. I bowed – but could not speak and hastened from her while I was able to command myself.

I was almost overwhelmed - My heroism was half dissolved. There was a perplexity and a contradiction that I could not unravel. What did she mean? What was the real state of things?

It was some time before I became quite calm. At last I reasoned with myself that I had now shown my indifference and change of mind by not speaking purposefully to her, by not looking at her and by not paying her any attentions there was no reason why I should assume longer an offensive behavior. She had ceased to be anything particular to me but she seemed disposed to meet me on friendly terms. Why should I not then conduct myself to her as to any other lady? If I continue my acquaintance with her father, it is not proper for me to act otherwise while she is with him. She has a right to chuse and marry whom she pleases. I must meet her in future society. I will therefore accustom my mind to be in the same state with her as with any of her friends. If I cannot do this, I ought to see her or her father no more.’

This resolution taken, I sank into a heavy sleep and awoke unrefreshed but with a determination to conduct myself with as much care and courtesy to her as I could – yet avoiding every thing beyond decorous and proper civility and social attention to her as my friend's daughter and as a respectable and agreeable lady.

2<sup>nd</sup> September

Last night Mr. – passed his evening at my Chambers. We chatted alone till 11. I did not mention his daughter – nor did he. I had looked in the morning into my copy of my last letter to him and I found it so explanatory of what had been my intentions and so decisive as to their termination that nothing was necessary to be added to express the present position of my mind. We conversed without reference to this subject and parted with mutual friendship without any allusion to it. I shall wait until the end of the week before I go there again. That will be nearly a month since the new incident began and if they are to be married, the completion cannot then be far off.

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> Sept.

I returned the visit to Mr. W – last night. She was at tea with him alone. Regarding her as another person's wife I felt so tranquil and so uninterested that I put easily into practice my resolution of behaving to her as I would to any other lady. Therefore when she asked her father the meaning of the words in that Evening's Courier 'Cesarem vehis' and he looked at me at once as for the explanation I answered it myself and gave her an account of the incident which led the Roman General to say so. She seemed much gratified. S – came in and when he spoke to her a small debate took place between them which I did not understand. I left her without emotion and walked home in complete self-possession.

An earnest desire for my historical studies came now upon me. I indulged it with eagerness till I became so absorbed in them that I did not go again to my friend for the next 12 days – expecting every morning to see her marriage in the newspaper – but I found no such notice. On the 18<sup>th</sup> I went to him. He told me that my long absence made him fear I was ill and he was going to send to inquire. I pleaded much occupation as my excuse. Nothing passed with her. Without being uncivil I avoided talking with her and conversed while I stayed with him only and left his house early.

My evening reflections when I came home were -

'My principal aim shall be to acquire if I can the esteem of my fellow creatures and to employ my time improvingly as well as pleasantly. I shall be 26 in a few days and should now settle all my objects of pursuit. To have much time to myself for my reading, I have kept my circle of acquaintance small and I will not, for the same reason enlarge it, except to converse with men of greater knowledge or unless I meet with some other lady who may interest me as much as I have lately been interested and who will be really interested for me.'

I am told that John Horne Tooke when Parson of Brentford said to himself – I want distinction and will have it – I want a station that will demand and employ all my powers – my present one unnerves and cramps me – It does not suit me – nor do I suit it. I will strike into politics!

He has acted on his determination – but with what fruit? Has he got honor? Has he got happiness? Has he got esteem? I will decide differently. I will totally renounce politics. I will aim at something better – or better at least to me. There are other scenes, safer and more attractive which are accessible and in which I may try to combine some literary reputation with philanthropy. At least I will make the effort and devote myself fervently to my studies and forget all other interruptions.

Friday 26 Sept.

C – has arrived from the North in London again and has just called on me. I told him generally that all was at an end between Miss W – and me and that she was going to be married to Mr. S - . This, he declared that he would never believe. It seemed to him impossible.

I went with him in the evening to Mr. W -, my mind steady and unshaken. She came in from a walk with 2 female friends. C – took them all by the hand, I merely bowed. But during tea as he was conversing with her father about Edinburgh and Scotland, I was led to chat with her. One reason was that I might shew him how little I was hurt at the separation – but the chief motive was my resolution not to decline common civilities to her. Yet recollecting my settled disinclination to her from all that had taken place and that I ought to be guarded, I left off the conversation and turned from her. I could not but observe that she was very cool to Mr. S -. He complained to her that she was dull. She said she was tired and sat silent. So did I. Till Mrs. M – one of the ladies wishing to speak to me I changed my seat to be near her and this brought me nearer to Miss W – when some remark made by the elder lady drew me unintentionally again into conversation with the fairer one. Thinking however that I ought to keep reserved, I did not pursue it till Sophy Holcroft being mentioned I could not but express my surprise that a girl of her strong intellect so like her father, should marry a man so very inferior to her in mind and manners – whom she could not value. Miss W – made some excuses for her friend’s choice on the ground of her wishing a certain provision for life, and my criticism on some of Sophy’s more violent sentiments and strong expression of them led me by degrees, designedly, into an argument with my tormentor on the propriety of declaring without reserve all our opinions whatever they might be. The rest had before taken a part in the conversation but retired from it as soon as it became a personal discussion between her and me, as if interested by the singular occurrence and anxious to see how it would end. I did not like this position but I could not get out of it. She talked remarkably well – so well as to pique me into a trial of intellect with her – independently of all other considerations. Rather nettled at being accidentally involved in what I had resolved to avoid I took fractiously the wrong side of the question on purpose to tease her – but this made the matter worse, for it soon gave her the obvious triumph. She was very smart on the hypocrisy and deception of all politic compliment and I was compelled to qualify and for my credits sake to take right views and to enter more fully and justly into the new discussions which the topics we handled led to. I meant to leave off the moment I could extricate myself – but every thing she said was so proper and apt and so successfully applied that I had no alternative but to go on or to appear defeated and disgraced. I was therefore forced to continue the Skirmish and to fight hard. She was however so acute and so ready in her replied that I could neither overcome her nor disentangle myself nor indeed wish to do either.

The personal battle thus went on between us with more than usual ability of her side yet with a very modest and most interesting manner, that before I thought twenty minutes had been employed above an hour and a half had elapsed. I had no notion of the time till the clock struck one, then jumping up abruptly with some confusion at the circumstances, I apologized for keeping them all up so late. The company however declared that they had not noticed the time and had been much gratified. While she, in high spirits, said I had quite awakened her; she felt no fatigue; and had no wish to sleep for the next 3 hours. I bowed with great cordiality to my fair antagonist. I could not but compliment her and left her with a sympathy that I have not felt for the last 6 weeks.

She certainly displayed throughout the energy of mind – to use Holcroft’s favourite phrase – more than I had ever seen her exert before. Mr. S – looked on with avowed pleasure often rubbing his hands because he thought that I was foiled in the argument and that her animation was displeasure and hostility against me. There was something of this sort in both our minds. We had never been so pugnacious or so personal towards each other at any time

before. We both talked as if we had something to complain of in each other that neither chose to avow – and we were really fighting our secret quarrel under other topics and guises. I do not know whether the others saw this – but I felt it in myself and suspected it in her. Yet she managed it so inoffensively that I dropped all warfare at last and became so interested with her effusion of mind as to say only what would excite her to talk more. This made me put my further remarks into the form of questions and half concessions until the hour became so intemperate that I was compelled to break off and run hastily away.

What shall I say – she has delighted and perplexed me. It was all her natural mind. No affectation. It was her ancient and unusual self tho with some tartness not usual to her. But she talked and looked at me and seemed to feel toward me so exactly as she did before that I cannot understand it – nothing is at all advanced between her and S -. They seem just as they were as to each other when I left town. How does the matter stand? What is the actual truth?

C – has fixed to come on Friday to sleep in London, read all my letters and hear all that has taken place – for he says he is sure there is something wrong, mistaken and unexplained.

Monday 29<sup>th</sup> Sept.

There does appear some interruption between her and S -. He visits there still but I see no signs of an approaching union. There is no cordiality at all from her to him. She puzzles my judgment. Her beauty and talent are visible, but what else am I certain of? I cannot marry a fickle nor an artificial woman. Yet what art do I find in her. All is natural – nothing forward. She receives the attentions I now give her with apparent pleasure – but never seeks for or solicits them.

1<sup>st</sup> October

I believe I am right in my conjecture that she does not mean to have Mr. S -. Last night when she came in from Holcroft's she placed herself at a distance from him. I hinted to her father what T – had said of Mr. S – but desired that it might not be repeated to him – meaning not thro his daughter who had left the room. He answered 'certainly not but there is not much danger of that now'. Her behavior corresponded with this intimation for she was very reserved to him and would not be near him.

Well – I will suspend all unpleasant feelings. I will leave it to herself to shew her genuine mind and heart and that she has been acting with propriety. I will do nothing to irritate. I will take her the books she likes. I will behave to her with good humoured ease and let events make their own way.

4<sup>th</sup> Oct. Saturday

C – came to me last night we went over the whole matter and I desired his impartial and friendly judgment. He was decided in his opinion. I<sup>st</sup> that she does not like Mr. S – and does not mean to have him. II. that she must have been hurried or overpowered or overpersuaded into what countenance she may have given to it by the artifices of others, whom he named, for their own purposes. IIIrd that she repented of what she may have been led into and shrank from it and was freeing herself from what she had been improperly entangled in. IV. That her father had been misled by the same causes but was recovering himself. V. That she looked very poorly and unlike her former self and as if she was not happy; and he was afraid she was suffering by the management of others.

He approved of what I had written and done and did not see under such circumstances I could have acted otherwise. But he would have merrest quietly and do nothing hastily again. He saw that my love tho I had tried to suppress it was just what it was and he hoped another fortnight would set us all right again. It would be folly to give her up if she could be won.

