

Mary Shelley, *Life of William Godwin*

1: literature

autobiographiesⁱ

c.606/1

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1)ⁱⁱ

“(1791) On the 29th of April of this year Mr Holcroft and I wrote two anonymous letters, he to Mr Fox & I to Mr Sheridan.ⁱⁱⁱ Mr Fox in a debate on the bill for giving a new constitution to Canada, had said, that he would not be the man to propose the abolition of a house of Lords in a country where such a power was already established, but as little would he be the man to recommend the introduction of such a power where it was not - this was by no means the only public indication he had shewn how deeply he had drunk of the spirit of the French revolution - the object of the above mentioned letters was to exite [sic] these two illustrious men to persevere gravely & inflexibly in the career on which they had entered - I was strongly impressed with the sentiment, that in the then existing circumstances of England & of Europe, great & happy improvements might be achieved under such auspices without anarchy & confusion - I believed that important changes might must arise, & I was inexpressibly anxious that such changes should be effected under the conduct of the best & most competent leaders.

“This year was the main crisis of my life^{iv} - in the summer of the year 1791 I gave up my concern in the *New Annual Register*, the historical part of which I had written for seven years,^v & abdicated, I hope for ever, the task of performing a literary labour the nature of which should be anything but the promptings of my own mind - I suggested to Robinson the bookseller the idea of composing

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a *Treatise on Political Principles*,^{vi} & he agreed to aid me in executing it - my original conception proceeded on a feeling of the imperfections & errors of Montesquieu,^{vii} & a desire of supplying a less faulty work In the first fervour of my enthusiasm I entertained the vain imagination of “hewing a stone from the rock” which by its inherent energy & weight should overbear & annihilate all opposition, & placing the principles of politics on an immoveable basis. I need not add to anyone who has read the work, that it was my first determination to tell all that I

apprehended to be truth, confident that from such a proceeding the best results were to be expected. - My residence this year^{viii} was in Titchfield Street, Marybone.

Duke reel 2^{ix}

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Chapter II

Continuation of autobiography - removal from Wisbeach - residence at Guestwick - coronation of George III - Schoolmistress - Religious bias of his instructors - resolves to be a clergyman - Sermons - temper of his father - desires to run away - the Cat - Schoolmaster - Mrs Sothren^x - visit to Norwich - the seat on the top of the organ

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Chapter IV

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The autobiographical fragment ends here. There are few written documents & few survivors to tell the story of the years intervening between 1773 & 1793 - twenty years during which ^a double & ^ the momentous struggle was going ^forward^ - mentally it brought Godwin from being learned & a teacher the learning & teaching of the Latinistic form of Christianity into the character of an apostle of disbelief into scepticism & final disbelief In a more worldly view.

During these years he Mr. Godwin prepared for the ecclesiastical state; he became a preacher of the gospel - seceded from the church - entered on an arduous struggle

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for a maintenance by the literary labour & finally established his fame as a man of genius.

No letters of his remain written during this period. I find a correspondance with [illeg] that concerns the carrying on the Annual Register & some a few letters from his family. Besides these there are some few memoranda & notes which continue the history of his life - together

with scattered remarks on the progress & formation of his opinions. These were written later in life - & put down either as materials for the continuation of his autobiography - or to assist the future writer of his life collater of his remains. I introduce these as they appear to accord with the person or topic in hand. The following first among the following fragments is somewhat a repetition of the foregoing pages - but it places some of the circumstances in a new & impressive light; and I insert it here before we are carried onward to view the effects of the operations of mind that it records.

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At this place ends any regular autobiography^{xii} A few notes carry on Mr Godwin's personal history for some years - & in process of time a good many letters fill up the void.

At seventeen Mr Godwin's destiny in life future career was decided by a journey to London.^{xiii} It is evident that at that time he possessed the intellectual ardour - yet ^constitutional^ calm of disposition that accompanied him through life. There was within him an anticipation of future greatness. Even as a child, I have heard him say, that he was often influenced by the reflection, "How would such or such an act look in the history of my life?" - this might be called mere vanity, had not his aspirations after fame ^always^ ^been of the purest & loftiest nature.

Timid yet in manner, but with considerable internal ^self^confidence; desirous of the approbation & sympathy of others - yet without that overflowing sensibility communicativeness of heart of soul disposition that wins love, & e or that co overflowing sensibility of soul that readily participates in the pains & pleasures of others - he was often doomed to receive coldness when he felt his own heart warm open warmly to the sentiments of friendship; & often did quiescence of manner & tardiness in understanding & entering into the feelings of others cause him to chill & stifle those overflowings of mind from those he loved which he would have received with ardor had he been previously prepared.

In one of the last - & in many respects the wisest of Mr Godwin's works, he refers in two ^three^

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three four of the pages to his own individual mind & in two of them to his ow the feelings of his early boyhood.

The two extracts, marked by inverted commas, are taken from the last & in many respects the most delightful of my father's works, Thoughts on Man.^{xiv}

“I find in myself, for as long a time as I can remember trace backward the records of Memory, a prominent vein of docility. Whatever it was proposed to teach me, that was in any degree accordant with my constitution & capacity, I was willing to learn. - In addition to this vein of docility, which early prompted me to learn whatever was proposed for my instruction, I felt in myself a sentiment of ambition - a desire to possess the qualifications which I found to be productive of esteem and that should enable me to excel among my contemporaries. I was ambitious to be a leader, & to be regarded by others with feelings of complacency. I had no wish to rule by brute force or compulsion; but I was desirous to govern by love, & honour, & “the cords of Man”.

In another portion of the same essay he remarks

“I go back to the recollections of my youth & can scarcely find where to draw a line between swiftness & maturity. The thoughts that occurred to me as far back as I can recollect them are often shrewd; the suggestions ingenious, the judgements not seldom acute. I feel myself the same individual all through. Sometimes I was unreasonably presumptuous, & sometimes unnecessarily [sic] mistrustful”.^{xv}

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The briefest outline written by the man himself contains more real information in matters of biography than pages of uncertain guesses. The following skeleton of his life Indeed nothing but conjecture is left us with regard to the early manhood of Mr Godwin - & we are glad to see the path through these years traced by his own hand, however slight the sketch may be - the following consists of brief annals of the years from 1772 to 1798 1796,^{xvi} written either to assist his own memory if he continued his autobiography, or to prevent material mistakes in any future history.^{xvii}

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Having arrived at a certain ^the^ limit of the account which Mr Godwin gives of himself it is necessary to go back for the sake of greater detail - to give an account of his literary career - the political events in which he took a part - & to view his position in society - the variety of persons who sought to know him & the circles he formed out of these of near & particular friends - his domestic habits - & those peculiar modes of thinking & acting that influenced his manner of life.

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letters

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During this year^{xx} we begin the series of letters which mark & illustrate a very interesting portion of Godwin's Life. Unfortunately, many of these letters are to him, instead of from him. But I see no reason for suppressing a reasonable number of them on that account. A private man's life is spent among his friends and derives its interest from the variety of sentiments or events that occur in friendly intercourse. - In modern times, even when living in the same town, thanks to the twopenny post, much of this intercourse is carried on by ^means of^ pen ink & paper - & to give the notes & letters a man receives ^as well as writes^ is to cite the subjects on which his heart is set - which occupy his thoughts - & influence him to sadness or enjoyment. Most of the letters I insert however are from celebrated people - nor do I insert any that do not derive an interest from the writer, from the subject, or the style in which light it throws ^in a just measure^ on my Father's feelings & opinions. I give these letters chronologically - for, as far as I can judge, that is the most effectual way of interesting the reader.

The first in the series is from his mother^{xxi} who, as he mentioned in his Life, had after losing her husband become uncomfortable in mind, through association with Methodists. The primitive tone of the letter, its mixture of religious precept with a warning not to walk in the dark, renders it a precious relic of the good old times.

Following this is a letter from Godwin to his mother. I do not know whether it was written in answer^{xxii} - but as to a great degree it is an answer it can be inserted with as great propriety as in any other place. It is taken from copy in his own hand

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writing; but being merely a copy accounts for the abruptness of the conclusion.

Doubtless in the real letter On the top of the real letter the proper ceremonies of subscription were observed.

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c.516/1 [Ann Godwin to William Godwin]

19) dear William,

Dalling Ap 5 92

I earnestly pray you may be making progress Heavenward, that is my fear & question, on account of the little appearance of religion in those that are left as well as those yt are departed this life, my life is bitter, am oblig'd to cry out with David Ps 13 How long wilt thou forget me O Lord forever, How long wilt thou hide thy face from me, I may say I pray without ceasing for you, 3 times a Day, besides the sleepless hours of the night and my strength is so feble that I know not how to sustain myself in the day somtimes. I know that its Gods work to make the hart susceptible of divine Impressions. Not ye most Eloquent Preachers, for they are but Earthen Vesels, Paul & [?Apolas]^{xxiv} may plant & water, but without God gives the increase no fruit will spring up.

Godsword is full of promises to those who seek in sincerity, relying on Christ as the atoning sacrifice & intercesor, for sure ^I am^ that sinners cannot be justified, &, accepted, by any righteousness of their own. His word declares that by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. and for that reason Christ came to make a propitiation, to offended justis, that all who beleive in him might be saved, You know its not ment without observing their faith by their obedience as far as we in our falen , &, depraved state, are capable. but its not said that his affronted & dispised patience will last always, a bare crying for mercy at last is a dangerous experiment. -- I'm oblig'd to you for the respect you profess for me. If I could see my Children walk in ye truth I should be happy, my Happiness is bound up in thires. It would sweeten my expiring moments, with Views of meeting those I have ^been^ ye instrument of bringing into life, in the happy Regions of blessedness, where all perplecty will forever cease. -- Thank ye for ye information you gave me respecting Natty, as to ye name of ye ship Captn &c [.] Am sorry he has not a better constitution, for he can have but few indulgences in the way of life He is in. the tempers of seafairing men are generally like the boisterous Element, I hope there will come a time that he will fare better, tho I dont think Mr Harry have been so kind to him as might be expected considering he had been so many

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years in his service, his perseverance is a good sign, for what c'd be done wth him otherwise, I dont know. Am really sorry John should accept a place an ^iniquitous ^ employment, I think He might make a living of the two Clarks Places without the Lottery. I gave him my advice before I rec'd yours or knew anything abt it, not to disoblige Mr Finch, least he should lose his place. but would have you use all the influence you have to prevale with him to keep the two places, & never more to engage in the Lottery. I think he might do exceeding well with his pay, & the perquisites. I sincearly wish Mrs Cooper cou'd meet with an agreeable situation beleive they are hard to be met with, beleive there is something in her temper that forbids happiness, It must give Miss Cooper much uneasiness. Miss Cooper is [^{^sic}] think a very senceable prudent agreeable Girl. Poor Hannah wrote me of the unlucky accident that befell her of her being push'd down in the street & her Cloths being spoiled, It was a great mercy she escaped so well as she did, & was able to get home I hope it will be a warning not to be out of an Evening at least not to come home alone. Intend writing to her soon, Am glad She has got such an agreeable girl as Miss Green to bare her company I was exceedingly hurt that you should have borrow'd 5 g ^guineas^ of Mr Venning so long, & then say to me when I was in Town [illeg] so mean as to mention it. What would you have him do, or what would

you have done in such a predicament. However I have paid it, & shall expect your note for it. You can inquire at Fish street Hill when its likely, Mr Jacob will be in Town for you to meet him, & give him a proper note. These things so often repeated with all the oeconomy I am Mistress of shall not be able to do any thing for the young ones. -- I have a few friends that I highly value Mrs Sothren & Mrs Foster & Mrs A Hill is a comfort & help to me. but Mrs Sothren is a Person you ought to Rever as your second Mother, who nurtur'd you in your infancy. I did not expect she would [[^]sic] got this winter over She is so assmatic, thro divine mercy she is yet spared & hope shall see her in the course of the Summer. Mrs Hill was confined near 6 weeks has had a bad complaint of her neck, otherways much as usual --

She and Hully desire to be kindly remembered to you

from your Affecate Mother A Godwin

Shall give you a few sketches of a sermon I have lately read

[marginal note in MWS hand]

Here follows the abstract for sermon on ^{xxv}

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^{xxvi} **William Godwin to Ann Godwin**

I am exceedingly sorry that you should suffer yourself to form so unfavourable an opinion of my sentiments as & character as you express in your last letter. Noth Not that I am anxious so far as relates to myself what opinion may be formed of me by any human jud being; I am answerable only to God & conscience. But I am sorry even without deserving it to occasion you the smallest uneasiness.

You seem to regret to my having quitted the character of a dissenting minister. To that I can only say with the utmost frankness whatever inference may be drawn from it, that the character quitted me, when I was far from desiring to part with it.

With respect to my religious sentiments I have faithfully endeavoured to improve the faculties & opportunities that God has given me, & I am perfectly easy about the consequences. No man can be sure that he is not mistaken, but I am sure that if I am so the best of beings will forgive my error. I have now more reason to hope for it than ever. My views I think were always right, but they now [[^]sic] nobler & more exalted. I am in every respect, so far as I am able to follow the dictates of my own mind, perfectly indiffe

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rent to all personal gratification. I know of nothing worth living for but usefulness & the service of my fellow creatures. The only object I pursue is to increase as far as lies in my power the quantity of their knowledge & goodness & happiness. And as I derive every thing from God, I hope the situation in which I am now placed is that in which I am likely to be useful. Always anxious to resemble the great creator, can I be afraid of his displeasure? If he has resolved to punish in another world those who are most sincerely desirous to act properly & uprightly in this, what must we think of his goodness or his mercy

Mr M. ^{xxvii} had no authority from me to mention any circumstances relative to my pecuniary situation, but as he did mention them, I can only say that I believe he told you nothing but the truth. In signing my name to the

paper he mentioned I was made to believe I should essentially serve the person concerned, & be myself exposed to no risque. The fact turned out otherwise, & it is easy to condemn any mode of proceeding, when we have first seen in what manner it turns out. I am however cured by what has happened, & am pretty sure I shall never in future be induced to venture in a similar engagement. I have already paid upon account of this business near

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one hundred pounds, & the whole so far as relates to me may be considered as finished. But, though by frugality & strict economy I have been able to do this, you must think that it has reduced [[^]sic] to considerable shifts, & that some few tradesmen’s bills of my own have been neglected, in order to extricate me from this more urgent demand. This was the reason Mr M. thought proper to mention the subject to you; but I should never have done so, & was determined to struggle with my own difficulties as well as I could.