Not one girl in a hundred had such a mind and few in our sphere with so many accomplishments. She sang beautifully. She played respectably. She drew and painted flowers very prettily. She had travelled with her father in France and Italy and had lived some time at Naples. She knew Italian and French. Yet with all this she was her father's housekeeper and very steady and made her own dresses and yet not quite 18. Where should I meet such a combination again? It was not to be much expected. There were no doubt many such – but they might not fall in my way again. I told him that my own difficulty was how to get a knowledge of the real facts that had occurred without committing myself before I was satisfied about them. His answer was 'Don't suppose there has been anything wrong – don't be foolishly fastidious, wait quietly and see what turns up – do not, for your own sake, make matters worse or you will be very sorry for it by and by'. I thanked him for his advice and resolved to act upon it.

N.B. This conversation was very generous on his part for afterwards he told me (or us) that if he had not seen me so much attached to her and her preference for me – he should himself and solicited her hand.

5<sup>th</sup> October. Sunday

I seem to be advancing to the crisis. Last night I was at W-'s again. Some friends were there. She did not come into the room till after tea. She took her seat on a line with my chair but at some distance. A subject arose which engaged me in a little chit chat with her – but as we did not hear each other distinctly, from being so far apart, while the rest were talking, we changed our position till I found myself by her side. This increased our conversation with each other and topic after topic arose of themselves as it were and some subject led me to talk and laugh a great deal with her. She seemed much pleased and looked very interesting. This did not diminish my loquacity, till happening to mention Mrs Woolstonecraft's phrase of Masculine Philosophy, W-'s ear caught the sound and he asked me 'if there were any sexes in minds?' With a little bit of more malice that conviction, I hinted that the female was inferior and therefore naturally differed. This was sufficient to rouse her, she immediately suggested the contrary – I opposed – she reasserted their natural equality and I, lightly and as playfully as I could, impugned it. This again involved us personally with each other, the dispute was left to her and me. Neither of us would give way for we had both other objects and meanings in our minds in every thing we said. Our eyes met very frequently and at times seemed to search into each other's sentiments. Mine wished to dart into her bosom to know her real heart. But keenly as I exerted all the powers of penetration that I had, I saw nothing that I could disapprove or that seemed concealed or that was adverse to me.

The secret feeling that was governing me led me into a dangerous stream of raillery against the female sex, only avoiding every thing that was ungentlemanly in both manners and expression. Whatever I could remember against them I repeated to her – but put it as jocosely and as unprovokingly as I was able. I mentioned the opinion of Diogenes, Horne Tookes idea of matrimony, K's notion and image of the sex Eve. Achilles in his girls clothes; Costatio's invectives, Popes verses – some of Young's; everything that I could call to mind that would be piquant without being insulting and that would shew that I felt as if I had reason to depreciate them.

I was careful however to cover the attack with as much good humour and courtesy as I could express, for I felt all that was kind to her except that I thought I had been deceived. She fought her battle amazingly well, criticized and ridiculed every thing I brought forward to equal temper and spirit – and then without the smallest acrimony, in a gentle firm and lady-like manner vindicated her own sex with a constant secret allusion to herself and attacked ours.

Nothing could be more unassumingly and unoffendingly done – and yet with much effect. Our real meanings were only perceptible to ourselves.

Mr. S – was there – to him she was repelling. She would not let him take her hand, nor would she talk with him. He sat silent and discontented.

I left her with my mind greatly softened, its prepossessions against her dying away – and with a sense of renewing happiness. We have been very near losing each other. But I will adhere to my determination to let her decide for herself and fully discharge S – before I make any explanations of my own feelings. He shall have his fair chance. I cannot bear a divided or vacillating mind – nor to have any things left in doubt. Till she shows me that she has discarded him and I find that she has done nothing wrong, I will not step forward.

1794

6<sup>th</sup> October – Monday

The great point is now decided or nearly so – the desired and needed explanation between us has come on most unexpectedly and in a manner quite agreeable to my own taste and temper.

All yesterday morning what could I think of but her. The chief part of it passed in contemplating the pleasing prospect which the last night's conversation placed before me. There was a manifest artless natural and mutual approximation. I felt the magical influence. She did not seem sensible of it.

I dined with my friends at Knightsbridge, but quitted them early that I might join her at her tea table. The evening became exceedingly stormy. The wind and rain came suddenly on with such impetuosity that before I reached Titchfield Street I was wet thro. Yet I went in – but her father saw my state and made me leave the room and new dress myself in his clothes. They fitted me sufficiently well to enable me to join his circle and I took my seat at their fireside. Mr. S – had just before come in and other friends were there.

My change of apparel made such an alteration in my usual appearance, that the ladies who knew me joked on my sudden transformation from a young to an old man. She timidly joined in some of these. Not much attending to what others said, I answered only her. Their observations led her to give me an account of a little domestic incident which had happened that morning. She did this with great vivacity, she was in uncommon spirits – never looked better and never seemed happier.

The tea things were now brought in and after the refreshment was over, we were mostly seated round a large table – she a little on my right almost facing me with a lady between us. The young ladies were next separating her, as she had desired from Mr. S -. Her father was near me, at the fire and Mrs. M – at the opposite side of it.

I had lent her father the day before Mrs Woolstonecraft's History of France. This book became the occasion of what to me was a very important sequel. He put it suddenly into my hands to read the conclusion to the company. I did so till I came to page 519 where the authoress said – "Every noble principle of nature is eradicable by making a man pass his life in stretching wire, pointing a pin, heading a nail – or extending a sheet of paper upon a plain surface". With these words I paused and charged the writer with uttering a sarcasm on her own sex, as much as on ours, for if it was a debasement for men to make such things, it was surely they who by wanting pins and needles, fine dresses and fine furniture – compelled the Male Workman to be so unworthy. This remark was declares by the Ladies to be unjust to them and a perversion of the passage. When I indulged after this in some depreciating Irony on the Sex, in which think I was blameable - but I was still nettled at my situation - they all joined in some warm expostulations and censures rather severe upon me. They accused me of Misanthrophiam and the eldest with some passion declared she had no patience with me and that whatever I might pretend she was sure, that I was in truth, tho in secret, a Woman Hater.

Her asperity and this imputation startled me. I perceived that I was creating an impression very unfavourable and which might be more lasting than I wished - and especially in one who now looked very grave and seemed to expect an answer from me to so serious a charge. I saw I must do something to extenuate or remove the misconstruction without deviating into a glaring contradiction to myself. A simple denial would be taken as a matter of course, and would not do away the mischief. She looked at me with a questioning eye that made me uneasy. At last I said, 'If any lady has a pencil, I will write down in Mrs Woolstonecrafts book, whom you all so 'praise as your champion, what I seriously think of your sex'.

Before any could answer, my rival to my surprise suddenly took out of his pocket and handed over to me his gold or gilt one. He thought I was getting into a scrape and willingly assisted me to sink deeper into it. I perceived his meaning. He had a right to take advantage of the circumstance if he could - and I took the offered loan. Yet his obvious belief of my dilemma made me averse to use it. Uncertain what it was best to do, I thought it safer to do nothing - but merely to express a verbal apology and avoid such railleries in future. I therefore shut the cover of the volume which I had thrown open, and was pushing it away when all the Ladies exclaimed against my drawing back and insisted on my performing my promise. This perplexed me as words of course would not do now, and I was still in too much dissatisfaction with my fair lady to be sincerely complimentary.

Suddenly the idea flashed across my mind that I might make it instrumental in accomplishing my secret wish of sounding her actual feeling without professedly doing so and that I had better take advantage of the present opportunity to do this when no else could be supposing that I had such a purpose.

I therefore said to her with an earnest look, 'Do you wish it'. Her immediate answer was, 'Yes, your real opinion'. It was clear to me from these words, that whatever I wrote she would apply to herself. This coincided with my wishes, yet made it a more endangering crisis. But I resolved to risqué everything as longer uncertainty was tormenting. I therefore wrote on one of the two blank leaves at the end of the book.

'The ladies very much resemble a flower garden. There are many very beautiful and interesting flowers; Roses Carnations and Tulilps. These every eye must admire and every visitor covet. There is nothing in Nature more desirable or more invaluable then a sensible and amiable Woman. Such a Woman is of more importance than a thousand treasures - But - there are also many Weeds, and many poisonous things which tho blooming to the eye, are death to the taste. However for the sake of those which are delightful I will always lament and hope for the emendation of the others.'

I meant this to be a little allegory applicable to herself. I had though her a Rose - I had found her very different to me. I put it into her hands, she read it - she understood my allusion paused a little, but made no remark upon its and without looking at all at me passed it round. She seemed displeased and I was uncomfortable. When Mrs M - heard it read, she exclaimed loudly, 'Poisonous indeed! I know why you give Women such a name, It is all on account of one - turning her eye towards Miss W - I said at once ' You are right, it is exactly so'. Miss W - heard me and said rather faintly ' Then I've a good mind to answer it.' Being near, I caught the words and eagerly replied - 'Pray do, you only can'. She took the Pencil from me and wrote immediately these words beneath mine.

'In the reasoning before us, Women are here accused of being ' either Roses or Hemlock - But -

'I would rather see some energy of character, than that undecided mind which hardly deserves the name of mind. The men are often obliged to us for the ideas they possess'.

She pushed the Book from her without giving it to me - but I took it and read it. I saw by the undecided mind - 3 times under-scored - she meant me to feel her sentiments of my own, and by the

tone of the whole to express a little spleen against me. But I chose not to seem to take it in that sense and told her 'that the first part 'of her remarks entitled her to be placed among my first class, but the last sentence would require a Mountain of Proof and I must strike 'out the article "The" before Men as it made her charge too general.'

She replied 'If you omit that, you must put in most'. ' No, only 'some'. 'I insist upon most.' 'Indeed! then, fair Madam! your reasons for giving to, yourselves the honor of infusing into us our ideas.'

'Well then, we nurse you, we educate you, You are always under our directions in your Youth, and I hope under our influence afterwards - and do you not often want strength of mind to decide for your selves.'

She marked the word ' You' - in this question with a little emphasis, as she pronounced it -but looking down; obviously pointing it to what she thought of my conduct towards her. I pretended not to see this and replied - 'Admirable! fair Lady! But is this a compliment to your sex? . . We are taught by you and yet we have weak minds. Now it is commonly thought that weak minded children must have had very indifferent Teachers.'

- 'Or have been bad Scholars? '

- 'Be it so - But dear Lady. Do you mean to say - We ought to be under your direction?