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In 1785 Mr Godwin’s only sister Hannah returned from Norwich & settled herself in London.^{xxviii} She was affectionately attached to her brother, & her letters now lying before me are full of proofs of the kind & active interest he took in her welfare. For himself he deeply sympathized with the poor - & was ever ready to assist in whatever way he was able the various members of his own family who were struggling painfully to make their way in the world. In one of his mother’s letters, dated 1797, she says, “I have been burning a great number of old letters; but when I came to yours it was with great reluctance that I destroyed them, there is such a kind & benevolent spirit towards your dear sister & J in their difficulties necessities[. “]”^{xxix}

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journals

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Of Mr Godwin’s dinners & interviews with Sheridan there exist several records in scattered notes which we will present in their crude state thus giving a livelier idea of what passed than any comments drawn from them by us.^{xxx}

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1788 At the parties of Mr Brand Hollis, whom I first saw at Mr Timothy Hollis's of Ormond St, I became acquainted with Mr John Adams, American Ambassador[,] Mr Romilly, Mr Richard Sharpe, Mr Capel Lofft, Mr Wodhull, Mr Grose, Thomas Taylor the Platonist, Dr Geddes, Mr Gilbert Wakefield, Mr George Walker of Nottingham, Mr Paradise, &c, &c. - In the summer of this year I took lodgings for two months at Guilford in Surry, & received as an inmate my kinsman Mr Thomas Cooper, then twelve years of age, who had just lost his father in the East Indies, by whose premature death, his family were left unprovided[.] I pass over some insignificant matters of literature in which I was engaged in these years - but, about the period at which I am now arrived, I found my disbursements clearly exceeding my receipts, & had foolishly anticipated in future receipts, & being under the necessity of retrenching I took a cheaper lodging than I had lately been accustomed to, in Great Marybone St. It was at this time that I became extremely intimate with Mr Holcroft.^{xxxii}

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On 6th April 1788 Mr Godwin began a journal - which he continued to the end of his life.^{xxxiii} Nothing can be more concise than this record - & contrary probably to the usual practise it is more laconic at the beginning than at the end. The use to which he put it was to mention the portion of writing he each day accomplished - the books he read, the persons he saw & where he went - at the commencement he leaves many days & even weeks without a record - & the most full account of any extends but to a few words - as for example:

April 11th F. Dined at Leg of Pork. Doctor Priestley in London.

23 W. Holcroft calls. Send him corrections of French.

[illeg]

May 8 Th. Tea Holcroft's. Dinner at Cadel's on Gibbon's birthday & day of publication.^{xxxiv} Sheffield, Fullarton, Reynolds, Geddes, Kippis.^{xxxv}

June 3 Tu. Hear Sheridan. Earl of Mansfield resigns. See Mrs Williams,^{xxxvi} who goes every day to Sheridan's speech,^{xxxvii} introduced by Geo. Hardinge.

From these brief notices we find the intimacy between that Godwin & Holcroft are already intimate friends^{xxxviii} see each other several times a week & communicate their writing & aid each other by mutual criticism. [illeg] the more polished education & great acquirements of Godwin led him to be of most use to his friend - but when he undertook the writing a drama^{xxxix} Holcrofts criticisms became valuable & important

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124)

June 30 M. Dispute between Pitt & Thurlow, respecting Arden's appointment to the rolls, terminated in favour of the former.

July 1. Tu. Dine at Hollis's with Lindsey. Go with Barry to see the Cerberus groupe by Locatelli.

July 14 M. See Canning: Call on Hamilton: Dine at Robinsons: Nomination of S J. [?Brownhead] Shield at the Bedford

July 27 Su. T. Cooper at Guildford.

Dec. 16 Dine at Hollis's: Barry at tea. Right of Parliament to appoint a regency decided 267 to 203. Fox condemns Thurlow.

From this journal it appears that the friends whom Godwin saw most frequently at this time were Holcroft & Barry. His friendship with Barry was only broken up by the encreasing madness of that unfortunate man, who, as Rousseau,^{xl} entertained a belief that a wide spread conspiracy was entered into to destroy him, & his friends were one after the other sacrificed to this unfortunate disastrous passion.

Besides this journal there are various notes among his papers - made after recording

It appears from this journal that from some unexplained motive Godwin passed a portion of this year at Guildford. The earliest letter that I possess of his was written addressed to Holcroft from that town

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c.607/2^{xli} [Godwin to Thomas Holcroft]

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Mr Holcroft

No 45 Upper Marybone St London

Dear Sir

Though I am flattered by your attention, & must acknowledge that you have touched upon my [illeg] hobbyhorse, yet I am sorry that your politeness led you to give yourself a moment's trouble for the sake of gratifying the silly impatience of your humble servant. I owe you a thousand apologies for not having answered your letter of a fortnight since; but the fact is, I wrote to you & another gentleman immediately after my arrival by the same post, & was answered by said gentleman that "I was a man of leisure & could write letters; he was engaged in active life, & could not." No man is less willing to be guilty of the sin of intrusion than I am: I therefore took this rebuff in dudgeon, & forswore the writing any letters, but of mere business, for a fortnight. Will you accept this apology? If you do, in gra-

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titude I will damn you, & say, you have more good nature than wit.

If you did but properly reflect upon my desolate situation, banished from human society, & condemned to eat grass with the beasts, you surely would not tantalise me with the visit of a day. But be it as it will, for I can adapt to myself the words of Addison with the true Addisonian fire, & say,

A day, an hour of intellectual talk,

Is worth a whole eternity in solitude.

Only upon this occasion keep the reins in your own hands, & do not fetter yourself too much with domestic stipulations before you set out.

Sir, had you remembered the letter of the Chinese Mandarin,^{xlii} which had no other address than, "Dr Boerhaave^{xliii} Europe", you surely would not have insulted me with the supposition that I must borrow lustre from a petty upholsterer in such a town as Guildford^{xliiv}, & not be seen by my own radiance. I would have you to know that I am as much of a poet, as either Dr Boe^r haave, or even Van Swieten,^{xlv} his

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b.227/2(a)^{xlvi}

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127)

Mr Holcroft /No. 45./Upper Marybone Street/ London

commentator. Nay, if you provoke me, I do not know but I shall ^enter^ the lists with mynheer van Haaven, the Homer of the whole Dutch nation.^{xlvii} Lord John Townshend^{xlviii} for ever! Huzza!

yours sincerely

Guildford,
Aug. 5. 1788.

W Godwin.

presents my compliments to Robinson & Hamilton. Tell the latter (if you see him & if you like it) that he has
forgotten me).^{xlix}

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Besides the journal I have extracted there are various notes among his papers recounting
anecdotes he heard in conversation. To these are appended usually the name of his informant - &
as Godwin was a correct reporter, the anecdotes bear at least the authority of their recounter
^whose name is appended to each^. I extract a few. I give these some of these; they are at least
specimens of the manners of the times - & as Godwin [?thought]

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early works

c.606/1

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From childhood almost he had a propensity to composition & he has preserved a list of his
earliest “works”. Among papers referring to this period I find

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It runs as follows, though I believe a greater part of them were merely projected & begun
& left unfinished

1761 - to 1767

The Wish, a poem; Sermons, Hymns; Paraphrase

1768 1769

Paradise regained; Integer vita.

The Paradise regained, I have heard him say, was conceived on a different plan from Milton. It was founded on the whole Life of Jesus Christ - & concluded with his triumph of Death & Hell - & his ascent to Heaven.

1770

Story for a Magazine

1771

Death of Socrates; Character of Alfred; Abridgment of Collier.

1772

Damon & Pythias; Verses on a Marriage; Palamon; The Brutus; Foundation of Ars Poetica & Ulysses to Penelope.

The Verses on a Marriage are all that remain of this list. They are entitled “The Happy Couple - A copy of verses Addressed to an Elderly Lady on her Marriage [“]

This lady was Miss Godwin, the instructress of his youth, now in mature years married to Mr Southern.¹ The verses are tolerably smooth - but trite. They are complimentary, not satirical as the word “elderly” might

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imply. They were addressed to Mrs Southern whom he loved & respected & who married during this year. Hymen is made to aver that neither Love Beauty nor Riches conduce to connubial happiness - which arises in a more perfect degree from prudence.

1773

Death of Caesar. Iphigenia; Harmony ^of the Evangelists^

1774

Talbot; Falkland; Lunaticus; Lucretia; Inkle & Yarico.

Talbot consists of two letters - one from Sir Edward Biron to his friend Talbot describing his return home to his native country after the death of his Father.

It is very sentimental - & concludes by requesting a letter from "his friend" whom he names a droll fellow - The answer is noted as being by a different hand & is a very serious attempt at jollity & wit

Nothing remains of Josephus Lunaticus^{li} but the introduction; which is meant to be satirical & witty but fails in the attempt

Three stanzas remain of Inkle & Yarico^{lii} by which

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the reader may judge that the young author had attained some facility in versification - his verses indeed at that age were better than his prose - though neither, it must be confessed, give token of future eminence.

Inkle & Yarico

A Poem - 1775

Whilom an age there was, misnamed of gold,
The age of love & joy more fitly dight,
When every heart was cast in virtues mould,
When every hour implied some new delight,
And or in cheerful labour sped its flight,
Or in some sportive game's pretended stealth,
The equal pastime of each gentle wight,
For peace & plenty, innocence & health,
Alike composed the Monarch's & the peasant's wealth.

No care but love the happy Mortals knew,
A love estranged to guilt & anxious fear;
For every nymph was chaste & swain was true,

And every heart from dark dissembling clear.
Retired, where high in air the woodlands rear
Their arched shades, or where the silver stream
Exhales its breezy freshness far & near,
Safe from th'oppression of the noontide beam,
Pleased they converse apart, their love their grateful theme.

Thrice happy mortals, & thrice happy Age!
Ere yet they knew fell envy's rankling sting,
Or mad ambition's disappointed rage;
Th'uneasy gaiety our passions bring,
Or haughty pride of pontiff or of King.

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90)^{liii}

Ere yet they knew diseases loathing life;
Remorse, despair, that guilty conscience wring;
Pomp, pride, or circumstance of warlike strife.

1775

Lucretia, Virginia - a Comedy

1776

Timoleon; Edward III; Libellare Superbos; An epilogue

Other papers remain consisting of College compositions, themes etc they are peculiar only from the lofty tone they assume with regard to the supereminence of virtue - & a certain energy of expression even then developed; but they are devoid of originality. The thoughts of his mind at that time rather shewn in aspiration than in execution. There are a few notes drawn up of feelings experienced at this period on which to found a continuation of his autobiography - the commentary of each of these kinds which he could have given is irretrievably lost - but we

preserve the heart - being of opinion that one word written by the man himself is more characteristic than pages of enquiry as to his character. In these he goes back to

“1773 - journey to London - dispute with a Quaker - story of Nemo.
Jacobs’ admiration of Jos. Read Sir Charles Grandison.
Disappointed in London - in Garrick - Epanouissement de l’imagination - Last tears - Require events to be made exprès
Hoxton - Second cause of misery

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[91v]

Gregson G. C. Morgan. Walters - T. Brown, Keap [,] Marshal[.] These are names of fellow Collegiates. The latter remained his friend to the end of his life.

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Temper with which I saw Garrick

He mentions in a previous note that he was at first disappointed with Garrick. This wore off & he became his enthusiastic admirer. Mr Godwin was always a lover & frequenter of the theatre. This taste may have at first taken root in his admiration of Garrick. He used to walk home to Hoxton after the play (he thought it sacrilege to stay for the afterpiece) in a sort of extasy brooding with jealous delight over the feelings excited by the actor. This taste was called forth principally during Garrick’s last season.

Sequar veritatem, ubicunque ducit

Je me prête aisément a la ridicule. Crabbedness of G. P. N.

Third part of Heaven.

Used to try to govern my thoughts & words.

Thought it impossible to read but for pleasure. Long arguments on necessity. Undertake to convert [?G.P] of Stockbury. Affection for W. G. founded on physiognomy[.] Ministerial - Mrs Hill long stories. Painful solitude.

1777 I preached during my last vacation in the months of July & August at Yarmouth every Sunday morning

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and at Lowestoft in the afternoon.

Metaphysical correspondence with Evans.

This last note brings us back to his chronological abridgment of his life^{liv}

1778

“In the last year of my academical life I entered into a curious paper war with my fellow student, Mr Richard Evans, an excellent Mathematician & a man of very clear understanding, who was afterwards for some years a preacher; & then became a clerk in the Bank: the subject, the being of a God. Our papers were I believe seen by no one but ourselves. I took the negative side, in this instance as always, with great sincerity hoping that my friend would enable me to remove the difficulties I apprehended. - I did not fully see my ground as to this radical question; but I had little doubt that, grant the being of a God, & both the truth of Christianity & the doctrines of Calvinism followed by infallible inference. - I had not however the courage to persist in such an objection, & finally took refuge in the argument à priori, as contained in Dr Samuel Clarke’s Discourse on the Attributes.^{lv}

“ I had this spring a putrid fever which almost killed me. Preached as a Candidate at Christchurch in Hampshire. Settled at Ware.

1779

In this year my political sentiments experienced a great revolution: - Wilkes & Liberty had been the doctrine of

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93)

Newton my instructor at Norwich. - Speculations on the nature of parliamentary oppositions, occasioned by reading the debates in the Gentleman’s Magazine at Hin Dolveston^{lvi} first shook my faith in this creed; on my arrival in London I immediately conceived a warm attachment & a profound deference particularly in politics, for Mr Joseph Jacob who was on that topic in total

hostility, though without any breach of fraternal concord, with his brother, Mr John Jacob, druggist on Fish Monger Hill, a most zealous champion of the Wilkite party, at whose house I resided as a guest, during the months of April & May 1773. - The first cause of my conversion in the present year was the newspaper reports of the speeches of Burke & Fox, to whom from this time I conceived an ardent attachment, which no change of circumstance or lapse of time has ever been able to shake. I was present for the first time in a debate in the House of Commons on the opening of Parliament, in the autumn of this year, when Mr Fox delivered the celebrated speech, a passage of which gave occasion to a duel between himself & Mr Adam.^{lvii} I quitted Ware about August, & resided with great economy for four months at a little lodging in Coleman Street. My favourite acquaintance now & for several subsequent years was Mr Joseph Fawcett, the poet.”

Mr Godwin notices this change in this intimacy in other notes on his life:

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“New world in Fawcett - dispute with him a whole day: one question, whether motive be necessary to virtue; solitude; classics.

“Dear Fox - become an oppositionist.^{lviii}

“Regret at having never made a discovery, Stowmarket - at not having observed the scenes of nature.

Such as I am the world is welcome to me.

Singular mixture of gentleness & arête.

“I was cold or warm according to the persons around me. My first thorough warming was in 1778-9 - Fawcett, Fox etc. [“]

Fawcett^{lix} was one of those men of whose talents his friends & contemporaries spoke with enthusiasm & admiration, but whose fame with posterity is not commensurate with their reputation while living. Everyone who knew him, however eminent themselves, regarded his genius with admiration. He was an extempore preacher of great eloquence & pathos, as several volumes of printed sermons testify.

1780

At the commencement of this year I went to reside at Stowmarket in Suffolk, in my

profession of a Dissenting Minister - the only pleasant acquaintance I had there was Mrs Alice Munnings, & her unfortunate son, Leonard, a captain of the Suffolk Militia, & an agreeable, lively, well-bred, intelligent Man.

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opinions^{lx} were singular, as Mr Godwin records when he remarks that it was through his conversation that “he became impressed with the immorality of the private affections[“], which forms so prominent & in the eyes of many so censurable a figure in the theory of ^theories promulgated in^ Political Justice. Hazlitt in his life of Holcroft ^{lxi} speaks thus of him in his own person “The late Rev. Joseph Fawcett , author of the Art of War^{lxii} etc. It was he who delivered the Sunday evening lectures at the Old Jewry, which were so popular about twenty years ago. He afterwards retired to Hedgegrove^{lxiii} in Hertfordshire. He was the friend of my early youth. He was the first person of literary eminence, whom I had then known; and the conversations I then had with him on subjects of taste & philosophy (for his taste was as refined, as his powers of reasoning were profound & subtle) gave me a delight such as I can never feel again. Of all the persons I have ever known, he was the most perfectly free from every taint of jealousy or narrowness. Never did a mean or sinister motive come near his heart. He was one of the most enthusiastic admirers of the French Revolution; & I believe that the disappointment of the hopes he had cherished of the freedom & happiness of Mankind, preyed upon his mind [^sic] hastened his death”

1.Life of Holcroft Vol II, note to p246.^{lxiv}

All that is here said Godwin would have endorsed. He often spoke of long days spent with Fawcett in pedestrian rambles, ^{lxv} the hours forgotten, as they discussed the tenets of religion & philosophy,

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and endeavoured to discover the hidden form of truth, as some of the happiest of his life. Never had his heart swelled with such pure enthusiasm, never did he enjoy with such fervent delight the pleasure derived from intimate communication with another mind. Their friendship & intimacy continued to the end of Fawcett’s life.

“1780 At the commencement of this year I went to reside at Stowmarket in Suffolk in my profession of Dissenting Minister. the only pleasant acquaintance I had there was Mrs Alice Munnings & her unfortunate son, Leonard, a captain in the Suffolk Militia, an agreeable, lively, well bred & intelligent man.

1781 This year there came to reside at Stowmarket Mr Frederick Norman, deeply read in the French philosophers, & a man of great reflection & acuteness. We immediately became exceedingly intimate.

1782 In April I quitted Stowmarket, in conse

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quence of a dispute with my hearers in a matter of Church discipline. My faith in Christianity had been shaken by the books which Mr Norman put in my hands,^{lxvi} & I was therefore pleased in some respects with the breach that dismissed me. I resided during the rest of the year at a lodging in Holborn, & by the persuasions of Fawcett & another friend was prevailed on to try my pen as an author. I drew up proposals for a biographical periodical series of English Biography, but having sat down first to the Life of Lord Chatham,^{lxvii} I found it grew under my hands to the size of a volume, which I completed by the end of the year.

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sermons and novels, 1783/4

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The Sermons are entitled Sketches of History^{lxviii} & each is formulated upon some ^one^ scriptural incident, which is described, commented upon, & brought home to the reader, as a warning or an example. They are peculiar from ^displaying^ that tendency to ^dive into &^ anatomize the human heart, which is so principal a feature in all Mr Godwins writings - & also by that lofty conception of the excellence of human nature which led him to consider its absolute

perfection no dream of the imagination - unlike the usual clerical exposition of the vileness of humanity, he speaks of the glorious being a good Man is with enthusiasm; this belief clung to him through life - he had a firm faith in the powers inherent in Man human nature to raise himself itself to heroism & surpassing excellence, if his will & understanding combined to see the good, & to follow it.

The first sermon has for its text the simple words “And Aaron held his peace” (Leviticus x 3) & is a commentary on Aaron’s behaviour when his sons, incurring the displeasure of the Lord, by offering strange fire, were thereon immediately destroyed. He describes the natural anguish of a father’s heart at so cruel a bereavement from apparently so slight a cause - he dwells on the meeting between the brothers, Moses & Aaron, & ^brings forward^ the silence of the latter abstaining from all repinings at the judgement of God ^as an impressive instance ^ of fortitude & pious resignation. He observes “Resignation is the most direct & proper improvement of affliction. If you wish to second the gracious designs of heaven upon your soul, nothing can do it so effectually as acquiescence & submission. If you wish to have the affliction removed, or not to be again visited by the divine chastisement

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nothing will so immediately propitiate the sovereign displeasure or take away further calls to repentance & amendment. Resignation calms the surges of the mind, calls home the wandering attention, & leaves us room to reflect upon our ways, & consider the intent of those divine messengers, under whose inflictions we are now mourning. But what I would principally remark, & what falls in most immediately with the tendency of my text, is the grace, the amiableness & the beauty of this affection both with regard to man & with respect to God. We ought ever to reflect, that however keenly we may feel our misfortunes it is not to be expected that the world about us will feel them in the same way. Peevishness & a continual tendency to complaint, instead of exciting additional pity, tends only to dry up the sources of that which our misfortunes naturally excited. But turn to the other character, to him who retains the dignity of a Man under the severest pressure of misfortune - However much he may inwardly suffer he scorns to complain. The severest torture cannot wring from him a murmur or a groan. He carefully shuts up his anguish in the little circle of his bosom & outwardly adorns his countenance with all the serenity of complacency & composure. His friends perceive how he is inwardly worn with

anguish & sorrow, & they come to condole with him. But he chides the weakness of their tears, calls forth their courage, & bids them be of good heart still. With what a warm, what an overflowing pity do we consider a character like this, a pity mixed with every generous sentiment, with love, esteem, reverence & admiration. Who would not wish to be made the object of a passion like this? Consider the example of Aaron. In pitying such a man, are we not apt to feel a generous resentment, a sense that the man was worthy a better fortune? Contrast this with the resentment we feel for a man peevish & impatient, madly cursing his fortune & arrogantly arraigning his creator. Add to it the

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complacency Deity feels for so faithful a servant for so faithful so loyal so obedient a subject. There needs no argument to convince you that such a character as this must appear an object of honour & love to God himself. Does heaven appear to frown on him? Shortly it will regard him with unequivocal never changing smiles. His afflictions are but the clouds of morning, or the flitting dew. Shortly this refulgent man of virtue & felicity will break forth with meridian undecaying beams.”

In another of these sermons speaking of the language of Scripture he observes: on the simplicity of the style of the Old Testament & the genius that scorns to stoop to embellishment or stratagem. He observes that: “Its reasonings are nervous pointed & concise - & its narratives to [sic] last degree plain inartificial & unadorned. There are no traps to elude our impartiality - it exhibits the sublimest virtues without arrogance & the bitterest sufferings without execration”. He continues (carrying on his observations to the “discourses of the Apostles & the Conversation of Jesus[“]), “One of the graces most naturally to be expected from this manner of writing & speaking, is the mode of speech which rhetoricians have stiled the laconic. This appears in its constitution the reverse of everything artificial. It is founded upon the observation, that energy consists very much in conciseness, & its end is to suggest the sentiments it means to convey, whether they be one or more in as few words as may be [.] I say to suggest the sentiments; for provided they be implied with sufficient clearness, it contents itself without actually having them expressed. The rays of the sun when diffused though the hemisphere we inhabit, suffice to cheer the globe, & to keep alive vegetation & animal heat, but it is only when collected in a burning glass, that they impart a genuine flame to the object towards which they are directed. And thus in sentiment. A thought may have energy & force, when drawn out into length, but it can only

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transport the soul with vehemence, or overpower it with splendour, when its point becomes centered in a single phrase, short, masculine & pithy” -

Another of the sermons is on the character of Jesus Christ - whose perfection is dwelt upon with affectionate earnestness & alluding to the history of his life he exclaims, “My friends, ye do not come here to hear some new thing - & to learn that with which you were before unacquainted. We pretend to nothing of this sort. I can tell you but one plain story, that is seventeen hundred years old. You have often looked *upon Jesus as he walked*, and wept over the sad story of his sufferings. But methinks there are some among you that tire with the endless repetition, & to whom our words seem but as idle tales. You love a melting story, & the tears of sympathy are pleasant unto you, and yet your bibles lie neglected on your shelves. You are ready to exclaim with Dives in the parables, “*Nay, father Abraham*, but if something unexplained claimed our attention, & *if one rose from the dead* we should believe. But, no. Old as the story is, it is inexhaustible. *Angels* do but *look into it*. And plain as it may seem, there is not another in the world half as affecting. It is the masterpiece of divinity. God, if I may be allowed the expression, has exhausted upon it infinite pathos. Fear not the rending rocks & trembling earth; fear not the gaping tombs & rising dead. No, if you hear this story, calm, unmoved, insensible, ye may shake hands with destruction”.

In the treatment of subject & the arguments of all these sermons - though they are perfectly orthodox - there is a ^peculiar^ tone - & an omission of certain topics that seem to imply that tendency to Arminianism to which in another place he alludes [.]

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Though certainly the works here mentioned are not worthy of the genius of Godwin - & shew that something was yet wanting to develop the embryo powers of his mind - they display in their versatility & quantity a degree of energy patience & industry highly praiseworthy. Thrown out by through conscientious motives from the profession he had chosen, resolved to pursue the arduous career of literature - ignorant of the true scope of his talents, & what the sentiment was that would hereafter cause them to be universally acknowledged he worked hard

& thankfully in his vocation - his horns ungilded^{lxix} by the smiles of the great - but cheered by the intercourse of friendship. Fawcett was still his chosen intimate. And there was another man, a fellow student, & an aspirant to authorship ^the honors of literature^ - the booksellers of London ^of his day^ knew him well - & many a ^contemporary^ author, fallen on evil days, & many a widow & an orphan had cause to remember the benevolent disposition, the strenuous exertions & the ^kind &^ intelligent countenance of James Marshall. His talents not permitting a higher range, he became a translator & index maker, a literary jobber. But though he had not genius for original composition In a thousand ways he was useful to Godwin - he ^sensitive, proud &^ shy - whose powers of persuasion lay in the force of his reasoning, often found the more sociable & insinuating manners of his friend of use ^in transactions matters of business with editors & publishers^. Often they shared their last shilling together & the

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success of any of his friend's plans was hailed by Marshall as a glorious triumph. Godwin whose temper was quick (& from an earnest sense of being in the right & without knowing it somewhat despotic on occasions) assumed a good deal of superiority & some authority[.] Marshall sometimes submitted - sometimes rebelled - sometimes he was wrong, sometimes right - but they were always reconciled at last & the good humoured friend was always at hand to assist to the utmost with untiring patience & labour of hand & foot - copying & walking from one end of town to the other Godwin's more intellectual exertions.^{lxx}

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[“] Towards the end of this year^{lxxi} an incident occurred which I considered as a lightening in my circumstances: Mr Robinson, the bookseller, called on me, in company with my tutor at Hoxton, Dr Kippis, to inform me, that Dr Gilbert Stuart, who had undertaken to write the historical part of the New Annual Register for 1783, had thrown up his task, before it was brought to a conclusion, & to request me to write two or three short chapters to wind up the year - for this undertaking I received the compensation of ten guineas; & what I did being approved, I was installed in due form writer of the historical part of the New Annual Register at the stipend of 60

guineas & the contract was sealed by a dinner in trio between Mr Robinson, Dr Kippis, & myself at the Crown & Anchor in the Strand.”

When we remember that Mr Godwin always required twelve months & usually a year & a half for the composition of a novel we turn with surprize curiosity to these earlier productions struck off with so much haste, as if we might expect to find more fire & vigour. It is not so. An Author requires a subject for the developement of his genius ^he^ requires that the right chord should be struck - ^We^ turn to the “Italian Letters”^{lxxii} - a novel in two small volumes written in three weeks & find no story - no developement of character & situation - none scarcely any of that anatomy of heart for which the imaginative writings of Mr Godwin is [sic] conspicuous. ^There is^ Occasional Energy

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of style - & a strong percept admiration of the higher & more stoical virtues, are the only characteristics that remind us of him. The story is slight. St. Julian & the Marquis of Pescara are fellow students at the university of Palermo - Pescara is recalled by the death of his father to his native town of Naples & here the correspondence begins. Pescara is a man of sensibility desiring anxious to do right admiring his friend - but ^easily^ led away by pleas evil example ^& the love of pleasure^ & recalled with difficulty to a sense of virtue by his friend. St. Julian is of nobler clay. His friend thus describes him: - “You may talk as you please of the wildness & impracticability of ^the sentiments of^ my amiable solitaire, they are at least in the highest degree amusing & beautiful. There is a voice in every heart, whose feelings have not yet been entirely warped by selfishness, responsive to them. In vain the man of pleasure & gaiety pronounces them impracticable - the generous heart gives the lie to his assertions. He must be under the poorest & most despicable of prejudices, who would reduce all human characters to a level, who would deny the reality of all those virtues which the world has idolized through revolving ages. Nothing can be disputed with less plausibility than that there are in the world certain noble & elevated spirits, that rise above vulgar notions, & the narrow conduct of the bulk of mankind, that soar to the sublimest heights of rectitude, & from time to time realize those virtues of which the liberal interested & illiberal deny the possibility[.]”

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100)

[“] I can no more doubt than I do of the truth of these apothegms, that the Count St. Julian is one of these ^honourable^ characters. He treads without the airy circle of dissipation. He is invulnerable to the temptations of folly; he is unshaken by the examples of profligacy. They are such characters as his that were formed to rescue mankind from slavery, to prop the pillars of a declining state, & to arrest Astraea in her re-ascent to heaven. They are such characters, whose virtues surprize ^astonished^ mortals, & avert the vengeance of offended heaven.” - St. Julian is reduced to poverty through the knavery of his brother - he writes concerning his disaster with all the fortitude that might be expected from his exalted notions of human excellence - & he exclaims - “Why should not he who is born a nobleman be also born a Man? A Man is a character superior to all those that civilization has invented. To be a Man is the profession of a citizen of the world. A man of rank is a poor shivering exotic plant, that cannot subsist out of his native soil. If the imaginary barriers of society were thrown down, if we were reduced back again to a state of nature, the nobleman would appear a shiftless ^and a^ helpless being; he only who knew how to be a Man would shew like the creature of God, a being sent into the world with the capacities of subsistence & enjoyment. The nobleman a fantas ^an artificial^ & fantastic creation, would then lose all that homage in which he plumed himself he would be seen without disguise & be despised of all.”