Do you mean act wrong?' Laying a stress on the 'you' and looking at her.

She mildly said - 'I hope not intentionally '. This remark was ambiguous and afraid of being too personal, I went guardedly on not quite knowing how to manage the matter to my wishes.

' To teach us yet to spoil us is no recommendation'.

' But if you wont think for yourselves, it will do you no harm if we lead you.'

' Might it not do us more good to leave you?' I spoke this in a pointed manner. She felt the allusion - a frown passed over her brow - and for a short time she was silent - but recollecting herself she said.

'As you please, but I have no objection to allow that when Men are less under the direction of Ladies, they may have more strength of mind.'

'That's a great concession - but how so?'

'Because to have strength of mind, they should not be under any direction – but their own judgement.'

'Then of our common Reason.'

After this I ought not to have urged her further but I had not yet gained the elucidation I was trying for. She kept steadily on her guard, she seemed resolved to maintain her own dignity and would not follow to what I wished to lead her as if she felt I had acquired no right to question her. I was perplexed how to proceed without offending her. I thought a moment – then said –

'But will you excuse me for asking whether this agrees with your intimation that to avoid an undecided mind, we should adopt your opinions and spirit.'

'Then strike out spirit' –

'Still if we weaken our minds under your direction, how can your opinions improve us?'

'I am afraid I am confusing myself'.

'Shall I understand you to mean that we are always benefited if we attach ourselves to the Roses but will be injured if we are under the hemlock class?'

'Yes, that will do' - The rest of the Company having no further interest in the subject, had turned their attention from us to talk with each other. Mr W - took up a No. of the Political Register. Mr. S. chuckled to himself at the idea from what he observed of her manner, that I

was not pleasing her - for she was looking very grave - and he also thinking I should now lose all her good opinion if I went on, left me do so and turned to speak to the others.

I observed their inattention and resolved to use the moment to bring on the secret explanation I wished. I therefore said to her in a lowered voice –

‘But - Madmoiselle - see now the difference between our written remarks. Your observation ends with a sarcasm - but mine had a charitable conclusion. How will you answer that part?’

This was - ‘However, for the sake of those which are delightful, I will endure and lament what is not so and hope for an amendment’.

She took the book again - read this passage, looked at me -, bit her lip, and rather frowned but was silent.

I now felt every nerve in my body in agitation. I saw the moment was come for what I wished, but from her manner, the result was doubtful. Yet I had no choice but to seize the opportunity of forcing or leading her to an explanation with me. I therefore said with a little tremulousness –

‘Come, now I will put you to the test. Favor me with the pencil. ‘It was lying beside her. She gave it me. I paused and looked earnestly at her. She cast her eyes down. I could not avoid trembling, but at last wrote - giving a new meaning to her words.

‘We always dislike what we despise. Now, if there be men’ of the weak minds you censure, how do you esteem them?’

I put the Book into her hands casting a glance as she raised her eyes to take it - on my rival. She followed my look - and then read my remark and coloured as if she feebly understood my question - but was silent.

I put the pencil into her hand. She took it, but did not use it. She seemed to be pausing as if she were deliberating whether she ought to answer me in that way and that moment.

My agitation increased - no one was then paying us any attention. She held the pencil but motionless and I saw she was still deliberating with herself how thus suddenly called upon for such a decision and thrown upon her own judgement, she ought to act towards me. ‘How do you esteem them’ was the important question I had put her to answer.

After waiting a few minutes and perceiving that from a fear of doing wrong She would not express her mind or she had not made up her determination I resolved to make one more effort and commanded my voice to say – ‘oblige me with the pencil and book again’. She gave them to me with a downcast look and I wrote.

‘You seem to hesitate. Is it not then true that you would rather see some energy of character than a frivolous mind - which hardly deserves the name of intellect.’

I put the Pencil on these Words and laid them before her. By this time she had collected herself and fixed her line of conduct. She read both my remarks twice over - then wrote beneath both and with an unsteady hand pushed the Book towards me and turned her face away. I took it up eagerly and found to the first question ‘How do you esteem them’ she had added ‘Not at all’ - and to the last - ‘I cannot hesitate. I do not either esteem or like such’ nothings.’

I read these answers with an effusion of delight which ran thro all my frame and eagerly wrote beneath them with an undesguised reference to Mr. S - ‘s addresses and to her apparent acceptance of them.

‘I am astonished. I read with a mixture of wonder and incredulity. I am too much perplexed to be able to answer it. I can only ‘stare.’

This was not the happiest was of putting what I wished her to feel - that I desired yet further to now because it was rather coarsely expressed and implied a reproach on her conduct and might have caused feelings of natural resentment on that account which would

have frustrated my purpose. I believe its first effect was of this kind - for when I gave the book to her again with the addition she colored and looked displeased. My meaning was, if you do not at all regard him - neither esteem or like him how is it that you have acted so towards him - or that what has taken place with respect to him has occurred. I did not dare to ask this directly of her, nor had I a right to question her so pointedly. Therefore I was obliged to lead her to guess what I meant, rather than to express it. I think I did it awkwardly - but I had to use the moment as it passed and to act rapidly on the instant before others noticed us and nothing better occurred to me. Yet to say 'I could only stare' was a rude and affronting expression.

Her good sense and kind feeling befriended me at this juncture. She perceived what I desired and that I had advanced so far as to be soliciting some explanation. In a short time the angry flush disappeared. She seemed for a minute or two much agitated as if doubting whether she ought to say more. She thought again a little as she became calmer and then relaxing her brow and looking kindly and sweetly at me, she pencilled down.

'You are mistaken, I can only answer by deeds' - underlining that last word.

This frank and decisive answer almost overwhelmed me. It was exactly what I wished. Recovering myself I said in a low voice 'Less mistaken than misinformed - but very happy if deeds prove 'either.'

Quite satisfied with what she had condescended to express for her word had been always sacred with me, I forbore to press her further and gratefully bowed. I took up the Book on whose blank leaves all this had been written and closed it. We interchanged one expressive glance when she hastily rose up and quitted the room and I turned towards her Father. No one knew what the pencil had been thus communicating - nor had any notion of what had passed between us. I put the volume into my pocket - returned the pencil with thanks to Mr. S - and strove to talk on indifferent things. But this was impossible. I could listen to no one my mind turned wholly on these important sentences. I left them rather abruptly - put on my own things which had been dried and came home.

(The following is the exact copy of the original pencillings as far as I can make them out.)

'The Ladies very much resemble a Flower Garden. There are very many interesting and beautiful Flowers, Roses Carnations and Tulips. These every eye must admire and every visitor covet. There is nothing in Nature more desirable or more invaluable than a sensible and amiable Woman. Such a woman is of more importance than a thousand treasures. But there are also venemous plants which delight the eye, but are death to the taste, many things useless and many superfluous. However for the sake those which are delightful I will always be and hope for the emendation of the others.'

'On Men'

' In the reasoning before us are accused of either being roses or hemlock I would rather see some energy of character than the undecided mind which has

'We always dislike what we despise. If those be Men who have the weakness of mind which you laugh at how do you esteem them?

'Not at all.'

You seem to hesitate. Is it then true that you would rather see some energy of character than that undecided mind which hardly deserves the name.'

' I cannot hesitate, I do not either esteem or like such ' nothings.'

'I am astonished! I read with a mixture of wonder and incredulity. I am too much puzzled to be able to answer it. I can only stare.'

' You are mistaken. I can only answer by deeds.'

I have torn out these important leaves and will never part with them. I am now happy. I have not the details of what has passed between her and S - but I have got the pledging declaration

of her mind and feelings as to him and also as to myself, for she would not have given me this avowal if I had been indifferent to her. Thus I may be indebted to Mrs Woolstoncraft's history for one who is already one of the most interesting of women and will I hope be the wife I covet.

Without this book we should have still been in a state of misunderstanding and mistrust; alienated and bickering, from not knowing each others real mind. The Volume was sent to Symonds. He did not know from whom but he friendlily brought it to me to read the same day last Friday desiring to have it again on Monday. I thought W - would like to see it and therefore took it to him last night and called for it this Evening - otherwise as I had settled with C - to wait and watch the progress of events I should not have gone there on either of the 2 last days.

My friends remarks had put my mind into a state of desiring to be reconciled to her if all should turn out right - and when she came in last night I was sorry to see her take a chair at a distance from me. The recollection of C 's favorable opinion of her made me turn, to her and offer her as I were the olive branch by addressing myself to her. This drew her for our better hearing of each other, as others were talking across us to come nearer the fire and the only chair vacant there being the one by my side, I rose and offered her the choice of that or my own. She could not but take one and mine being nearest to her Father she great tact sat down in that saying

'If I don't deprive you would rather be near my Father'. This exactly suited my particular humour which required her to be neither adverse nor forward - and my elation of spirits led me to laugh and talk playfully with her. Her Father let us converse after his questions without interfering and then ensued that stream of argument not unfriendly yet rather sparring which renewed all her fascination and caused me to leave her with great regret and with an anxious hope that I should yet be fully reconciled.

The same book put me under the necessity of calling for it this evening and this made my visit not particular to her tho I rejoiced in it - but I wished to avoid such a construction till I knew the real state of things with her.

Our last conversation had removed a great part of the awkward predicament we had been in for the last 2 months.

Without at all saying so we both showed to each other a mutual disposition to resume our former friendship. Yet both felt that an explanation of last circumstances was necessary to produce a lasting satisfaction and regard. I could not seek this avowedly without a formal declaration and she would not give it unsolicited. Here was the intellectual bar to our perfect reunion. This has been now removed - a train of unforeseen circumstances led us into a kind of enigmatical dialogue on this subject without either of us committing ourselves till the sympathy increasing in us both and our feelings being alike excited, I put at last the trying questions to her which after a little maidenly hesitation some resisting pride - some not unfair vexation with me, she at last ingenuously delicately and kindly answered -

'How do you esteem them' - meaning him - Her decided answer - is 'Not at all . I do not either esteem or like him. This decided it as to him. And then the emphasis 'You are mistaken' is her pledge to me that I shall find this to be so. Yes, I will believe her - mistaken in all I have heard or thought to her disadvantage. This is her deciding assurance. But does she stoop to invite or apologize? No - Her mind seems to have argued with itself. 'Words are easily pronounced and evaded, I will satisfy you and vindicate myself in a better way, without humiliating either'. Hence she wrote. 'I can only answer by deeds.' By this I am sure she means 'Wait and learn fairly what I have done and shall do and esteem me according as I shall be found to have acted and to I can I to act.'

Nothing can be more charming, convincing and delightful to me. Fears, doubts and resentments! Hence away for ever and for ever. It is for me now to unbosom myself to her. She has done all that she ought.

Friday 10 Oct.

I was at her Fathers last night. I fount S - there again - but a very cold civility only was shewn him. To me she was condescending and polite. Hearing her mention that she was going to the Theatre with her Brother, I asked her permission to accompany her. She said she should be very happy, but that it depended on her Fathers acquiescence. I applied to him but he answered - No Sir! I thank you, I would rather it be deferred for the present until matters get a little more settled.

Tuesday - 14 Oct. 1794.

On yesterday twelvemonth my regard for Miss W. - seriously commenced and yesterday I received the detailed explanation which removed every scruple and I have mentioned my wishes decisively to her Father.

Mrs. M - had desired me to go with her professionally to Dartford to confer and arrange with her Tenants there on their rents and leases which had now to be newly arranged and settled - and Mr. W - agreed to accompany us in the chaise to assist me with his judgment in case serious difficulties should arise with any. As both knew my situation as to my fair lady, I brought on the subject as we travelled. Mrs M - said she would tell sincerely all that she had learnt on the subject which she believed to be true.

Mr. S - had embraced the opportunity of my absence to make I his proposals and offered a very handsome establishment. Her female friends pressed her to accept it for her Fathers sake and benefit and that as I had gone into the Country without making any such offer, she might be sure that I did not men it not care about her or else had something dishonorable in view. She was also told that as the War had suspended her fathers access to his property in French funds and the present Convention had confiscated it - it would be cruel to him to refuse such an enticement as well as to herself for both be and she might be left destitute. She was distressed at these remarks and took S - 's letter to her father and asked his feelings and opinion what she ought to do.

Mr W - here interfered and said to me That he believed he had been much to blame for when she came into him he was very unwell and in bed and angrily bade her not trouble about such nonsense. She burst into tears and said she had then nobody to advise her. He believed Miss Holcroft some other ladies and Mr. E. had pressed her strongly to accept the offer. He did not know their motives but it was from these importunities, from his own ill humor which he regretted and from his alarms and unfortunate situation that she had for a time given some countenance to Mr. S -, or at least had not at once rejected him. He had been greatly misled himself and therefore he had misled me. But it was now quite off and she had repeatedly told Mr. S. so Mrs, M - assured me from all that she knew or had seen that I had never lost her preference. More than this it would not be proper for her to suggest as I must learn all beyond that from herself. But she had been much harassed and agitated and was misled to believe that I did not seriously care for her and was only amusing myself with her. This had alarmed and irritated her and turned her mind for a time against me.

I explained to Mr. W the position of my pecuniary affairs. I had been receiving from my business £150 a year and I thought might reckon now on its increasing to £200. He told me that by careful management in which he was sure his daughter would cordially join we might lead a very comfortable reasonable life on that income if I would avoid shew and unnecessary company and all expenses for mere personal indulgence. He had done so with her for that amount when he could have afforded a larger style if he had chosen it and therefore he saw no objections to our union whenever desired it to take place. We could not

command the future but he thought I had every rational prospect that it would not be unfavourable to me.

Having expressed my earnest and determined attachment to her I then asked his leave for an interview with her. He said he could wish that I would defer that till all political danger was over as he was still afraid of S - I assured him that he was not in the smallest peril. He had done nothing. No man could be more quiet and unoffending than he was and as to any sentiments he had expressed as incidents had occurred they ere no other than such as were heard in every company. He then acquiesced in my having a conversation with her provided that it was so arranged that Mr S - should not know of it. I declared I wished no concealment but Mrs M. intreated that would not disturb him by opposing so small a request.

Thus all is as wish. Happy - Happy change! She has done nothing wrong. It is myself only who have been to blame and really without meaning it.

16 Octr.

W - took his tea with me and told me that his daughter meant that night to request Mr S - not to visit her any more as she desired his acquaintance with her to be totally ended. He had begged her not to dismiss him with asperity because he was afraid of some malicious resentment. She had promised to do it gently but decidedly and he had come away that she might do it herself in her own way. He begged me to wait a few days.

18 Octr. Sat.

Last night I was at Mr. W -'s Mr. S - was there waiting to see her - but she sent him word that she would not come down while he stayed. At last he went and then I saw her. She looked most beautifully. Then I told her I had a communication to make to her very important to myself but that I had promised her Father to wait a day or two. She answered that she wished to be guided by him and liked to please him.

19 Oct.

C.D - (in margin Charles Holland) dined with me yesterday and left me before 8. I took a walk till 9 but my mind was so affected by its beloved object that when came home could not read so walked out again till 11 - tired went to bed but waked in an hour afterwards and could sleep no more for the next 3 hours a could only think of her. I went to breakfast with a friend to divert my mind but unable to control my feelings I left him early and as no adequate reason now exists for repressing them I have returned to my Chambers to write my avowing letter to her. I think I have no cause to be uneasy about the result - and yet I am so - nothing but the certainty of its favourable reception will now appease my anxiety.

I have written it from my heart and am easier. May it influence hers.

20 Oct. Monday.

After dining at my Mothers yesterday I returned to my Chambers, sealed my letter and took it with me to her Fathers. I think she never looked so beautifully before. She was dressed in simple

exquisite taste. Could a finer picture of loveliness be seen: Lovely mind and lovely feelings enhanced the effect of a most lovely person. Her conversation was sensible. Her demeanour to me was very modest -but soft and interesting. Mrs. M. was there and I determined to ask her to give my letter. So after supper at my request she left the room with me and I begged her, when I was gone to say for me to Mr. W - that he must permit me now to disclose my attachment - that I would submit to any other regulation that his prudence might impose - but I must be indulged in this request. My matronly friend said she was sure that nothing would give him greater pleasure nor to the Lady also, if one female could see into the heart of another. I told her that when I considered how absolutely the affair had been left in Miss W - 's own power, how much she had been assailed and importuned and yet deserted when she

most needed advice - I thought she had conducted herself with admirable judgment and I begged her to give Miss W. my letter with this Observation - and she promised to do so. I then returned into the parlour to take my leave for the evening. I kissed her hand and wished her good night with much emotion. She gently said ' Let us see you soon, I pressed her hand 'Very soon - it shall be very soon' and have come rapidly home rather tripping than walking - for the Rubican in crossed.

The letter which I copy from the Original which she still keeps and has lent it to me - was -\

Copy

My dearest Madam

It is with no common anxiety of mind that I venture to I presume so far on that obliging sweetness of Temper, which I have I so often contemplated with delight, as to solicit the honor of being; permitted to unbosom to you the feelings which I have so long made it my happiness to cherish.

After a conflict too severe to be soon forgotten, I suppressed them while I thought they would be deemed intrusive. But as it seems to me that your favor is yet unpurchased, I eagerly embrace the opportunity of avowing to you that your amiable qualities have long awakened in my breast the sincerest and the most affects innate esteem. I write with timidity because I know not with what sentiments you may read this confession. If they are averse to mine all the pleasure of my life will be clouded – for in you they all center and on your condescension they totally depend.

I will frankly confess to you that I am myself surprised to feel how absolutely my happiness depends on yours. From my earliest youth to this moment I have indeed had an uniform desire to cultivate the endearments of domestic life. The imatination of the felicity which I hoped at some time to enjoy, has never ceased to form my principal comfort in my solitary reveries. But tho my enthusiasm on this subject has never varied, I have hitherto possessed it unavailingly.

It is true that I have seen many amiable women for whom expected my sensibility I would be excited but the impressions were always transient. I wished an union of qualities so congenial to my own as to interest my heart with permanent attachment. ' But I wished so long in vain and was so often disappointed that ' I began to suspect that my habits of reflection made me look too ' far forward - and that there was more truth than wit, in the old ' Roman sarcasm that the Gods have never permitted man to be at the same time in reason and in love.

But I had hardly conceived this opinion when it was – I know not YET whether to say to my happiness or my misfortune 'or that will rest on your decision, to become sensible of your merit. Pardon me when I mention that the sympathy was so ardent and so sudden that it alarmed me into resistance. It treated me much as rudely as it has had the fame from time immemorial of treating others for Lo! it came attended with its customary concomitants 'of loss of sleep and appetite, restlessness, and those other woe begone syptoms which indicate the most desperate disease. While I was thinking myself a Hercules I soon found I was but poor puny Strephon as well adapted to sigh and pipe in the Groves of Arcadia as any of those novel lovers and tragedy heroes whom in the day of my independance, I had the temerity to laugh at.

But, my dearest Madam! desirous that my affection should be the child of an esteem that would never lessen; and not of a passion which would evaporate on success, I checked my inflamed fancy in order that my reason might convince itself that you possessed those mental accomplishments which compose the powerful magic of connubial felicity. - Beauty, I said, however interesting is destined to be transitory: but the virtues of the heart and of the understanding grow more lovely by length of

time and insure the longest period of the nuptial union - the continuance of those raptures which peculiarly adorn and felicitate its commencement.

' What were my weekly transports when I perceived that my in expectations were in nothing disappointed!! For once and but for once I found that the visions of my Fancy were realised by my

experience - Delightful hours! Yes my dearest Many! I have frequently left you almost in a delirium of ecstasy. To have found the treasure I had been so long seeking was so enrapturing a circumstance that it required the strongest exertion of my resolution to conceal from you how much I felt it. Yet I submitted to the coercion because I fancied that I sometime saw reason to doubt whether I should ever be so fortunate as to be thought worthy of your attention.

At Lymington I had three times taken up the pen to communicate to you my sensations, then but why should I recollect such painful moments. Do not the present circumstances fully convince me that I was mistaken? Have you not condescended to assure me that I was? You have - and your word has, and shall ever have ' the force of a thousand oaths with me. Your ingenuous disposition and sacred regard to truth were two of the features that first struck me in your character and it is not at this moments when your deeds confirm your words, that I can begin to mistrust them.