St. Julian is however in love & that takes a little from the high pitch of heroism to which he endeavours to rise. The father of the lady is a man of generous

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sentiments - he invites St Julian to his house & finally upon his death bed bestows the hand of his daughter upon him. Nothing prevents the happiness of the lovers except the year of mourning for the lady’s Father - but St. Julian is impatient of this restraint & to vary the scene & acquire patience he makes a journey to Madrid to further the interests of his friend Pescara - leaving Matilda to the care of this noble. What remains is a common story - the friend proves false - persuades Matilda that her lover has married in Spain & finally persuades her to accept his own hand. ^On the first intimation of this treachery,^ St. Julian returns on the wings of vengeance, challenges his friend & kills him. As they were actually married it was scarcely chivalrous to make the deceived lady a widow - however in recompense he endeavours to persuade her to fulfil her former contract & to become his wife. The letter in which Matilda refuses, which is the last of the novel is better ^the best^ written than any in the book. On the whole however it is to

be observed, that though the sentiments are to a great degree upon stilts, the genuine expression of passion does not appear - Except in a few sentences we are not reminded of the future creator of Falkland.

Even less can might be said in praise of Damon & Delia^{lxxiii} which is a modern English tale though the

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sustain - an endeavour to exert the whole powers & do the best - such animated the author of Political Justice & Caleb Williams - but the soil that contained such precious seeds could [[^]sic] its moult & neglected seams produce works, which it would do him no honour to withdraw from oblivion

The only^{lxxiv} interesting portion of Damon & Delia, is an account given of himself by a man of letters, derived from the authors own experience

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As we a natural philosopher watches with intense curiosity the process of nature when a chrysalis expands into a butterfly - or [^]as we sympathise in[^] the breathless anxieties of a navigator in an unknown sea - thus is our interest awakened by the efforts of infant youthful [^]& obscure[^] genius struggling into self confidence & celebrity. My father's mind, so ardent in all intellectual pursuits never permitted him to dwell carefully anxiously, especially in the outset of life, in providing for his pecuniary resources - he was at once sanguine & easily satisfied. I am sure that he suffered little of humiliation or care during the period of privation nay of almost penury he describes. His vocation he considered a noble one - &, although he as yet but imperfectly saw his road to fame, & was not warmed by those principles of philosophy that afterwards governed every thought & exertion, he was not the less ambitious of literary fame, or the less callous of the strokes visitations of poverty, when he compared its power to the to him slight infliction with the reward he sought to attain.

This is no fancy picture. He describes himself in a great degree in the first novel he mentions. Damon & Delia has not much merit - it is imitative of the novels

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of those times - the lovers with their separate difficulties - tyrannical fathers - impertinent rivals - & a ridiculous old maid all this are woven into a slight web of story, from the book diversified by no very novel incidents. There is one episode in it however to which I turned with interest, when I discerned that it portrayed to a certain degree the his the authors own story & his own feelings.

This passage I therefore extract:

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101) [MJG hand begins]^{lxxv}

“He was destined for the profession of a divine,^{lxxvi} and having finished his studies, retired upon a position curacy of forty pounds a year. His ambition was grievously mortified at the obscurity in which he was plunged; and his great talents, in spite of real modesty forcibly convinced him, that this was not the station for which nature had formed him. But he had an enthusiasm of virtue that led him for a time to overlook these disadvantages. “I am going,” said he, “to dwell among scenes of unvitiated nature. I will form the peasant to generosity and sentiment. I will teach laborious industry to look without envy and without asperity upon those above them. I will be the friend and the father of the meanest of my flock. I will give sweetness and beauty to the most rugged scenes. The man that banishes envy and introduces contentment; the man that converts the little circle in which he dwells into a terrestrial paradise that renders men innocent here, and happy for ever, may be obscure, may be despised by the superciliousness of envy; but it shall never be said that he has been a blank in creation. The supreme being will regard him with a complacency, which he will deny to kings, that oppress, and conquerors that destroy the work of his hands.”

“Such were the suggestions of youthful imagination. But Mr Godfrey soon saw the truth of that maxim, as paradoxical as it is indisputable, that the heart of man is naturally hard and unamiable. He conducted himself in his new situation with the most unexceptionable propriety and the most generous benevolence. But there were men in his audience, men who loved better to criticise, than to be amended, and women, who felt more complacency in scandal, than eulogium. He laboured unremittingly, but his labours returned to him void.

“ And is it for this,” said he, “that I have sacrificed ambition and buried talents? Is humility to be rewarded only with mortification? Is obscurity and retirement the favourite scene of uneasiness, ingratitude, and impertinence? They shall be no longer my torment.

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In no scene can I meet with a more scanty success.”

“He now obtained a recommendation to be private tutor to the children of a nobleman who wished to be considered as the patron of men of letters.

“In this situation however, Mr Godfrey once more looked for pleasure, and found disappointment. The nobleman had more the affectation of a patron, than any real enthusiasm in the cause of literature.^{lxxvii} The abilities of Mr Godfrey were universally acknowledged. And so long as the novelty remained, he was caressed, honoured and distinguished. In a short time, however, he was completely forgotten by the patron, in the hurry of dissipation, and the pursuits of an unbounded ambition. His eldest care was universally confessed, stupid and impracticable. And in the younger he found nothing but the prating forwardness of a boy who had been flattered, without sentiment, and without meaning. Her Ladyship treated Mr Godfrey with superciliousness as an intruder at her Lord’s table. The servants caught the example, and shewed him a distinction of neglect, which the exquisiteness of his sensibility did not permit him to despise.

Mortified, irritated, depressed, he now quitted his task half finished and threw himself upon the world. “The present age”, said he, “is not an age in which talents are overlooked, and genius depressed”. He had heard much of the affluence of writers, a Churchill, a Smollet,^{lxxviii} and a Goldsmith, who had depended upon that only for their support. He saw the celebrated Dr Johnson caressed by all parties, and acknowledged to be second to no man, whatever were his rank, however conspicuous his station. Full of these ideas, he soon completed a production

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180) 103)^{lxxix}

frought [sic] with the fire and originality of genius, pointed in its remarks, and elegant in its style. He had now to experience exertions of which he had before entertained no idea. He carried his work from bookseller to bookseller, and was every where refused. His performance was not seasoned to the times, he was a person that nobody knew, and he had no man of rank, by his

importunities and eloquence to force him into the ranks of fashion. At length he found a bookseller foolish enough to undertake it. But he presently perceived that the gentleman gentlemen at the head of the concern that profession was wiser than he. All the motives they had mentioned, and more, operated against him. The monarchs of the critic realm scouted him with one voice because his book was not written in the same cold, phlegmatic, insupportable manner as their own.

“He had now advanced, however, too far to retreat. He had too much spirit to resume either of those professions which for reasons so cogent in his opinion, he had already quitted. He wrote essays, squibs and pamphlets for an extemporary support. But though these were finished with infinite rapidity, he found that they constituted a very precarious means of subsistence. The time of dinner often came before the production that was to purchase it was completed; and when completed, it was frequently several days before it could find a purchaser. And his copy money and his taylor’s bill were too little proportioned to one another.

“He now recollected, what in the gaiety of hope he had forgotten, that *many a flower* only blows, with its sweetness to refresh the *air of a desert*. He recollected many instances of works, raised by the breath of fashion to the very pinnacle of reputation, that sank as soon again. He recollected instances, scarcely fewer, of works exquisite in their composition, pregnant with beauties almost divine, that had passed from the press without notice. Many had been revived by the cooler and more deliberate judgment of a future age; and more had been lost for ever. The instance of Chatterton, as a proof that the universal patronage of genius was by no means the virtue of his contemporaries, flashed in his face. And he looked forward to the same fate at no great distance, as his own. (From page 103, of Damon & Delia)^{lxxx}

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104)

(p.180) “Think not of me,” said Godfrey, “ I am happy in the way that nature intended, beyond even the power of Damon to make me. Since I saw you, a favourable change has taken place in my circumstances. In spite of various obstacles, I have brought a tragedy upon the stage, and it has met with distinguished success. My former crosses and mortifications are all forgotten. Philosophers may tell us, that reputation, and the immortality of a name, are all but an airy shadow. Enough for me, that nature from my earliest infancy led me to place my first delight in these. I envy not kings their sceptres. I envy not statesmen their power. I envy not Damon his love, and his Delia. Next to the pursuits of honour and truth, my soul is conscious to but one

wish, that of having my name enrolled, in however inferior a rank, with a Homer and a Horace, a Livy and a Cicero”.

[MWS hand resumes]

This last paragraph breathes the very soul of Godwin & it is a comment on some words among his memoranda these remarkable words which I find are written among his scattered memoranda

“In aeternitatem pingo” - I read that phrase of Guido in one of my vacations at Guestwick & drank in the whole force of it into my own soul”.

The Italian Letters are more characteristic of Godwin as developing with more greater energy those lofty stoical sentiments which he always admired & on which he endeavoured to form his character. There wants the admirable planning of a story & intense interest conspicuous in his later works - but there is an energy a force of style that reminds us of him Caleb Williams.^{lxxxix}

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102)^{lxxxii}

“Imogen” is termed a pastoral romance.^{lxxxiii} In the preface it sets out with the fabulous pretension of being translated from the Welch - & mention is made of its adherence to the customs & manners of the ancient inhabitants of that country - but in reality there is no pretense endeavour to describe those ancient times - the machinery of the piece is rather founded upon Comus - the plan of Druids & the names of the mountains & rivers are introduced & some mention of the allusion to the peculiar religion; but one of the principal personages bears the Gothic name of Roderic. The story is simple - Edwin & Imogen are brought together, they become lovers, there is no impediment to their union, till Roderic, the son of an Enchantress, & himself an Enchanter, sees & loves Imogen, & conjuring up a storm in the midst of a druidical feast bears her off to his Magic Palace - Edwin seeks her in despair - he falls in with a Druid, who explains the powers of Roderic, & relates that the overthrow of his schemes simply depends on the virtue & resolution of his victims; for if they withstand the allurements of his power, he is destined to lose it & to wander henceforth an unpitied, necessitous, & miserable vagabond outcast - The druid gives Edwin a root, such as Ulysses bore that renders the magic arts of Roderic of no avail, if he can withstand the temptations held out to

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[102v]

him of pleasure & luxury - and Edwin sets out to seek the palace prison of Imogen. The greater portion of the tale is engrossed by a description of the palace & of the temptations of Imogen - the style is often elevated, concise & energetic, reminding the reader of the author of Caleb Williams - There is eloquence in many of the arguments representations of Roderic & in the denials of Imogen. The description of the enchanter on his first appearance to the shepherdess is pleasing striking

“Roderic approached. While he was yet at a distance he appeared graceful & gay, as the messenger of the God that grasps lightning in his hand. His stature was above the common size. His limbs were formed with perfect symmetry; the fall of his shoulders was graceful, & the whole contour of his body was regular & pleasing. Such was the general effect of his shape that though his advance was hesitating & respectful, it was impossible to contemplate his person without the ideas being suggested of velocity & swiftness. His presence & air had the appearance of frankness, ingenuousness & manly confidence. the natural fire & haughtiness of his eye was carefully subdued, & he seemed, at least to a superficial view, the very model of good nature & disinterested complaisance. His bright & flowing hair parted on his brow, & formed into

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104)

a thousand ringlets, waved to the zephyrs as he passed along. There was something so delicate & enchanting in his whole figure, as to tempt you to compare it to the unspotted beauty of the hyacinth; at the same time that you rejoiced that it was not a flower beauty frail and transient as the tender flower, but which promised a manly ripeness & protracted duration”.

The following passage is stamped by Godwin’s peculiar style :- “Imogen stood for a moment in a sweet & ingenuous state of suspense. She had a native & indefeasible reverence for every thing that had the remotest analogy to virtue, & she could not answer a proposal that came recommended to her by that name with unhesitating promptitude. She was too good & modest to assume an air of decision where she did not feel it; & she was too simple & unaffected to disguise the hesitation to which she was really conscious”.

The catastrophe of the story is simple - Edwin arrives at the enchanted palace - dashes down the magic cup & seizes the wand of the enchanter - and in a violent concussion of the elements the ^stupendous^ fabric disappears Roderic & his train fly - the lovers are left beneath the canopy of heaven & restored to each other.

Though of the nature of the story a forced & fictitious pastoral, there is less interest in Imogen than in the tales which he had already written [^{^sic}] there is more of the vigour of Godwin's style & sentiments. Language is an instrument in the use of which habit alone can perfect us. My father often recommended

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105)

much writing though little publishing to any aspirant to authorship. These tales developed his style; he acquired energy & force and eloquence - he became capable of expressing in fitting language the thoughts that arose in his mind - the next thing necessary was a subject, worthy of his genius - a subject to support his style, which hitherto had supported his subject; that did not present itself so readily - & several years passed before the idea of Caleb Williams was generated conceived- & those powers ideas were yet as it were in chaos, assumed the shape which still haunts the work with forms of power & excellence.

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[unnumbered]^{lxxxiv}

Dec. 31 F. It was in this year that I read & criticized The Simple Story in MS.^{lxxxv} The whole in alternate letters between two confidantes: Miss Woodley relating the story of Dorriforth, & the other the story of Rushbrook.

Notwithstanding this memorandum, & the recollection I have that at his suggestion Mrs Inchbald remodelled the Simple Story there is no sign of Godwin's being acquainted with Mrs Inchbald this year. The first time indeed that he notices having called on her was Oct. 29 - 1792

One other word only remains of this year. Mr Godwin endeavoured to obtain some post in the Museum^{lxxxvi} & applied to the Bishop of Landaff^{lxxxvii} for his influence. The Bishop replied by the following letter

Sir

I would not have hesitated a moment writing to the Archbishop in your favour, if I had not been of opinion that *my* appearing in support of a *Dissenter* would rather have tended to obstruct than to promote your wishes. The enclosed is written in such a manner, that if you think it can serve you, it may be as from yourself as a kind of information that you had used my name with propriety. I sincerely wish you success & am your

Most obedt. Servt. R. Landaff

Tallgarth - Kendall

May 19 - 1790

.....