I am intruding a long time upon your patience - but a conversation with you is always too delightful to me to be by my consent a short one. Yet I hesitate to proceed. Dearest Miss W - I approach to a very tender point. I own I am not bold enough to think on this subject without great agitation. I love too sincerely not to be alive to every fear. My happiness is at stake - I tremble to think what I may lose and my hopes are absorbed by my apprehensions. Shall I be for life unfortunate? or shall I be blessed with the permission to devote that life to the dear and

delightful purpose of making her happy who alone can make me so. My dearest Mary! it is your esteem of which I am ambitious - may I add of more than you're my esteem? Believe me, if my attentions, my unabated affection will be but likely to create the smallest interest in that dear bosom where so much loveliness and so many virtues reside, there will be nothing left in life to covet but the daily satisfaction of seeing your felicity increasing; with my own and of being always assisting to perpetuate and to share it. For of no truth am I more firmly convinced than that "Vain is wealth fame and fortune's fostering care - If no fond breast the splendid blessings share: For each days bustling pageantry once past, There, only there, our bliss is found at last."

My dearest Miss W - ! I should think myself highly honored if I might know whether my assiduities win be unwelcome, for in that case I will never offend you by an impertinent perseverance. I am sure you are above the little vanity of keeping a well intending mind in a moments unnecessary suspense, - and the happiness which a favorable intimation will impart will be so

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great, that should I be thus distinguished, I know I can rely on the benevolence of your disposition for an early communication.

'But in every event I shall be with the greatest esteem for life

'Your sincere admirer and most

'affectionate and faithful friend

'Sharon Turner.'

'1 Pump Court Temple

'Sunday Mg. 19 Oct. 94'

Tuesday Morning 21 Oct.

Having received no discouraging answer I have just sent her a note soliciting half an hours conversation with her this afternoon and that with the hope of being so favoured I would call upon her before 5. I am engaged this evening at Hammersmith – but I must see her first unless she forbids it.

Wednesday 22 Oct.

I went yesterday at my time. Two young friends were with her. I got them to leave the room and then mentioned to her that I had taken the liberty to write to her on a subject most interesting to my happiness. She said she had received both letters and was obliged by their contents – a long talk followed. The substance of her intimation was – that she could not forgive herself for having give to Mr. S – a moments countenance. But he had extorted it frome her and from the hour she had been hurried into it to the present time she had bitterly repented of it. Hardly a day had since passed without her being in tears. She had not allowed herself to think that I meant anything serious by my compliments, and when the idea sometimes arose she had never encouraged it, because she thought I should have explained myself before I left London if I had meant to do so. After I had gone her Father became unwell and melancholy and when Mr S - made his proposals, all her friends urged her to accept them. She was told that her Youth her Fathers situation, her unprotected state if he should die required this of her and that I was not to be depended upon and meant nothing. She sought her Fathers advice and wishes and he was only angry with her. She did not know what to do amid so much importunity. She wished very much that I could be apprised how things stood - but no one would act for her and for her to write to me was too improper to be thought of. She would suffer any thing rather than take such a step. Suddenly she heard that her Father had written to me but he would not tell her what he had said. She expected then either to have seen me or to have heard from me. Instead of this she found I had written to her Father. She inquired of him what I had said and was answered ' nothing that concerned her'.

This shocked her. She thought I had forsaken her when she had done nothing to deserve it, and in the moments resentment at this and overpowered by her friends remarks and Mr. S - 's importunity - she had given him leave to continue his attentions. But she immediately afterwards regretted that she had gone so far and wished to recal her words, but neither he nor others would let her.

When I first returned to Town, she said she was very unhappy at being so circumstanced. By my behaviour at our first interview then she saw that I despised her and she could not bear it, as she had not deserved it. But before C - (Carpue) came to Town she had settled her mind and told Mr. S – that she wished their acquaintance to cease entirely. He would not take her denial but strove to keep her bound to her firs apparent acquiescence. She denied that he had a right to do so. She had made it conditional and the condition had not been complied with. He admitted this and she then told him that she felt herself at full liberty now to act a free Woman with-our any impeachment of her honor. She kindly assured me that I possessed her whole esteem - no other man had ever had it and no other ever should.

I told her that it should be my constant endeavour to deserve her regard - my highest ambition to preserve it. On this point I could not but be very anxious and urgent. But she stopped me by saying in a very modest and tremulous voice - ' Do not press me further, but if it will be such a gratification to you to know that you have and have ever had my fullest esteem, you may assure yourself that you and only you possess it. It shall be now my business to make myself deserving of yours.'

I mentioned my domestic habits. She expressed her own wishes to be to make her house her home - to cultivate my affections and to indulge in the acquaintance of a few selected friends. She asked me not to let Mr S - know just yet of my attachment to her because her Father desired this. She was sorry for his disappointment as she desired to give pain to no one - but it could not be helped and he could do her no injury - 'I defy him to

aspersion my character. He has not the smallest foundation for that. I never put myself into his power. I always kept myself reserved to him. He has told me ' that he has nothing to accuse me of but what he called a change of mind. But I have never had two minds as to him and if I had been left free to my own judgment and wished, I should never have allowed him for a moment to suppose that it could be otherwise.

I could not but here exclaim ' I am sure this is the truth. Your behaviour to me has been too exquisitely proper for it to have been otherwise to him. have no doubt about that and if I had judged you only from my own knowledge and feelings, I should not have thought for an instant unfavorable of you.'

' You need not doubt - I will never deceive you. I have declared to him most decidedly that I will not see him again.'

When I mentioned my delight in her accomplishments her answer was - 'I owe them all to my Father. I shall never forget his kindness and should not have hesitated sacrificing myself for his happiness. The desire of making him happy was my chief motive in admitting Mr. S 's addresses, but as soon as I learnt that they did not give him pleasure, all my motives for countenancing them ceased, and I have acted accordingly.'

I confessed that I had taken some pains to know her truly because I thought it concerned her happiness as well as my own that we should each be such as would make the other happy - she answered -

' I have never disguised myself. I have always wished to appear to you and to every one what I was. you always saw my real self.'

When I mentioned my agitation at Lymington she assured me she was very sorry that I had been so unhappy. She had no notion of it and if she had been fairly consulted or had known my real sentiments she would never have given me cause for it.

On the whole, tho not yet (mite 18, no woman could have more creditably conducted herself. She displayed great modesty sensibility discretion and good sense joined with an irresistible sweetness of manner - and an ever implied but never expressed tenderness. She looked down during almost the whole time. Her voice was soft and low. Her manner collected and thoughtful - but her emotions were often visible in the fluctuations of her frill and tucker, tho by her compressed lips at times she strove to repress them.

24 Oct. Friday

Last night we had another pleasing tete a tete. I had called upon her early for a Walk , but the Weather was unfavorable. She kindly declared she hoped to convince me of her desire to make me happy. I mentioned how exceedingly she had improved since I first knew her. She remarked that she was not then 16 and she had never attempted to join in any conversation with her Fathers company because the observations of a girl so young would not be regarded - but however she then both read and thought.

Reverting to the former affair she said that if she had been left to herself she would not have given to it the least countenance. Importunities of others had for a moment overpowered her, but the strongest assent she gave was that perhaps she might have no objection. She had never been with him alone and refused always to be so. It was her own wish to have postponed every thing until my return. She did not like the offer - she had scarcely expressed her half acquiescence in his attentions but she repented of it - and night after night lay sleepless looking at the moon thinking of the wretchedness that awaited her and wishing to be extricated from it. But she was told she had bound herself by her word and that it was highly dishonorable to retract. She had considered her self as a devoted person but eagerly caught the first moment she could to disentangle herself without imputation, and this, before I had made any alteration in my behaviour.

She told me that had come to Town and to her fathers un-expectedly to her and that she was in such confusion and agitation at my alienated manner that she could not stay in the room.

Returning to her Father we settled our arrangements with him. He said he thought a married state was only preferable to a single one if the parties would make each other happy. This would depend on ourselves. Our happiness would rest wholly on our mutual disposition to oblige and upon its continuance. If either forgot this the charm would be broken and misery would begin. I told him 'I hope to find it impossible to act otherwise'. She prettily added - She would not say much. Her actions should show her real feelings.

The Sequel may be shortly stated - Mr S - behaved very well on his failure. He congratulated me on my success. I reminded that I had given him his fair chance as I had waited and not interfered until that was disposed of. He said he had nothing to blame but a good deal to regret and we parted not unfriendly. He soon consoled himself by seeking and marrying another Lady.

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I resume my diary looking backward a little for what I postponed in order to complete the preceding subject.

Tuesday a8 Oct. 1794

The Trial of Hardy for High Treason came on to day at the Old Bailey. All the metropolis was, from various feelings deeply interested about it. There was a general impression that it would bring on a crisis in which the Government would either fall or be strengthened. I partook of the Sensibility and as I was entered as a student in the Inner Temple and there was a box or enclosed space in the Court appropriated for the Students - I rose at half past 4 and made my breakfast, then putting on my Students Gown and taking my certificate I was in the Old bailey by 6 waiting for admission into the Students Box. But so many others were there also that I failed of getting in then - but in the evening at 9 I went again and was admitted and found William Woodfall celebrated for his Memory under examination as to John Horne Tooke's handwriting. Erskine went up to Hardy, conversed with him smilingly as if to encourage him to hope and then applied to the Court for an adjournment.

The chief Baron Eyre at first refused this but afterwards, when Midnight was turned, acquiesced in the request. He ordered the jury not to separate, to speak to no one and to submit to such accomodations as the place could give. One of the Jury complained of being an invalid. He was told he must be locked up with the rest.

Monday 3d. Yovr.

This was the Sixth day of the Trial. I had not got to bed till two this morning but was so desirous to hear this part of the defences that I rose 2 hours afterwards at 4 - made my fire, breakfasted and was in the Old Bailey by Five. The Students had agreed that their names should be put down in a list as they came to the Public House opposite and be admitted and seated according to series. So that the earliest were sure of accomodation. I was the 15th. in the list at 5. At p. 7 we were admitted into the Court and at S the Court began the proceedings. Evidence was examined on behalf of the Prisoner.