Duke reel 5 ^{lxxxviii}

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The revd. William Godwin presents his most respectful compliments to lord Robert Spencer, & presumes to solicit his interest in the vacancy that has taken place in the British Museum upon the death of Mr Maty. Mr Godwin has been encouraged to offer himself as a candidate by his friends, & his interest has already been espoused by some persons capable of assisting him. The Office he solicits is a trifle in itself, but extremely eligible to him.

Mr Godwin presumes that his name will be recollected by lord Robert, as having uniformly contributed to & lately conducted the publication ^{lxxxix} that was begun by the late Doctor Gilbert Stuart.^{xc} Mr Godwin will take the liberty of calling in Berkeley Square tomorrow twelve o'clock.

Wednesday Jan. 24

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Holcroft and *Dunstan*

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The name of Holcroft at once gives rise to a crowd of recollections to every ^any reader^ who [illeg] is conversant with the history of those times & that particular circle of literary men, of which my father made one.^{xcii} The story of Holcroft is well known. He was the son of a shoemaker - and rose to literary eminence through the energy of his character & the genius with which nature had endowed him. To remember think of Holcroft as his friends remember him - & to call to mind whence he principally derives at this day his fame as an author, presents a

singular contrast. He was a man of stern & irascible character. From the moment that he espoused liberal principles he carried them to excess. He was tried for life as a traitor^{xcii} for his enthusiasm for the objects of the French Revolution. Truth & virtue, resolution & vehemence - such are He believed that Truth must prevail by force of its own powers - he advocated what he deemed truth with vehemence. He warmly asserted that Death & disease existed only through the feebleness of Man's mind - that pain was not of him when in him Fortitude & courage were the gods of his idolatry. But the defect of his temper rendered him a susceptible friend. What he is chiefly celebrated for as an author are his comedies his capacity of seizing & representing human nature with vivacity & truth. The Road to Ruin^{xciii} will always

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114)

- when there are actors to represent fitly its leading characters - maintain its station on the English stage as one of the best of our original comedies. Holcroft's life had been adventurous - he painted what he had seen & the stoical philosopher & stern moralist excelled most in delineating with flexible & delicate touches the frivolous - the dissipated & even the pathetic.

At the time when Mr Godwin became acquainted with him he was chiefly distinguished as an author of several successful dramatic pieces, as a translator from the french. He was indefatigable in his industry - unwearied in his endeavours to support his family. Neither he nor Mr Godwin apparently then yet imbibed those strong political feelings which afterwards distinguished them. It required the French Revolution to kindle that ardent love of Political Justice with which both were afterwards, according to their diverse dispositions, warmed.

Of the several names here recorded as newly acquired acquaintance - many several remained as dear & valued friends for many years. Among these may be selected William Nicholson - of whose talents Mr Godwin always entertained an high esteem. In these days Nicholson would probably have risen to greater eminence. During the period when he lived he knew ^the world^

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115)

was best serve chiefly alive to the progress of mind & political science - now the external universe obtains far more consideration. As a man of invention, of acquirement - of mingled theory & practice, Nicholson would have prospered in these days of mines, tunnels, railroad & steam engines - as it was his fate was adverse.

Mr Archibald Hamilton is the Irish gentleman so well known afterwards under the name of Hamilton Rowan.^{xciiv} He was in his youth a splendid specimen of manly beauty, joined to an ardent generous temper - he must have been in the prime of youth, when Mr Godwin first became acquainted with him. - Nearly ten years afterwards he published an address to the volunteers of Ireland, setting forth the dangers with which their country was threatened by foreign & domestic foes, & inviting them to resume their arms for the preservation of the general tranquillity. This publication was prosecuted as a seditious libel - he was sentenced to fine & imprisonment - but escaped & fled to France. Curran was his advocate conducted his defence at this trial - & we may suppose that from the time Mr Godwin first knew Hamilton Rowan his ear had been familiarized with the name,^{xcv} talents & reputation of him whom he long after recorded as “the best friend he ever had.”

(1) Life of Curran by his son William Henry Curran^{xcvi}

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150)^{xcvii}

[“]1790 - my mind became more and more impregnated with the principles afterwards developed in my Political Justice - they were the almost constant topics of conversation between me and Holcroft; & he, who in his sceptic & other writing had displayed the sentiments of a courtier, speedily became no less a republican & reformer than myself - In this year I wrote a story tragedy on the tragedy story of St Dunstan^{xcviii}, being desirous in writing a tragedy, of developing the great springs of human passion, & in the choice of a subject, of inculcating those principles on which I apprehended the welfare of the human race to depend. [“]

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151)

The giant now awoke. The mind, never torpid, but never roused to its full energies, received the spark which lit it into an unextinguishable flame. Who can now tell the feelings of liberal men on the first outbreak of the French Revolution? In but too short a time afterwards it became tarnished by the vices of Orleans & Mirabeau - dimmed by the want of talent of the Girondists - deformed & blood stained by the Jacobins. But in 1789 - and 1790 it was impossible for any but a courtier not to be warmed by the general glowing influence.

The few had reigned, the many been subdued the choice & elect

The many men who felt that they, as well as the nobles of the land, possessed inherent rights, grasped those rights, & proclaimed them to the world.

The English had always regarded the political condition of the French with mingled pity & contempt - at first therefore this country sympathized universally with the attempt to throw off time-worn & corrupt institutions.

And France in wrath her giant limbs upreared
And with that oath which smote earth air & sea,
Stamped her strong foot & said she would be free^{xcix}

Then did Godwin, as the poet, feel the hopes & fears - the lofty gratulation that led all young & enthusiastic hearts to hail the dawn of freedom on the world.

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152)

The first effect of this spirit was to incite him to write a tragedy where priestcraft & superstition were at war with noble & philanthropical principles. It is a pity that a tragedy drama should have been the first birth of the spirit of Liberty - probably his intimacy with Holcroft led Godwin to think of composing for the stage - but his genius was not dramatic - he often said - “Give me scope enough - three volumes in which I can turn round the power of narrative description & I think I can do something” - He asserted that Shakespeare only had entirely overcome the manifold difficulties that presented itself to the telling a story in a dramatic form - in making the personages not talk of themselves but from themselves.

St Dunstan is full of also has many defects as a drama. A want of proper concatenation of event & several leading circumstances not accounted for - an abruptness & inconsistency in the sentiments & an unsatisfactory catastrophe ^Though founded on events in Saxon history^c

By writing in verse he also shackled his style. Verse is an unmanageable weapon. There are those who “lisp in numbers for the numbers come” but for one not born a poet Yet even to these blank verse presents great difficulties at once to rise from the palpably familiar without becoming turgid. One not born a poet must practise much to erect any thing like readable blank verse -

Edward, King of England, is on the eve of marriage with Eltruda. Eltruda was the daughter of [a] noble who had been banished in a former reign for opposing the priesthood - Eltruda & her mother living in retirement were attacked by a band of invading

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153)

The story of the plot of Dunstan is fictitious. In old chronicles the king named Edward in the tragedy is called Edwi - He was called surnamed the fair from his the beauty ^of his person^ - & is named praised by one chronicler - while another Malmsbury a monk names him for libertinism. He married a near kinswoman, Algiva, of whom he was passionately fond. His attachment interfering with his regal duties his Barons deputed Bishop Dunstan to remonstrate - the king angry at his interference not long after sent Dunstan into banishment, caused his monastery to be rifled & became an enemy to all monks - sentence of divorce was pronounced between him & Algiva - which raised still higher his enmity of the Church - & he put such affronts on it, as caused a large part of his Kingdom to revolt, & ^to^ set up his brother Edgar. Grief on this ^event^ soon after caused his death. Edgar became King of all England at sixteen years of age & called home Dunstan out of Flanders, where he lived in exile. As an enemy to the monks it is not surprising that the memory of Edwi is vilified - & it is but a fair interpretation of history to give him laudable motives for his hostility to the clergy - & to represent him as an enlightened hero.

The drama opens at the time when Edward, King of England, is on the point of marriage with Eltruda ^the Algiva of the chronicles^ci - she is ^his kinswoman, and^ the daughter of a noble who in a former reign had been banished for opposing the priesthood & who died in exile. Eltruda & her mother, living in solitude & retirement were attacked by a band of invading

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154)

thanes - and saved by Edward - the marriage is a consequence of the mutual attachment that hence arises. It is Eltruda's wedding day - fortune smiles upon her dearest wishes - but she is

miserable haunted by a presentiment of evil - The first scene, a very long one, is between her & Athelstan, a friend of the King, who exhorts her ^{^vainly^} to banish these superstitious fears. They are too soon confirmed - the news arrives that St Dunstan has arrived in England - St Dunstan lately banished for “crimes that spoke the basest traitor” a proud, ambitious, scheming priest churchman - he is now returned accompanied by a train of priests & supported by all the assistance influence that can be derived from the support amity of the Roman pontiff. The multitude receive him with open arms - & the mother of King Edward is among his adherents. A good deal of obscurity hangs over this portion ^{^of the subject^}. Edward and Eltruda always speak of St Dunstan as a traitor convicted of crimes the most heinous he is described not only as

Proud, insolent, imperious - eager of revenge,
Faithless in promise, ready to surmount
All bars divine & human, for his purposes.

But as a man convicted of heinousness & banished by the sentence of the assembled nobles of the land,

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155)

while Prince Edgar, who though weak is amiable, speaks of him always as a saint - a man renowned for virtue - who had been his instructor - his second father & formed his mind to purest goodness - & these discrepancies of opinion exist through the whole tragedy & are never cleared up - Edgar never alludes to the crimes of the Saint, nor does Edward undertake to convince him that he is mistaken in his opinion of his goodness. And we are the more surprised when afterwards Eltruda seeks an interview with him & deprecates his anger - without any allusion to his crimes

Dunstan is a sort of second Wolsey - but more artful - more unprincipled. He hates the race whence King Edward is sprung & only conciliates Edgar the more surely to secure wreak his revenge. Edgar loves Eltruda - on this love Dunstan works - while at the same time the near relationship of this lady princess to the King is a pretext for forbidding the marriage & rousing the superstitious multitude against their sovereign. He incites Edgar to murder his brother - he dooms Eltruda to the stake - he is remorseless in the prosecution of his schemes - yet there is something grand in his character. ^{^He is fearless.^} He lands in the kingdom of his adversary unaided except by his own trust in reliance on his own powers & the impression he is to make on the multitude - his partizans tremble for him (turn over)

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156)^{cii}

but he aspiring pretending to inspiration & support from heaven; - unchecked by pity or conscience is ready to meet & surmount every obstacle - he assumes humility to cloak presumption - but his heart is always haughty & unflinching - while Edward equally brave, is generous & gentle - with no thought but for his people's good & indignation at the assumptions of the priest.

A second trial is prepared for Dunstan he is called before the council of nobles to answer for his former crimes & return from banishment he is again sentenced to exile - & his utmost malice roused by this new condemnation, he again assails Edgar with persuasions to kill his king & brother promising Eltruda as the reward of the deed - the unfortunate Edgar - deluded - hurried away by passion & blinded by superstition resolves to obey. The scene that follows between him & his brother is one of the best in the drama - Edward magnanimous & noble - ready to resign his bride for England's sake, but horrified at the miserable end that is threatened her by the priesthood on account of their marriage - Edgar devoured by remorse - fearful for Eltruda - half betrays his design & gives token of an agonizing struggle till at last he rushes away resolved to save his brother. ^Then^ worked upon

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157)

again by the dangers that threaten Dunstan - & his artful instigations - he returns & stabs the king. Thus ends the fourth act - & the fifth commences with the horror which the murder of the king has shed around - ^augmented also by^ the expected death of Eltruda who is doomed to the stake by the priests - she however is saved by Edgar who rescues her as she is being led to death & then claims her for his wife - which she The scene between them is disjointed & ill-arranged - at first she treats him with something of kindness, then all at once we discover that she is aware that he is Edward's murderer & she overwhelms him with the bitterest reproaches - which awaken his remorse & fill him with keen repentance for the crime he has committed. At this moment Dunstan enters to seize Eltruda - she on this - who has hitherto been more of pining maiden, assumes the heroine - one would almost guess that Mrs Siddons^{ciii} was in the author's mind as the personification of his idea, as she rising with queenly Majesty addresses the people - yet most strangely she does not demand justice for murdered Edward - but allegiance for Edgar - through his brother's death the possessor of the hour - her [?commina

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158)

tions] expressed with heroic fervor even enter the heart of Dunstan - his courage is not does not fail - but his conscience is awakened - We find in him that he has hitherto been a self deceived imposter - that his assertions of support from heaven have had the avouchment of his own heart; but this fails him now - he perceives his crimes - he is struck with horror at his own deeds & rushes out having imprecated curses on his own head - Edgar attempts to stake stab himself but is prevented while Eltruda announces an intention of leaving England & taking refuge in the solitudes of Ireland.

There is much of what is eloquent & much of what is puerile in the dialogue of this drama. Godwin was not a poet - he was no adept in blank verse - There is an awkwardness & a bathos in the turns of his expression that remind us of a tyro - we do not wonder that the play was never brought out ^on the stage^, though there are many scenes & situations which render it interesting for the closet.

His chief attempt is to render Edward interesting for his fearless heroism & his exalted patriotism joined to the softest tenderness towards his bride while the mixture of enthusiasm & cunning [blank]

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c.606/2

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159)

Though his execution lagged no one was better aware than Godwin of the requisites of a tragedy - and in writing one he was beset by the discomfort attending the inability to write up to his conceptions. Godwin when writing was in the habit on awakening rising in the morning or on his return from a walk of putting down the thoughts that occurred to him during his ruminations. Notes of this kind we find on the subject of this tragedy^{civ}

“Edward should display the most perfect simplicity & public spirit - Beware of sentences expressing a little meaning in a tedious drawl of words - Be not misled by Holcroft: attend impartially to his criticisms, but adopt nothing except on full conviction. - The business of Edward in his first scene is to make a collected & manly confession of his views, & to probe the heart of Edgar. - Every thing must be terror, confusion, & dismay, Edward alone tranquil & serene in the midst. Edgar is ominously inane in his first scene. - Let there be no prodigies in the

first act; let them result from & not precede the impression of Dunstan on the people: they will also gradually heighten the action. - Let the second act have prodigies: the action will not then drag as it does at present.”