The Duke of Richmond was called who had been active as a Whig in the American War. A copy of his letter written at that time to Col. Sharmon was put into his hands. He said that he could not affirm that to be a true copy of what he had written, because he had seen mutilated ones. He was asked to look over it. He replied that he could shorten the time by putting into their hands an authentic copy. He did so. It was examined with the other and they were found to differ only in the word " and " being misprinted.

Several Witnesses from Sheffield/succeeded and they swore that they had imbibed their notions of Reform from the Duke's Pamphlet.

Mr Sheridan was then called. His appearance from his political and also literary celebrity, made a great sensation. The attention of all became very eager. He said that when the alarm of internal danger was made at the beginning of 1793 he was one of those who believed that no cause for it existed. He had therefore moved in the House of Commons that a Committee should be appointed to inquire into it. Previous to making this motion he had a conversation with Hardy in the presence of Stuart and others in order to know what were the objects of the Corresponding Society. Mr. Hardy assured him that it was a reform on the Duke's plan and offered him the inspection of all the papers and correspondence of the Society, and also added his wish that a Committee of the House might be appointed and might examine into their proceedings as they would then see how much they had suffered from misrepresentation. Sheridan declared that Hardy then conversed and behaved like a very moderate, peaceful and honest man.

Mr. Francis M.P. - afterwards Sir Philip Francis - next stated an interview he had held with Hardy - Mangarot and two others on their petition for reform which they asked him to present. He objected to its Prayer for universal suffrage and annual Parliaments as it was the custom in such petitions to leave the relief generally to the wisdom of Parliament. They argued for their plan with so much acuteness that it amazed him to find Men of their Rank so prepared. They told him they had learnt all their topics from the Duke of Richmonds pamphlets, They said they would have gladly altered their Prayer if there had been time, but there was not as Mr. Grey would make his motion the next" day. He was particularly struck with Hardy's modest reasonable and civil behaviour.

Lord Lauderdale was then called and mentioned that he had been asked by one of the Popular societies at Edinburgh to be their delegate at the Scotch Convention. When the Witnesses for the defence had been all examined at half past three, Mt Weary Gibbs rose to make his speech for the defendant. It had been arranged that Erskine should make his full oration for Hardy at the beginning of the defence which he done with all his scarcely rivalled power e and that Mr Vicary Gibbs should be allowed to reserve his address until the evidence had closed and then to reason upon it. He began Gentlemen of the Jury! ' It is unnecessary for me to state' a He suddenly stopped. He appeared much agitated. He hung down his head - fainted and fell back. The Court was in confusion. The first idea was that he was dead. Hartshorn and water were brought and applied and in a few minutes he recovered. He got up again and said - 'That he felt most heavily the ' arduous task which lay upon him. He was overwhelmed by the ' Chaotic Fass of evidence thro which he had to wade and felt really 'and most strongly felt that his faculties were unable to do the prisoner the justice which he ought.' Tears then gushed copiously from his eyes and the tone of his voice became broken.

So vast was the Mass of Papers which had been produced that a fact had occurred on this trial which was unknown in the history I of this Country or in the annals of the World. The Attorney ' General has taken 9 hours, only to make intelligible to the jury to the evidence he had to bring forward. I have found myself incompetent to manage such a deluge of materials. I have tried to arrange it into some form in which it might be understood and by which it might be able to distinguish and to point out what Darts operated in favor of the prisoner and what pressed against him. But it is impossible to do this. I am bewildered and overwhelmed by it. I can only select what I do understand an lay before you my honest sentiments upon it.'

He then rent thro the most arraigning topics of the charges in a succession of separate points, all distinct from each other and yet finely connected. He thus dissected the accusation into so many heads as it suited him best to confront them and then attacked each individually with a most logical and effective refutation. He so put and arranged them and so directed his arguments and facts

against them, that they seemed to fall down easily before him one after another. I never heard a more masterly effort of pure intellectual skill. No declamation no apparent eloquence - but a vigorous assault of mind in which he seemed to demolish whatever he fastened upon with irresistible success by the closest and most convincing reasoning. His stream of confutation flowed on for hours with undiminished energy and effect. Whether he was right or wrong on the whole question I cannot decide - but he carried me with him on every point he handled. No oratory could be more triumphant and impressive than his animated Logic. It felt like injustice and absurdity not to agree him.

His emotions at the commencement made me really cry as he did - not his fainting - that only surprized me, but the tears running down his cheeks as he spoke excited mine and his broken tones moved my heart into congenial agitation. They gave a glowing feeling to all he uttered while they lasted which compelled me to sympathise with him and with the Prisoner he was defending. It was the sublime oratory of a masterly reason, of resolute integrity and of animated sincerity. The Lawyer and the advocate were forgotten. You seemed only to hear the honest and intelligent man vindicating from the fullest conviction an unfortunate person who was unjustly accused. I did not examine afterwards how the speech read nor whether his arguments were so sound and really annihilating as they seemed to be. But they had on my mind at the time, this satisfying effect.

On Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup>. Novr. 1794 a 20 minutes before 4 in the afternoon, the Jury brought in a Verdict of NOT GUILTY.'

I thought it a right decision. There was ( were ) plenty of seditious practises and in some of the correspondents treasonable wishes or intentions but no practical Treason was proved against Hardy - nor did I see reason to believe that he personally meditated any.

Hardy went to the other prisoners to bid them farewell and then to the debtors door of Newgate to get into a Coach. But the people soon perceived him and drew him in triumph beyond his own door into the Strand and Pall Mall. At his Mother in Law's door in Lancaster Court, he stopped the Mob who were dragging his coach and begged them to go home and assured them of his adherence to their cause. Mr Erskine and Mr Gibbs were also drawn to their houses.

They made speeches to the Populace - recommending their quiet dispersion.

Sir John Scott the Atty. Gentleman (General) was surrounded by the rabble and a loud cry was raised to hang him up at a Lamp post like the French - ' a la Lanterne'. At this he stopped and looking at those nearest to him, said with great calmness and a smile ' Why my good fellows, of what service will that be to you. You may hang me certainly if you like it. But you will as surely only get another Attorney General tomorrow, So what good can my death do you?' 'To be sure none at all' called out one man in the circle - 'So he shan't be hurt and hurra to him as a man of courage and good humour'.

They accordingly hurried him and made way for his passing thro them.

John Horne Tooke's Trial came on next. From his great celebrity I determined to attend the whole of this.

17'. 19'. 20'. Novr.

All these days I have been at Horne Tooke's Trial.

On the first day Z saw he was determined to make an impression. Therefore as soon as the Court was formed, he desired its permission to by his Counsel. This was not usual. Hardy had been all the time at the common dock as they call it. Baron Eyre said the Prisoner must remain in the usual places. But Horne Tooke persisted and pleading his infirmities was at last permitted to go and take his seat between his Counsel. I felt that this have a great commencing advantage.

Removing thus from the felon position, it took off from him the felon character. He seemed afterwards like a Gentlemen sitting near his Counsel and instructing them as on some common Trial.

This point gained, He attempted another impression on the audience and Jury to distinguish himself favourably in their eyes. He told the presiding Judge that he had heard with surprise and concern that the defendant whom the preceding jury had found guiltless of the charge that had been brought against him – the very same charge that was now renewed against himself – had been subjected to a protracted trial of above a week by repeated adjournments before the case had been finished. Now he deemed these delays and prolongations to be highly unconstitutional and illegal and oppressive. He would have none such in his case and he was therefore determined to keep both the Court and the Jury as well as himself unshirted and unshaven without any adjournment until his Trial was concluded. An irresistible laugh succeeded. Chief Baron Eyre stared and seemed confounded and afraid to enter into an encounter with such an adversary. At last he said it was for the Court to judge about the propriety of adjournment not the Prisoner. Mr Tooke answered the Judge with great ingenuity and remonstrated on the enormous speeches and more enormous Mountain of papers that had produced such adjournments. At last he acquiesced in the Courts directing the adjournment but put his concession on the ground of accommodation to the jury. He obtained the point he aimed at which was to raise himself on a pedestal and to have his trial begin with a feeling that it would be a great pity that so clever a man should be fatally convicted. It certainly created this impression in others as well as in myself and I had no doubt from that time of his acquittal unless the Crown had some striking facts of Treason to adduce that were too clear to be reasoned away.

He took another opportunity to distinguish himself by a criticism on some of the evidence which was produced as irrelevant and inapplicable and called upon the Judge to perceive it and support his objection. This was done I thought to involve Baron Eyre in an argument with him that he might get some intellectual advantage over him and make another favourable impression on all around.

The Baron said that the particular subject which had been impugned might have no direct reference to the charge as to the defendant but it might form the part of a chain of circumstances and documents and so be applicable and necessary - 'Be it so my Lord! but if the case against me be only upheld by a factitious chain, then if cut up a single link of that chain, or if one single link be found rotten down must go the whole tho it should have 50 or 100 other links all stout and stable. The Gentlemen of the Jury will I am sure remember your Lordships just Metaphor and watch the chain accordingly.'

On 2 or other occasions he interfered in this way with the same object and to the same effect. He meant to be defended by the eloquence and ingenuity of his Counsel. He therefore had himself strictly no right to speak and it was for them to do what he did if it were proper. But by these unexpected interferences he drew the attention of the Jury strongly to himself. He displayed an acute but good humoured ingenuity unlike that of a dark minded virulent Traitor and he excited a hope and wish that a man of such Talent should not be put to death. The Countenance and manner of all within my range of vision and of the Jury satisfied me that he had raised these feelings and was certain of acquittal unless some striking and undeniable fact made this impossible. I saw that no constructive reason would do for I was sure the Jury would seek and desire to give their inferences another direction as soon as they found it would remain with them to reason on the vast chain and to form their own conclusion.

These little chit chats with the Judge were so much by play which divested the worthy but pompous Baron of a great deal of his weight and influence, for he was vastly inferior in

the intellectual conflict. By every one of them Horne Tooke raised himself a step higher and made a verdict against him less probable.

Erskine's speech of 5 hours in his defence when the long chain of Evidence against him had been ended was most impressive. It was very egotistical but by the egotism, he so mingled his own feelings with his clients and so identified them together that you could not convict the one without condemning the other – and the glowing stream of his eloquence made you feel that however blameable or imprudent you might deem much that was brought forward, there was nothing traitorous either in intention or in act.

Yesterday (20 Nov.) some of the first men of the Country were called among the Evidence for the Defendant – obviously to increase the impression in his favour by mixing up his case with such distinguished personages. Among these – Mr Pitt was examined. He gave his evidence in a clear firm and stately manner. But when Sheridan was question on some of the same points, he gave answers different from Mr Pitts and seemed I thought to point them purposely into a contradicting effect as far as without actual falsehood he could do so. Pitt not only felt this, but felt that something further was necessary for himself to obviate the idea that he had misstated any fact. He therefore came forward again from his seat on the Bench and said he wished to make an additional remark to what he had mentioned. 'O Sir;' said in his pompous manner the presiding Chief Baron Eyre rising magisterially up and taking up his note Book and Pen; then turning his head to Mr Pitt - 'You wish to correct some Part or your Evidence.' Pitt fired at this accusing term and coloring with indignation at this supposition of a prevarication exclaimed so loudly that all might hear him 'NO SIR: not to correct that which needs no correction - but to add an explanatory comment upon it, that after what has been said, it may not be misconstrued or misunderstood.'

( Note by W.T.)

My Father has more than once in talking about this Trial mentioned that he remembered the words used by Tooke at a Public Dinner that would have been sufficient to convict him a if he had been called as a witness - but that the Witnesses who had been present seemed to have forgotten the exact words, and so the sting in Tookes words as against him was lost. W.T.

The Solicitor General Sir John Mitford, made a very dull tho elaborate and able reply and in a very dull manner, not at all giving any force to his cause but tiring every one and on Saturday night - 22' Nov. the Jury after only ten minutes deliberation acquitted John Horne Tooke. His friends came around him to congratulate him on his liberation. To one whom I knew he after-wards said ' When I was arrested I thought they had or meant to forge some damning facts against me beyond what I had any recollection of that would be fatal to me. For I could not suppose that they intended my Trial to be only a vague political experiment for party slander, did not give them credit for such folly. I am therefore as much astonished as delighted to find that they had nothing but their constructive logic against me on a pack of idle papers the usual stuff of party faction and political enthusiasm. I saw it would be all moonshine from the beginning or that I should make it so. It has inconvenienced me - but it will only make another nitch in my Biography.'

The mornings were bitterly cold and it required no small resolution to leave my bed at such early hours as I was forced to do to secure a place - but the pleasure of going in the Evening to detail to my dear Lady and her Father what had passed - the interest she took in it - his thanks and surprise and my memory and her more cordial thanks for giving him so much gratification made me insensible to the freezing Winds half starvation and laborious attention I had to undergo.

It surprised me to find that notwithstanding these 2 acquittals the Government was determined to pursue their charge against-the other persons they had apprehended and to put them successively on their trials. But the Ministry would not see that it was the constructive nature of the alleged guilt which caused them to fail. Many thought the defeats were owing to

the particular Juries who had been chosen and therefore hoped by having new ones they might yet be successful. This was ill reasoned for the preceding gave an impulse and a tone to the subsequent.

The wall was the next put to the Bar and a new Jury sworn. He had been sufficiently violent as an orator to the Audiences who came to see him in public rooms who paid for their admission the little sum that then formed his chief source of maintenance. He would have made himself conspicuous in any general movement of a dissatisfied population, but from all I could learn he had done nothing that could be called direct legal Treason. His trial went on like the others for several days, but I was not interested to attend it as I had not liked his temper, style and line of conduct.

One of his jury told me some little time afterwards that within the first hour after the prosecuting speech had begun, they made up their minds to acquit him for they perceived that it would be a case of what was not actual treason – but only what a lawyers brain and words would make out to be so. But not to seem impatient or partial they let the government counsel take their own course and quietly waited till their hour came for giving their verdict.

This third disappointment terminated these prosecutions. Holcroft Joyce and several others were in custody. But the indictments were abandoned against them all much to the displeasure of Mr. Holcroft. He was the only one who rejoiced that he had been arrested. He looked forward to his public trial as to a theatre of his glory. He meant to make it a scene of philosophic magnanimity and endurance rivaling that of Socrates. With these feelings it was a gratification to him to be carried to Newgate. He sent for his upholsterer and had his room or cell furnished with a new bed, chairs and table and prepared with all his energies for a grand public exhibition.

It was therefore a great and unexpected mortification to be dismissed quietly and obscurely away. He remonstrated against it, but the court would not listen to him and he was obliged to depart discontented with the liberation for which all the rest were joyous and thankful.

My conviction is that both the trials and acquittals will be a public benefit. The arrests and accusations have created a personal sense of danger from all treasonable acts which will keep the populace and their leaders from any such conduct in future – while the acquittals have diffused a general satisfaction and to the lower classes a kind of triumphant joy which is putting them into a great good temper.

As the government meant, as I was informed and from a good quarter, to have executed those who should be convicted, this would have begun a sanguinary train of action on their part which would have raised gloomy hating and revengeful and most dangerous feelings always likely to explode with uncertain results among the general public. As the issue has been the thunder clouds have discharged harmlessly their perilous matter – and are rolling safely away to leave the political atmosphere in its usual order and serenity.

At my mother's Mia Cara told me that the first day she saw me, she did not like me, but that every visit afterwards altered her feeling and created a new additional regard for me. She said she saw I was devoted to study and that her friends and some of my own wanted to make me a busy politician – and she determined quietly and silently to enter the lists against them and also against my books – and to win me if possible to herself; but without letting me or any one know or perceive her intentions. She had been particularly glad to find that I would not mix myself with political agitations and she liked me the better because I had avoided and blamed them.

I told her that ever since I had read and compared Tom Paine and Mr Burke I had disliked and shunned them – but amid the exciting events that arose and the earnest discussions I had heard there was always a chance that I should have caught the contagion and have shared in the general fever. I had been many times tempted to do so, and I had

really believed that the honest truth was that my attachment to her had been my best preservative.

More private memoranda as to my dear Wife.

On Sunday 26 Oct. 1794 –

I mentioned my attachment and intention of settling to my mother and sister for the first time. Both were much pleased to hear it and wished to be introduced to my dear lady. My loved mothers kind remark was ‘If you feel you can afford to marry nothing will give me greater pleasure, and whoever you choose will be always welcome to me. Marriage should be always a free choice on both sides.’

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> Novr.

Yesterday (9<sup>th</sup>) I introduced Miss W – to my dear and amiable mother. She never looked better, nor talked better. Her conversation was a clear and full stream of thought memory and good humour. When she saw the Gamester acted she was in tears all the time and in the last act was so overcome that she could neither see nor hear.

25 Nov.

I have been the last fortnight looking about for a house that in situation price and condition will be what will suit. Yesterday I saw one that united these considerations and went to mention it to her. I found her dressing for an evening party at Mr. Byrnes. She has become the most beautiful creature I have ever seen, for her sweet features are at once animated, intelligent and expressive. Her mind is always speaking in her face.

Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov.

I introduced Miss W – to my sister at my Chambers.

9 Dec.

Acting on her approbation I settled this day for the house No 9 Featherstone Buildings as best suiting our moderate circumstances. I have arranged with my landlord that it shall be quite ready for her reception by the end of the month.

December 1794

But while I have been so happy in the month that has passed it has proved misery and ruin to ill used and sacrificed Poland. The accounts have arrived that the terrible Suwarrow has succeeded in defeating and slaughtering the defenders and has destroyed its independence. While he was raising batteries and entrenchments at Cherson to protect the Crimea against Tartars and Turks – he was selected by the Empress to overwhelm Kosciusko and the Patriot Poles.

He was ordered in September to hasten to take to take the command of the Prussian Army of 30,000 men which had been prepared at Niemen and make a decisive attack as soon as possible on warsaw. He went with this object with his accustomed rapidity, attacked and overcame all the Polish Armies in his way in 2 engagements and 3 battles and in the beginning of November having been joined by the forces of General Terson and two others was before Warsaw and its entrenched camp at Praga with above 50,000 men.

He determined on an immediate assault. The suburb of Praga was defended by 100 cannon disposed in several batteries and by 26,000 well trained soldiers. As this artillery was certain to be destructive he determined as in his storm of Turkish Ismael to make the dead bodies of the first who fell the means by which those behind could the easier ascend to the assault. He ordered his troops to use only the sabre and the bayonet – to press forward at

every cost and to give no quarter. And on 4<sup>th</sup> November while it was yet dark commanded the whole 50,000 to charge at the various points he had selected. For two hours the conflict raged with a slaughter which has been seldom equaled. At last the Poles were overpowered. The last forces of the Prussians burst into the rampart. The bridge over the Vistula was broken in the action. Some places were in flames and above 15,000 Poles perished from the weapons – the fire and the water. The resistance lasted for 8 hours and the Russians in their excited fury continued the massacre for 2 hours more. 12,000 inhabitants of both sexes and of all ages were killed besides the soldiers. The officers were then unable to restrain their troops as they wished and the pillage did not end till the noon of the fifth. Of the 26,000 Poles – 13,000 were killed in the suburbs – 2000 drowned and 11,000 made prisoners – only 1000 escaped by flight. On the 9<sup>th</sup> Warsaw surrendered and general Suwarrow entered it in triumph.

Before this while Suwarrow was marching – the patriotic Koscuisko was intercepted and defeated. Hearing that general Terson was proceeding to join Suwarrow with 20,000 men – Koscuisko, tho he had only 12,000 Poles resolved to prevent him – but the day before he meant to have joined battle with him, he was attacked himself by Terson on 10<sup>th</sup> October ten leagues from Warsaw. The conflict lasted 5 hours. The Prussians were 3 times repulsed, but at last overpowered the Poles: Koscuisko always in the hottest of the battle had 3 horses killed under him and was wounded from behind by a Cossack with his lance. He fell but recovered again so as to rise and run a few yards – a Russian Officer then cut him across the head with a sabre and he fell again apparently lifeless. He was secured and carried – not dead – into the Prussian camp in the peasant dress he assumed. Thus has ended the brave struggle of Poland to establish its national independence. Noble country! Your name is immortalized – but you have lost everything except your honor.