Mention is made in these notes of Holcroft's criticisms as a dramatist & accustomed to the theatre they were valuable. But they were unsparing. He detected every fault & laid it bare without pity.^{cv} Some of the notes remain & deserve to be cited to show the acuteness of the man & the principles

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160)

of truth & friendship that existed between him & Godwin^{evi}

“The dread of Dunstan should be heightened as much as possible, & his landing should excite much stronger terror as well from the unexpectedness, as from the daring effrontery of the act. Tumult - hurry, dismay, terror should be excited & exhibited. Edward only should appear capable of braving the storm - while he speaks the auditor should imagine all in ^perfect^ security - the moment he is absent all should be distrust, anxiety & distraction. - There are fine traits in the character of Edgar in the first act.

“Dunstan in Act II should shew more ambition, & superstition, unmixed with honest piety, which is too prominent by much.

“ Act III begins too like chit chat. The arguments of Edward, which may be made the finest in the play should be increased in force, & Eltruda having listened, cannot doubt then, whatever she might do before or after.

“Act IV Edgar's ^struggles &^ language should be stronger: his thoughts more confused & approaching madness. In scene I & II there is great excellence already. The false hope when Edgar goes off, is well imagined & should be increased in energy of thought.

“The whole speech of Act V The spiritless insufferably tame entrance of Edgar & Eltruda, that is of the murderer of his brother & the murdered man's wife, at the very moment he is left weltering in his blood offends beyond description. No such arrangement of scenes or sentiments must take place - the retiring of Eltruda to faint is worthy of Tom Thumb. Edgar is too paltry a scoundrel - the audience would rise & kick such a fellow off the stage as a dirty chimney sweeper, who has washed his face, & called himself a prince - line 130 - The fanatic motives

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161)

that determined him are finely enumerated. This is sublime, but all after 1 & 2, not only spiritless but wrong - that Eltruda should enter in such a vapid, whining, wanting to feel manner is impossible. She would be running frantic in search of her husband's body - accuse all she met - seek for instruments of self destruction - & freeze & terrify her hearers. Edgar & Dunstan himself would shrink from the wildness of her sublime sarcasms. Horror would seize on the soul of Edgar & the priestly, bigotted flowing insolence of superstition would stand confounded, motionless & speechless, while she spoke of murder & all the tortures that should overtake the swollen hypocrite & incestuous parricide. She should recite all the high qualities of Edward, his valour, youth, beauty, the bridal day - but above all his patriotism, his high disinterested views, his love of liberty, the blessings he had conferred on his nation country, his expansive heart, which embraced the good not of an individual, or a single nation, or a single age, but of all times & all people. The improbabilities or rather impossibilities of the scene between Edgar & Eltruda are too numerous to repeat, though there are thoughts & passages which only require to be placed in proper company to be extremely beautiful. I have before expostulated on the denouement & the catastrophe. I can only add that my feelings are confirmed by a second reading. Eltruda could not, ought not to act thus. What [,] seat the murderer of her husband on the throne! Why not marry him too!”

^There is From this it may be gathered that there is much strength & beauty in the drama, little no poetry and considerable faults in the action. There is no trace of its ever been [sic] offered to any theatre.^

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literary London

c.606/2

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24)

During this year^{cvi} Holcroft published his novel of Anna St Ives.^{cvi} It was the custom between the friends to criticise each other's productions very freely. Anna St Ives had for its object the promulgation of the tenets of philosophy to which the friends were each day more

warmly addicted. Holcroft's dramatic talent however threw variety into the character, & interest into the situations. But still Godwin was not satisfied. A well told story was the effort of imagination that most pleased him & an awkward incident or lame catastrophe was sure to excite his disapproval. Among his papers I find the following remarks on the fourth volume Anna St Ives.^{cx} I insert it not so much for its remarks on the book itself, as for the general lesson it gives concerning the means of inspiring & keeping up interest in fictitious writing.

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b.227/6(b)^{cx} [William Godwin to Thomas Holcroft]

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“I declare myself with all my heart & from the bottom of my soul, the utter and irreconcilable enemy of this fourth volume.

“I feared as much. I said at the end of the third volume; No; mortal man cannot support it; it would be better than Julie or Clarissa.

“There are two objections, both insuperable.

“1. The catastrophe turns ^not^ upon incident, but reasoning. Perhaps in the fifth monarchy & the reigns of the saints, such catastrophes will be excellent. But at present certain it is, either you are not wise enough to write them, or I am not wise enough to be pleased with them. I believe the first is true, & that neither you nor any other man existing is able to write them. As to the second, God send you ten millions of readers wiser, more refined & more speculative than your humble servant. To all the rest, not all the silly kickabies of the republican doctor's table in Peregrine Pickle would be so irresistible a provocation to nausea, as Volume the Fourth. If you wished to impress on your countrymen an abhorrence of the very name of Political Philosophy, you could not have ^done^ your business in any way so effectually, as by obtruding it upon them, when their passions were roused, & imagination was on tiptoe for events.

“2. Your object is to render sophistry victorious. If over Anna, how will ^are^ you be sure that it will ^not^ extend its conquests over the whole mass of your female readers? In the first ^second^ volume you were for a time guilty of the

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26)

error of supposing Frank's arguments inferior to Anna's; you are here falling into the same error^{cx} respecting Clifton. There it was comparatively of little consequence; here it is of the utmost magnitude. It is at least very problematical whether, when property & all its modes are abolished, the commerce of the sexes will be accompanied by any species of marriage. You say, “Women must not be so mad as to make laws for themselves in direct contradiction to the institutes under which they live.” Are you sure they ought not? Are you sure it cannot be proved

to be vicious, “to act according to a bad system, when there is a better?” Tout au contraire I suspect, a true heroine ought not even “in these times of prejudice & vice” to marry.

“How is the defect of your catastrophe to be cured? Of that judge for yourself. Perhaps by wholly changing it. By the ultimate rejection of Clifton, & the total success of Frank. I have a confused prospect of endless beauties attendant on such a change; & your total failure in your present catastrophe after such laborious study, leads me to suspect the tragical catastrophe to be radically wrong. Oh, what a glorious third volume! &, oh, what an abortive fourth! The fourth volume rises for the most part till towards the close of Letter 79, & convalesces again in Letter 87, &c.”^{cxii}

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c.606/4^{cxiii}

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1) [blank]

Literary occupation & the interests of private life were the make the history of this year. He Godwin continued in Charlton St.^{cxiv} He rented the whole of a small house of which he had only furnished a part & restricted his expenditure in the narrowest limits. Believing that no duty is so serious or so beset with mistakes & disappointment as the just disbursement of money, he narrowed his views to earning little & spending little. He lived the first three years in Charton St. & spent necessarily £110 - 120 & [?shillings] 13d in the three successive years.

His manner habits of life was exceedingly regular & remained the same to the end of his life. He rose between

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2)

seven & eight, & read some classic author before breakfast - that meal was dispatched at nine - & from that hour till twelve or one he employed himself with his pen. He found that he could not exceed this measure of labour with any advantage to his own health or the work in hand - (turn over)

[written upside down]^{cxv}

14 Old Jekyll the barrister executor to Mary Robinson?

15 C Lamb’s letter sent to [illeg.] published on the 1st May - June - 1837.^{cxvi}

....

”””

[2v]

The rest of the day morning was spent in calls reading & seeing his friends - When at home he

dined at four - but during his bachelor life he frequently dined out. His dinner at home at this time was simple enough. He had no servant an old woman came in the morning to clean & arrange his appartments. If necessary she prepared a mutton chop which was put in a Dutch oven.

While writing Political Justice there was one senten paragraph which he wrote eight times over before he could satisfy himself with the strength & perspicuity of his expressions. On this occasion a sense of confusion of the brain came over him, & he applied to his friend Mr Carlisle now Sir Anthony Carlisle, the celebrated surgeon, who warned him that he had exerted his intellectual faculties to their limit, & that whenever he felt the approches to similar sensations in his head he must desist from his employment. In compliance with this direction Mr. Godwin limited his hours of composition & study into what many may deem narrow bounds.^{cxvii} But when we hear of the melancholy results of taxing the brain with excessive labour, of which several deplorable instances has occurred in our time we admire at once the sagacity of the physician & the docility of his patient.

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c.606/1

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A few other letters occur during this year 1793; the most singular of these may be introduced by the following memorandum of Mr Godwin’s own

Mr Godwin has made a note to the memoranda of the year 1793 to the following effect

“When I had published written nearly three fourths of the volume of Caleb Williams,^{cxviii} I was prevailed upon with much reluctance, by the importunity of a very old friend to entrust him with the perusal of my manuscript. In three days he returned it to me with a note nearly in these words.”

[blank]

As the original note is preserved among Mr Godwin’s papers it [[^] sic] here presented entire. It is to be remarked that the writer was a fellow Collegian of Mr Godwin.^{cxix} A man of warm heart & strong sense - his partner & assister in every money difficulty & often the sharer of his privation, poor as himself - but more alert, more capable of competing with this sort of embarrassment - a man of the kindest feelings and readiest friendship - but not always willing

to submit to the tone of superiority which Godwin sometimes unconsciously & sometimes as a matter of right assumed.

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[81v]

Mr Godwin adds -

It is so hardly necessary to say that the receipt of this note was the means of disturbing me. It was three days [^ sic] I fully recovered the elasticity & fervent tone of mind required for the prosecution of my work” -

.....

b.214/5^{CXX} [James Marshall to William Godwin]

”””

[1r]

I inclose you three guineas; the rest you will have very shortly.

I take the opportunity of saying a word or two on the affair of Tuesday. It was not I, but somebody else, who exhibited marks of intoxication, or more properly of insanity; for upon no principle of sound intellect is it to be accounted for. I came, like a rational being, from motives of the purest kind, to discharge what I conceived to be a duty. But Sir Fretful was in a humour to hear nothing but commendation, & tyrant Procrustes would admit no duty in another of which he should himself be the object, & which did not square precisely with his ideas. Yet this is a philosopher teaching the firm discharge of duty to mankind? Whip me such philosophers, whose precepts & practice are eternally at variance.

So far from being told twenty times, that previous to reading the MS, that I was not to give my opinion, I do not remember being once told it: but had it been so, I do not see that it ought at all to have altered my conduct.

One word respecting the MS itself, &

”””

[1v]

I have done. - the incidents are ill-chosen; the characters irrational, distorted; the phraseology intended to mark the humourous ones, un-appropriate; the style uncouth; every thing upon stilts; the whole uninteresting; written as a man would make a chair or a table who had never handled a tool. I got through it, but it was as I get over a piece of ploughed-up ground, with labour & toil. - By the way, judging from the work in question, one might suppose ^some^ minds not to be unlike a piece of ground. Having produced a rich crop, it ^must^ lie fallow for a season, that it may gain sufficient vigour for a new crop. - You were speaking of a motto for this work: the best motto in my opinion would be a *Hic jacet*; for depend upon it the world will suppose you to be exhausted; or rather, what a few only think at present, will become a general opinion, that the Hercules you have fathered, is not of your begetting.

Your note to me is written to justify yourself from a charge of weakness; &

”””

[2r]

it contains an additional confirmation of that weakness. The meaning of it is, that, if I cannot have the forbearance to avoid mentioning a syllable, or breathing a censure upon this “work of works”, I must not approach you till it is finished. Fie! Fie! what name does this deserve?

Friday May 31. 93^{cxxi}

Jas. Marshal

[bottom of page, MJG hand]

How extraordinary! This novel
was ---- Caleb Williams!

M. J. G.

.....

c.606/4

”””

17)

Godwin commenced this year^{cxxii} his acquaintance with a man known to himself & all his literary contemporaries as the most generous the most amiable of men. Thomas Wedgwood of Etruria in Staffordshire a name dear to all who reverence virtue & goodness. His enthusiasm in the cause of Knowledge - his earnest desire to serve his fellows rank him high among good men. He was afflicted with bad health which acted on his nerves and ^frequently^ rendered him low spirited to a painful degree. The commencement history of his intercourse with Godwin is so well pourtrayed in their correspondance that no further observation need be made. It will be seen that at one time they meditated making common household together.

”””

18)

Their establishment was to be conducted on the most economical plan as suited the narrow circumstances of the one, & the generous views of the other which led him to limit his personal expences that he might have more to spare for others. It will be seen what prevented the execution of this project

”””

[unnumbered]

Wedgwood projected at this time taking a house conjointly with Godwin and making common household. This establishment was to be conducted on the most economical footing, as suited to

the circumstances of the one, & the generous views of the other, which led him to limit his personal expences, that he might have more to spare to others. I find the following notes on the subject

[blank]

....

”””

41)^{cxixiii}

I add a few letters written to Godwin this year. The one from Holcroft is so exceedingly characteristic that it demands insertion. From this date, Mr Godwins own letters will be more frequent He accepted and made use of the copying machine^{cxixiv} & to this we owe the preservation of very many of his letters. Some of the copies were obliterated or damaged by time, but on the whole the machine succeeded. It did not in the least damage the originals. Mr Josiah Wedgewood at my request most kindly sent such letters as he could find from Mr Godwin to his brothers, & those that underwent the operation of being copied are as well preserved as the rest.

....

”””

[unnumbered]

There was much of method in the objects Mr Godwin proposed to himself through life - & much of method also in his the mode with which he looked on the habits of his life - One of his objects was to see new people who at all deserved attention from talent. I find in one of his journals a list of his acquaintances made out under the year in which such were formed. I find the name of Coleridge thus marked from as far back as 1794^{cxixv} - After that I believe he went abroad and I do not find him mentioned till 1800 - when there is a particular record of Coleridge, visit, March 29, 30, 31, 1800. His intimate acquaintance with

....

”””

[unnumbered]

It was early in 1799^{cxixvi} that Mr Godwin first knew Coleridge - he particularly marks in his journal, Coleridge, visit, March 29, 30

.....

Duke reel 5

”””

The four principal oral instructors to whom I feel my mind indebted for improvement, were Joseph Fawcet, Thomas Holcroft, George Dyson, & Samuel Taylor Coleridge. I made their acquaintance at the following periods: Fawcet in 1778 Holcroft in 1786 Dyson in 1788

Coleridge I first casually knew in 1794; but the familiar acquaintance to which I feel myself particularly deeply indebted, did not begin till 1799.

.....[end chapter 1: *literature*]

***document Ann Godwin**

c.516/1^{cxxvii}

»»»

My dear Wm.

I'm a poor letter writer at best but now worse than ever, after thanking yo for yr genteel present of the Memoirs of yr Wife. Excuse me saying Providence certainly knows best the fountain of wisdom canⁿ^ot err. I hope you are taught by reflection your mistake concerning marriage there might have been two children that had no lawful wright to any thing yt was their fathers with a thousand other bad consequences, children & wives crying abt ye streets without a protector, You wish I dare ^say^ to keep yr own opinion, therefore I shall say no more, but wish you & ^dear^ babes happy does little Mary thrive is she weaned you will follow your wives direction give them a great deal of air & have a good oppertunity as yo live out of ye smoke of the city [...]