The battle of Suwarrow with the Poles near Brzese – 8<sup>th</sup> Sept. – as he began his advances to Warsaw shows the Spartan spirit with which they defended their well merited freedom. Having crossed the Bog in the morning he attacked them at their left wing. They repulsed him ten times before they gave way and on their retreat still fought desperately. The battle lasted 8 hours before they were completely defeated. It is stated in the account of Oct. 19 that ‘out of 13,500 of the best Polish troops consisting of old established Regiments besides the armed peasantry only 500 were made prisoners as they would not accept of pardon. All the rest except 300 men who escaped were cut to pieces, so that the field of battle for some miles was covered with their dead.’

Who can with hold their regret and sympathy for such a catastrophe. It is truly said that ‘the violent dismemberment and partition of Poland was the first great breach in the modern political system of Europe.’ And yet – the philosopher King Frederic the 2<sup>nd</sup> is said to have originated and caused its execution.

1795

3<sup>rd</sup> January. This evening I met at Mr. Goodrich’s in Queen Square a singular looking clergyman to whom he appeared to pay great respect. News had arrived at Christmas that in this unusually severe winter the Rhine as well as the Waal were frozen over in Holland and that our troops would be unable to prevent the passing of the French over the ice if it lasted – and in that case they would soon be masters of Holland. This day came the intelligence that Pichegru had effected the passage and that the Dutch state was now at his mercy. This gentleman reading the paper to his host over their wine. As soon as I was seated, he turned enthusiastically to me tho a stranger and exclaimed ‘Do you know Sir, who has done this wonderful thing?’ I answered ‘I believe Pichegru and the frost.’ ‘No, Sir!’ was his reply – raising his hands and arms upwards towards the ceiling ‘He that is above Sir! The Deity! He has done it. It is his work. No human power could have accomplished it. The frost has obeyed

his commands and we behold the great result.' I found his name was Mr. Hunt – an American refugee – a clever but eccentric man. It was the father of Mr. Leigh Hunt.

Having a pit ticket for the opera sent me I went there after this to hear Banti – and was delighted with her tones – and with her management of them, tho the report I have heard that she drinks so much brandy lessened my enjoyment by destroying the fascination which an interesting woman produces.

As I sat in the pit there a gentleman next to me turned to one behind and said – 'Lord William! I understand the Duke of Bedford dines at Burlington House tomorrow. Could you get me to make one?' The answer of Lord William Bentinck was 'I can't say now but in the morning I will let your lordship know.' I thought it odd that when a noble man had settled his dinner party that another not invited should thus obtrude himself and put the duke under the alternative of admitting him unwillingly or of refusing such a personal application.

4 January. 1795

This day is my charmer's birthday. She is now 18. I wished our marriage to have taken place this morning but she has refused it to this day fortnight.

11 January

On the 6<sup>th</sup> from Holland General Walsmoden writes 'That the violence of the frost has converted the whole country into a plain which gives the greatest facility to the enemy in their movements and that General Dundas with the British troops had therefore been forced to fall back from the Waal.' On 9<sup>th</sup> January Lieutenant General Harcourt states that a sudden thaw having come on upon the 6<sup>th</sup> offered a prospect of our preserving our positions to defend Holland – but that the frost had again set in with such severity that this idea must be relinquished. According to the next Gazette our troops were preparing to cross the Yessell. Pichegru therefore will soon be at Amsterdam.

11 January 1795

Sunday

This is the last Sunday of my being in these chambers, or in the single state. This day week I shall be married to one of the handsomest, the best tempered, the best disposed of her sex. To one who I believe will be the sensible and intelligent woman. She has told me that it was the first wish of her heart to be united to me before I declared my attachment. There are several gentlemen now who desire her hand and would, if they could be in my place. But she has honored me with her preference and I am most grateful for it. I love her most ardently, she is my fairy form of happiness. Her voice is sweeter to my ear than the finest melody. Her presence is to me the most beautiful of pictures. All these feelings can only become more tender by our union. May they be as lasting as our existence!

On 18 January 1795

We were married in Marylebone Church at the bottom of High Street. But her father would not be present at the ceremony – tho he had told me how happy he was that she was going to be my wife and only regretted that he could not, owing to his French embarrassments give an fortune with her. Tho he took trouble in looking for a house to suit us and went gladly with me to the proctor to give his consent to my license, because she was under age. Yet when the hour of parting with her came, he could not bear it. He could not even see her. He would not rise to go to the church to give her away. When we returned to breakfast; still he could not prevail on himself to meet us. He kept in his bed and said he was too ill to move. From the same feeling he would not join our festivities in the dinner, nor see us. He declared himself utterly unable. The struggle of parting with her who had been for so many years the great

comfort of his life over came every other feeling. So that I saw clearly how much the Lympington affair had benefitted us, for if I had asked him consent before that had broken down so many obstructions, and caused so much trouble I should certainly have found a refusal from his reluctance to relinquish her. So that all had happened for the best.

This day began a new period of my life. The realization of all my young dreams and maturer wishes! The sweetest and most heart affecting happiness that Earth can furnish.

Here ended the romance, or as some would call it, the poetry of my life, from this time all became serious and solid realities. For nothing else would support the fairy palace of my human happiness but the steady and regular application of my mind and time with all due care and diligence to the profession from which my wordly resources were to arise. Our wishes were moderate, but eh supply must be increasing. I resolved to make the proper discharge of my business my first concern – and hoped by constant attention – by unremitting industry – by improving judgment and by strict integrity, to obtain from it the maintenance we needed – making literature the occupation only of my leisure and uniting with it the society of my beloved. All this I have been enabled to accomplish.

The Divine blessing was upon my mind and life, so that altho the successive births of 13 children brought on a series of increasing expense, the means were never wanting for a comfortable subsistence and yet the professional demand for my time was so regulated by Him to whom I owe all my benefits and enjoyments that I had at all periods sufficient intervals for the study I coveted and for the compositions to which my mind led me. In all these I found in my beloved the intellectual companion I desired and at her side and by her encouragement and by her aid whenever necessary and amid her interesting little ones as they came to us and with feelings and ideas kindled by her and often suggested by her, all that I have attempted has been done. The cares and ailments and trials which cannot but attend a large family, we had our share of – and at times her heart was much affected by the weakness which her early family brought on – and once to my great alarm and affliction was for some weeks seriously endangered. But these were only the occasional clouds which come on every human life in some shape or other. The general stream of our days was that of all reasonable comforts as to wordly things and of continual enjoyment of mutual attachment – personal improvement, undiminished happiness and unreceding prosperity. I cannot look back on this period of my marriage without feeling the gratitude I owe to the gracious providence which occasioned it to take place. I never less deserved His favour than at the moment and yet I was not forgotten nor abandoned by Him whom I ought never to have forgotten or neglected. My allegiance to him was then in great danger of giving way when nearly the whole world was deserting him. I was then becoming an idolater of mind and of its self power and self sufficiency and was much attracted by one of Holcroft's favorite theories – that the mind has in itself the ability to accomplish anything it may chuse to direct itself to – if we would duly and strenuously exert it. Hence I was relaxing in some of my better views and principles. My marriage ended all these fantastic dreams of pride and vanity. A train of nobler thoughts and conclusions came upon me. The Realities that dressed upon pie sobered icy mind and consolidated my judgment. There was something in my Dear Lady and in her Society which destroyed the illusion of my false philosophies, An influence came over my mind which I did not then duly appreciate or refer to its proper source. But it worked its own effects in its own way and I now most grateful acknowledge its sacred origin and nature, its invaluable results and my indelible obligations to that Divine spirit by whom it was imparted.

I feel my inexpressible obligations to the Divine goodness for leading me to her, for enabling me to marry her and for that train of circumstances which when I thought we had separated for ever, ended so unexpectedly in uniting me to her, the more strongly because it was only such a Lady as from the peculiarities her education she had become as would have fully suited me. My own intellectual pursuits from the twelfth year of my age made an

intellectual Wife indispensable to me for either of us to be happy in our union. I also wished and I may say needed one who had the accomplishments she possessed. Yet I did not like the learned Ladies and Philosophresses whom I had met nor any who set up to be clever and who claimed notice as such, nor did I wish an Authoress. All such had disappointed me and I thought that with them I should not have that natural and domestic happiness I sighed for. Yet I aspired to a Woman of a cultivate mind and taste, of delicate feelings and with the manners of a Lady and to one who with these was willing to be the quiet domestic friend, the careful housekeeper and a Mother that would nurse and educate her children.

Humble in circumstances and station myself I had no pretensions to any one with such combinations - nor were all I wished very likely to be met together. They were at least in circles above my means of reaching or frequenting. Yet in her I found all that I wished or wanted. For when we had settled tho she possessed the qualities I have noted from my Diary, she adapted herself immediately to all the prudential habits and judicious economy and family attentions which my situation required. She had been taught by her Father to be content with little, to like simple dress to avoid expenses and yet never to be mean or shabby. And such I found her, always with a natural elegance in every thing yet never assuming or self protruding or displaying or even having any consciousness that she was the unusual treasure I experienced her to be. She never put me to a shillings expense. What I could spare for her dress and housekeeping I gave her as it came and she suited herself to it – applied it wisely and never desired more than the temporary means. Yet there was nothing pinched – no locking up – no scolding – no ill humour. When our supplies were small we were more forbearing ourselves – but never let a Servant have reason to be dissatisfied. Thus I had all the advantages of a Lady with the manner and attainment of those who have been brought up in an expensive style and yet so trained and so well regulated in herself as to have all the moderation and simple tastes which an humble Cottage could possess. I should have been soon shipwrecked without this combination – and therefore my gratitude has been increasing to the Gracious Providence who has befriended me for having blessed me with it and again say with regret, when too little deserving of it. It was the completion of her character that she brought up 5 daughters to be the counterparts of herself.