I have been burning a great number of old letters; but when I came to yours it was with great reluctance that I destroyed yours ^them^ there is such a kind & benevolant spirit towards your dear S & J in their necessities, what a burthen has Jo been to yo. poor creature what will become of him I tremble to think; [...]'.

....

c.516/1^{cxxviii},

»»»

Dear Wm,

[...]

Your broken resolution in regard to matrimony encourages me to hope that you will ere long embrace the Gospel [...] you might have been so good as told me a few more particulars about your conjugal state as when you were married as being a father as well as husband, I hope you will fill up your place with propriety in both relations [...] & I may say all your friends & mine wish your happiness, & shall be glad to see you & your wife in Norfolk if be spared.

.....

document *Life of Chatham

c.607/2^{cxxix}

»»»

[r]

I have just been saying my prayers; & with the greatest earnestness did I thank God that the life of Lord Chatham was finished, & added, with equal earnestness, From all such undertakings in the future, - Good Lord deliver me. O that mine enemy would publish a book! When Job & Shylock said this, I believe It is the greatest curse that can be uttered, & would very properly conclude the chapter of curses in the com. prayer. When Job & Shylock uttered it I believe they were more plagued with printers than reviewers. I include not Kearsley in the denomination of printers. He is a clever fellow & as much preferable to the puppy Newberry, as the The history of the life of Lord Chatham is to the history of Tom Thumb.^{cxxx} As a bookseller he has some acquaintance with great men. This morning the late attorney general came into his shop. Kearsley put a copy of your Chatham into his hands.

The Att. Gen opened it at Lord Chatham's "great soul brooding over the obscurity" & said, "the stile is good; If his materials are equally good, it will have an extensive sale, for the public has for some time thirsted after such a work.[“] Camden, Chatham, Cavendish, Shelburne, Burke, Fox, Johnson,^{cxxxix} recd. their copies yesterday morning. Johnson lives in Kearsley's neighbourhood. He sees him nearly every day & means in a day or two to ask his opinion regarding your performance. I want to see you but cannot as yet. The

”””

[v]

boy is as averse to ^the^ coming into the world,^{cxxxix} as we all are to the going out of it. I have sent you the morning Chronicle. I have marked an advertisement in it, to which you must give, for me, a clever ans^r.
Sat. Morg.

.....

***document Fawcett**

c.607/2^{cxxxix}[Joseph Fawcett to William Godwin]

”””

I thank you for your honest opinion upon the question on which I consulted you. It has not, I confess, determined me. The ground of your dislike, so far as your explanation lets me into it, certainly does not accord with my judgment. I likewise recollect to have remarked a difference, in more than one instance, between your opinion respecting the merit of poetry, & the popular judgment. Before I come to a resolution, I shall exercise a little more consideration of my own & avail myself of additional counsel. In the mean time, I shall be much obliged to you, if you will point out to me, in a line to Sledgegrove (where I now am, although, as I send this by a friend, you will have it by the Penny Post) those particular faults in the elegy to which you allude: as, though I should determine not to subjoin it to the Art of War, I shall make no scruple of inserting it in a collection of poems whenever I publish one.

Joseph Fawcett

***document Criticisms**

Duke reel 5^{cxxxiv}

”””

Remember there are such things as great & enviable talents, virtues of the purest kind which always more or less are associated with these talents, and attachments arising out of this association so strong ^& so delightful^ that they are known only to our private feelings. I say remember these facts which you so well understand and for god’s sake do not let any sense of obligation oppress your mind. It has been a source of supreme happiness to me that I had so unequivocal an opportunity of shewing you my heart. If the piece succeed all our desires I hope will be gratified. I only request you not to make *essential* alterations with out a conference: we may mutually perce[ive] reasons which had escaped the other:

Sepr 23d. 1804

T Holcroft

.....

c.607/1^{cxxxv}

”””

[r]

It is impossible to write any thing in a style of greater kindness & affection than my three last notes. To attempt to add anything to that, would be absurd.

You understand me as insinuating that you had “prescribed to me the law”, Permit the revision of the tragedy^{cxxxvi} by me, or starve.” It is foolish in me to put down in black & white, that I never dreamed of such a meaning. Circumstances may prescribe to me that law, without any concurrence of yours. I wish I were sure that I should never starve or go to prison , till you had put your name on the back of the writ.

I said in my last, that “it was some other sentiment than friendship that which dictated the restriction that, in revising my play according to my own judgment, I should not make use of your words.” I adhere to that assertion. It might be as noble a sentiment, it might be nobler, but I say again, “it was not friendship.” If I am to receive any more ^notes^ equally perversive of the real state of the question as the one before me, do me the favour to explain how it could be friendship.

But, in the name of everything holy in friendship, or honourable in man, do not let us by such idle comments slur one of the most generous actions that ever man performed for man. I have

”””

[v]

said already that “I feel a sense of obligation in the case that no words can express.” I have said that “I am persuaded that what you have done will be of infinite service to me.” And I swear that when I said this, they were not words of course, but the religious & unchangeable sentiments of my mind. Allow me to repose in this delicious feeling, without interruption from unintelligible & deplorable altercations.

Wednesday evening,

Oct. 3, 1804.

.....
document *Monthly Mirror

Duke reel 13

''''

Notes on the Biographical Sketch of WG inserted in the Monthly Mirror for Jan & Feb 1805

I once conceived the design of composing the narrative of my own life, & have actually brought it down as far as the twelfth year of my age. But I shall probably never complete it. My feelings on the subject are not what they were. I was always an infinite lover of ingenuousness. I sat down with the intention of being nearly as explicit as Rousseau in the composition of his Confessions. I think I have no wish to be understood by the present age or by posterity, if posterity should care anything about me, as anything better than I am.

But ingenuousness has not always the effect of truth. Truth, practically speaking, arises from the relative characters & dispositions of the persons or things, the speaker & the hearer, the words uttered, & the temper of him by whom the words are received. To say that I performed such an action, & felt myself prompted to it by such or such a motive, however faithful the statement may be, does by no means necessarily convey a true impression to the mind of the hearer or speaker. I have heard it asserted by an eminent artist, that on full examination it will be found out that every portrait painter will be found to paint ^ more of himself, his ^ own ^ conceptions & intellectual turn, into his delineations, than of the person who sits [?for] him. The case is paralleled in the matter of which I am speaking. The reader no sooner peruses the little section of narrative alluded to, than he exclaims according to his own preconceptions, How honourable a proceeding! how arrogant a folly! how glorious a virtue! how obvious a vice!

I am willing to confess of myself that I am a lover of fame, honourably formed, that last infirmity of noble minds. I am ready in this respect to adopt the sentiment of Plutarch, & to say, that I had rather posterity should never know that there ^ had been ^ was such a man as Godwin, than that they should believe of me, that Godwin was a being, immoral, degenerate & unjust.

I am an author. In that character the world has enough of me, upon which to place ^ fasten ^ its misrepresentations & its criticisms. As an individual, I have never been a man of the world. I have seen a portion of human society in most of its various classes; but that is a circumstance which has risen incidentally, & not out of any bustling & [illeg] of my own. I am of a retiring, not an intrusive disposition. My sensibilities are too great, & I am too sceptical & diffident as to how I shall acquit myself, & how I shall be received, to be by any means qualified, as the phrase is, to make my way in the world. The [illeg] half of human life I spent in & for the most ^ part ^ in solitude; & since have lived principally in the bosom of my family. My personal transactions have been too insignificant to merit the public attention, & too independent for me to wish to expose them to the cavils of the many-headed multitude.

I am an author. By my works I am content to be judged. I am perhaps as well acquainted as most men with their faults & their follies; but, having^{cxxxvii}

.....

***document Marshall 1817**

b.214/5^{cxxxviii}

»»»

Mr Marshall 1817

Without any eminent share of intellectual power, he has perhaps as liberal a mind as perhaps any person of intellectual power I ever knew know & has proved it through the whole course of his life

I received a letter this morning by the post, informing me of the death of my only sister, which took place yesterday. Mary I think must remember her by the name of Aunt Godwin, who was most unremittingly kind to her and Fanny in their childhood.^{cxxxix}

b.214/5^{cxl}

»»»

[r]

My dear Sir,

It is now many years since I have ceased to write to you on any subject but myself, and I do not know what is the state of your feelings and habits as to such a general subject as will form the topic of this letter.

I remember once Addressing your late brother^{cxli} on some such occasion as I have now before me. But feelings which then met his, and I believe your approval, the lapse of time may have altered, and they may now be deemed romantic.

I said to him, among a number of reasons why I regret that I have occasion to be under pecuniary obligation to you, this is one: You have wealth, more than you find a necessity of applying to your own wants, and you would gladly apply some of your superfluity in acts of benevolence. [...] and abstractly considered there would be a sort of propriety in my sometimes stating such a case to you, and inviting your ability to supply what the narrowness of my means took from me the power of effecting. This, I added, I should do without ceremony, but that the consciousness that I am under pecuniary obligations to you checks me and makes me feel as if there were an indelicacy in my doing what, under other circumstances it would be my duty to do.

In answer to this representation, your brother assured me, that I was wrong in my scruple [...]

I have entered into this preface as an apology for what is the express purpose of this letter.

The person whose interest is at this moment the subject of my thoughts, is a person nearly of the same age as myself, whom I first became acquainted with when I was seventeen, and whom from that time I have never lost sight [[^]sic]. His career in the world has been similar to my own, except that he wanted that originality of talent, that the world has been good [^]natured[^] enough to impute to me. In my outset in literature, I was engaged with the booksellers in obscure la-

”””

[v]

bours, reviews, compilations, translations, etc. and during that time this gentleman was for several years my coadjutor. Afterwards, when I was engaged in writings of a superior cast, he set up for himself, and now for twenty five years, he has subsisted respectably by the compilation of Indexes, the correction of English in works written by foreigners in our language, translations, and the superintendence of works in their passage through the press; [...] useful labours [...] indefatigable.

He has one son only [...] he has just now finished his education, and is fifteen years of age [...] my friend now, as he is going down the descent of life, and is full sixty years of age, finds himself for the first time oppressed with debts which he is unable to discharge.

[...]

Mr Marshal (that is his name) has spent the greater part of his life in disinterested service of others [...] his indefatigable exertions [...] a few years ago for the widow and six young children of Mr Holcroft, who by his death were left penniless in the world^{cxliii} [...] Mr Marshal is well known to Mr Basil Montagu [...] well thought of by many persons [...] anxious to raise for him 200£ or 300£ [...]

.....

***document Curran obit 1817**

b.214/8^{cxliii}

”””

On Tuesday evening at nine o'clock at his apartments at Brompton died the right Honorable John Philpot Curran. He is almost the last of that brilliant phalanx, the contemporaries & fellow-labourers of Mr Fox in the cause of general liberty. Lord Erskine in this country, & Mr Grattan in Ireland, still survive.

Mr Curran is one of those characters which the lover of human nature, & of its intellectual capacities, delights to contemplate. He rose from nothing. He derived no aid from rank & fortune. He ascended by his own energies to an eminence, which throws rank & fortune into comparative scorn. Mr Curran was the great ornament of his time of the Irish bar, & in forensic eloquence has certainly never been exceeded in modern times. His rhetoric was the pure emanation of his spirit, a warming and lighting up of the soul, that poured conviction & astonishment on his hearers. It flashed in his eye, & revelled in the melodious & powerful accents of his voice. His thoughts almost always shafted themselves into imagery, & if his eloquence had any fault, it was that his images were too frequent. But they were at the same time so exquisitely beautiful, that he must have been a rigorous critic, that could have determined which of them to part with. [...]

.....

”””

Mr Curran had his foibles & his faults. Which of us has not? At this awful moment it becomes us to dwell on his excellencies. And as his life has been illustrious, & will leave a trail of glory behind, this is the part of him that

every man of a pure mind will chuse to contemplate. We may any of us have his faults: it ^is^ his excellences that we would wish, for the sake of human nature, to excite every man to copy in proportion to his ability to do so.

....

For full citations see Bibliography.

ⁱDep. c.606/1: 1) and 2), from the Abinger collection deposited at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, are MWS transcriptions of Godwin's 'Autobiography' and 'Autobiographical fragments'. Godwin's holograph drafts, in b.226/1 and b.226/2, some with MWS marginalia and chapter headings, were given these titles, and published for the first time in William Godwin, *Collected Novels and Memoirs*, i, ed. Mark Philp (London: William Pickering, 1992) [MP]. Philp notes that MWS transcriptions in c.606/1 and c.606/2, of the fragments for 1781, 1782, 1790, 1791, 1792, and part of that for 1788, are now the sole extant version. Philp's introduction reports (MP 58-9), that the papers of the 3-chapter 'Autobiography 1756-1772' (MP 3-38), in b.226/1, and the 'Autobiographical fragments 1772-1796' (MP 39-51), in b.226/2, bear watermarks of differing dates between 1796 and 1819. These 'fragments' on near-contemporary events represent Godwin's first foray into autobiography, ending in 1796, at the time of Godwin's fortieth birthday, when he attended Lord Lauderdale's parties for Whig supporters, along with 'Mrs Wollstonecraft' and other friends (MP 51).

ⁱⁱMWS holograph, pages numbered in MWS style, single quarto sheet, laid paper, written r and v, watermark J Green & Son. On this sheet the date 1835 has been cut from the watermark when the paper was trimmed. As page numbers 1) and 2), and 1835 paper indicate, these pages open MWS account of Godwin's early life. It is characteristic that on her first page she quotes Godwin's declaration, 'that ... great & happy improvements might be achieved without anarchy & confusion', and on her second, that in 1791, Godwin declared 'it was my first determination to tell all that I apprehended to be truth'. *document *Monthly Mirror*.

ⁱⁱⁱGodwin writes of 'two anonymous letters' co-written by himself and Thomas Holcroft, to Whig Opposition parliamentarians Charles James Fox and Richard Brinsley Sheridan. But Mark Philp writes that a single letter now in c.526 'was written by Godwin and his friend Thomas Holcroft and sent to both in April 1791'. See 'Letter 1: to a Leader of the Opposition, April 1791', from Abinger Dep. c.526, *Political Writings* ii, 3, 7-11 in *Political and Philosophical Writings of William Godwin* ii, ed. Mark Philp, researcher Austin Gee (London: William Pickering, 1993). [Mph 1993] Dr Philp has priority of publication of this 'full version' of the letter. Drafts of Godwin's letter of April 1791 to Sheridan in b.227/2(a), of Godwin's letter to Fox in 1793 in b.227/2(b). A part-transcription of April 1791 to Sheridan in MWS transcription in c.606/2. See 2: *politics*.

^{iv}Godwin recalls his decision to break away from political journalism 'in the summer of 1791', to concentrate on serious literature, in the Preface to the 1st edition of *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*, dated 7 January 1793: 'It [*Political Justice*] was projected in the month of May 1791: the composition was begun in the following September, and has therefore occupied a space of sixteen months'. For both Godwin and Mary Shelley, the point is that Godwin's *Political Justice* (published February 1793) has intellectual priority of Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (published July 1792), and of Godwin's first meeting with Tom Paine and Wollstonecraft (in November 1791).

^vA column of numbers in the margin of c.606/1: 1), in MWS hand, lists '85 86 87 88 89 90 91', the years 1785-

1791 in which Godwin wrote the historical sections of Robinson's *New Annual Register*. See 2: *politics*.

^{vi}This was Godwin's working title for what became his major work, *An Enquiry concerning Political Justice, and its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness* (2 vols.; London: Robinson, 1793. 2nd ed. 1796. 3rd rev. ed. 1798). See 2: *politics*.

^{vii}Montesquieu's treatise of 1748, translated into English in 1752, *The Spirit of Laws*.

^{viii}The year 1791. See (below) Godwin's journal entry for 3 Jan. 1791, transcribed by MWS in c.606/1: 13).

^{ix}Duke reel 2, MWS transcription of 'Chapter II', one of three chapter headings in Godwin's manuscript autobiography. In the Philp edition of the *Autobiography* [MP], the relevant passages, from 'removal from Wisbeach' (MP 13) and 'residence at Guestwick' (MP 13-20) to 'the man placed us on the top of the organ' (in Norwich Cathedral) (MP 27) cover the years 1758-1765. Philp's Introduction (MP 58) notes MWS marginalia and her heading 'Memoir' on the manuscript b.226/1.

^xWilliam Godwin's father's cousin, called Aunt Godwin, was Godwin's first tutor, or 'Schoolmistress'. She married and became Mrs Sothren in the year of his father's death in 1772 (MP 11). After she was widowed she lived at Dalling, Norfolk with Godwin's widowed mother, Ann Godwin, and died 12 December 1796. The incident of 'the Cat' that made the boy desire to run away, was on a Sunday when Godwin stroked the family pet and was rebuked by his father (MP 18). The heading 'Schoolmaster' may refer to Akers's village school at Hilderston [Hindolveston], which Godwin attended in 1765, or to Newton's senior school at Norwich where Godwin became a pupil in September 1767 (MP 29). For Newton, see 2: *politics*. On the same page of the autobiography (MP 27) that Godwin recalls the 'visit to Norwich - the seat on the top of the organ', he also writes of the later occasion when he paid an advance visit to Newton's school, where his elder brothers were already pupils, on a day trip to Norwich with his mother, and 'how I was struck with the insignificant figure I made, compared with Mr Aker's school, where I was universally considered the most promising boy it had to boast'. The temporal overlaps that structure Godwin's reminiscent 'history of mentalities' are replicated in MWS script.

^{xi}c.532/8: 45), 46), MWS hand, MWS numbering style, two small sheets of laid paper. See *Bodleian rubric c.532/8. This heading 'Chapter IV', followed by a blank, may refer to MWS projected fourth chapter, or alternatively, to a Chapter IV in Godwin's manuscript 'Autobiography'.

^{xii}The page c.606/1: 53) is scored with vertical black pen strokes as well as horizontal strokes cancelling phrases and sentences. The distinction between a 'regular autobiography' carrying a personal history up to Godwin's father's death in 1772, and 'notes' reflecting on subsequent events up to 1796, is preserved in Philp's edition: 'Autobiography' [1756-72] (MP 3-38); 'Autobiographical fragments and reflections' [1772-9] (MP 39-51). But note that MWS script elides dates of composition and normalises chronological dates: 'At this place ends ... in process of time'.

^{xiii}Soon after Godwin's seventeenth birthday on 3 March 1773, his recently widowed mother had tried to enrol him at the leading dissenting academy, Homerton in the London borough of Hackney, but had to settle for Hoxton, and she made a rare trip to London to place him at the start of his five-year term of residence.

^{xiv}Mark Philp's editorial notes to Dep. b.227/1(i) quote Godwin MS note to 'My Literary Executor', dated 30 June, 1834: '[T]he most faultless book I ever printed, is probably the Thoughts on Man. It contains some

egotism, but kept perhaps within proper bounds' (MP 60).

^{xv}MWS quotes from Essay xviii, 'Of Diffidence', in William Godwin, *Thoughts on Man, his Nature, Productions, and Discoveries. Interspersed with some particulars respecting the author* (London, Effingham Wilson, 1831), 333-40. Autobiographical 'particulars' also in Essays vii, ix, xiv.

^{xvi}'1798' cancelled and '1796' substituted, as latest date covered by Godwin's 'brief annals'. The two year period 1796-1798 is crucial, as these are the years of Godwin's relationship with Mary Wollstonecraft.

^{xvii}One such 'future history' was the 'Biographical Sketch of William Godwin, Esq.', published in *Monthly Mirror* (31 Jan. 1805), 5-7; and (Feb. 1805), 85-93. Cf. *document *Monthly Mirror* (Duke reel 13), containing Godwin's notes to assist the *Monthly Mirror*'s journalist and 'prevent material mistakes',

^{xviii}c.606/1: [58v], consists of one heavily cancelled paragraph on verso of list of early works in c.606/1: 57).

^{xix} c.606/2, MWS holograph script, matching pinholes on every sheet in folder, no dated watermarks. See *Bodleian rubric c.606/2.

^{xx}'This year' is probably 1792.

^{xxi}Ann Godwin's letters to Godwin from Dalling, Norfolk, are in c.516, together with an undated draft letter from Godwin to his mother (below). See *Bodleian rubric c.516.

^{xxii}Internal evidence of Godwin's letter (below) makes it clear that it was not an 'answer' to Ann's 1792 letter to which MWS attaches it, but of earlier date, c.1785, after James Marshall's trip to St Vincent's in 1784, to finance which Godwin had borrowed money, probably from Felix Vaughan.

^{xxiii}c.516/1, numbered MWS style 19) and 20), Ann Godwin letter dated from Dalling, Norfolk, 5 April 1792, single sheet, written r and v, bluish laid paper, no watermark. Another blank sheet forms outer, addressed 'Mr Wm Godwin/No 39/Devoshire [sic] Street/Portland Place/London'. Wax seal has torn through paper and several words have been mended in unidentified hand. Matching pinholes left top corner in both sheets.

^{xxiv}Charles Kegan Paul, *William Godwin: his friends and contemporaries* (2 vols.; London: Henry S. King, 1876), [CKP], i, 56, gives 'Apolos'. Perhaps Ann Godwin's misspelling of 'Apostles'.

^{xxv} An unnumbered large sheet in Ann Godwin's hand was formerly pinned to her letter. It is a paraphrase of a sermon on the biblical text, 'I am become a stranger unto my brethren & an alien unto my mothers children'. Ann Godwin heads her first page: 'Christ's charge against his professing People Ps 69 & 8'.

^{xxvi}c.516/1, draft of letter [to Ann Godwin], Godwin hand, quarto fold, unnumbered pages, laid paper, lacks signature, undated watermark, pinhole left top corner matches Ann Godwin's 1792 letter (above). In a different hand, 'Mrs Godwin, Sen.', heads second page.

^{xxvii}'Mr M.' is James Marshall. Godwin-Marshall correspondence in b.214/5.

^{xxviii}There is an apparent caret in my transcription of this passage. In Pamela Clemit, 'Godwin', *Lives of the Great Romantics* III, i (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1999) [Clemit 1999], 101, the next sentence in c.606/1 reads: 'She carried on the business of a dressmaker.'

^{xxix}'your dear sister and J' are Godwin's sister Hannah and brother Joseph. On the manuscript letter in c.516/1, Mary Shelley marked out the final paragraph she quotes with a large black cross and vertical wavy lines in the left margin. The letter patently is not 'dated 1797'. It has outer postmark '10 April 1798', and Ann Godwin refers to Godwin's *Memoirs* of Wollstonecraft, published 10 January 1798. Also in c.516/1, another Ann

Godwin letter to Godwin dated 30 May 1797. Possibly MWS confuses the dates 1797 and 1798 of these two letters, one written during Wollstonecraft's pregnancy, the other after her death. *document Ann Godwin.

^{xxx}The editorial 'we' and 'us' may be merely formal, or may be inclusive of Mary Jane Godwin.

^{xxxi}Philp (MP 48, note b), notes of this 'Autobiographical fragment' for 1788, in b.226/2, that the MWS transcription of the concluding sentences is now the sole extant version.

^{xxxii}In 'Analysis of own character begun Sep 26, 1798' (MP 59, 55-60) Godwin writes of Thomas Holcroft, 'our acquaintance began in 1786, and our intimacy in 1788' (MP 59). In his *Memoirs of Holcroft* vol. ii, Chap. vi, Hazlitt had written, 'In the year 1786, Mr Holcroft first became acquainted with Mr Godwin. This friendship lasted for near twenty years'. "Memoirs of the Late Thomas Holcroft", *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt in Twenty-One Volumes*, ed. P. P. Howe, after the edition of A.R. Waller and Arnold Glover, iii (London and Toronto, 1932), [Howe], 163.

^{xxxiii}William St Clair, *The Godwins and the Shelleys: the biography of a family* (London and Boston, 1989) [C], writes that Godwin began keeping a journal on 6 April 1788 (C55), and that the last entry in Godwin's journal is dated 26 Mar. 1836 (C487).

^{xxxiv}8 May 1776 was annually commemorated as publication date of Vol. i of Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*.

^{xxxv}By 1788, Dr Andrew Kippis, formerly Godwin's tutor at Hoxton Dissenting Academy, was now an editor of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and had started a Whig oppositionist journal *New Annual Register* [NAR], published by G. G. and J. Robinson, in 1781. Kippis was a family friend and mentor of Welsh writer Helen Maria Williams. Cf. Godwin's 'Autobiographical fragments' for 1783/4 and 1787: 'towards the end of the year [1787] I was introduced by the desire of Helen Maria Williams into the coterie of that lady' (MP 45, 47).

^{xxxvi}The title of polite address 'Mrs' for an unmarried older woman was not unusual in Godwin's London circle. Nevertheless, in transcribing from MWS transcription of Godwin's journals, I may have misread 'Miss' as 'Mrs'. In the same folder c.606/1, MWS transcription of Godwin's journal entry for Friday 11 December 1789, gives 'Tea Miss Williams's', and 'Miss Williams' is again presumably Helen Maria Williams. See 2: *politics*.

^{xxxvii}Richard Brinsley Sheridan, MP, as Manager of the House of Commons proceedings against Warren Hastings, delivered a marathon speech in favour of impeachment on 3 June 1788, and three subsequent days, 6 June, 10 June, 13 June (My dates from 'Sheridan, Richard Brinsley (1751-1816)', [W.F.R.], *Dictionary of National Biography* (1922), xviii, 81.

^{xxxviii}MWS cancellations indicate her reservations about the degree of intimacy in the relationship. Godwin-Holcroft correspondence in c.607/1 and b.214/6.

^{xxxix}See below, Holcroft's criticisms of Godwin's *St Dunstan*, transcribed by MWS in c.606/2: 159) to 161). Godwin and Holcroft exchanged sharp criticisms about another play in progress during the autumn of 1804. This was probably Godwin's *Faulkener, a Tragedy in Prose*, staged at Drury Lane in December 1807. Their exchange produced a letter from Godwin, almost certainly to Holcroft, dated Wednesday evening, Oct. 3, 1804, in c.607/1. *document Criticisms.

^{xl} The Irish-born history painter and academician James Barry, like Jean-Jacques Rousseau, suffered mental distress when his ambitions were frustrated in the London art world of the 1780s.

^{xli}c.607/2, letter 5 Aug. 1788 from Godwin to Thomas Holcroft, Godwin hand, quarto sheet, written r and v, MWS numbers 125) 126), in sequence with c.606/1: 124), decorative undated watermark. For page 127), see b.227/2(a), below.

^{xlii}‘Chinese Mandarin’, the protagonist of Oliver Goldsmith’s *The Citizen of the World; or Letters from a Chinese Philosopher, residing in London, to his friends in the East* (London: Printed for the Author, [1760] 1762). Godwin’s juxtaposition of the name ‘Dr Boerhaave’ with Goldsmith’s *Letters from a Chinese Philosopher* draws attention to Goldsmith’s Letter LXVIII, ridiculing quack doctors who advertise cures for venereal disease. This appeared in the *Public Ledger* for Tuesday 26 (misdated 25) August 1760. (My notes from Arthur Friedman, ed., Oliver Goldsmith, *Collected Works* (Oxford, 1966), ii, 279).

^{xliii}Professor Dr Herman Boerhaave (1668-1738), Dutch medical scientist, Fellow of the Royal Society (London), author of a treatise on scorbutic diseases, reputed to have discovered a cure for syphilis by experimenting with mercury and magnetism. British Library Catalogue of Printed Books lists numerous 18th-century English translations of Boerhaave’s *Aphorisms concerning the Knowledge and Cure of Diseases*, first published in Latin (Leyden 1709).

^{xliv}In b.214/6, Holcroft’s letter to Godwin of 24 July 1788, was addressed to ‘Mr Godwin/At Mr - - Upholsterer/Guilford [sic]/Surrey’. Holcroft had added, ‘P. S. You forgot to send your address’. Godwin had apparently forgotten to give Holcroft the address of his lodgings in Guildford where he had probably gone to collect Tom Cooper who was to live with him in London until 1791 (C59). See above, Godwin’s journal entry for 1788, ‘July 27 Su. T. Cooper at Guildford’, transcribed by MWS in c.606/1: 124). In b.214/6, a letter from Holcroft to Godwin dated 6 Sep. 1788, ends with ‘P.S. My best respects to Mr Marshal and Master Cooper’.

^{xlv}Gerard van Swieten (1700-1772), a student of Herman Boerhaave and succeeded him as Professor of Medicine at the University of Leyden. His Latin *Commentaries* on Boerhaave’s *Aphorisms* were published and republished from 1745 to 1772.

^{xlvi}b.227/2(a), Godwin hand, numbered 127), single folded sheet, addressed on outer.

^{xlvii} Godwin’s encomium on Herman Boerhaave (‘mynheer van Haaven’) echoes the eulogy by Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle, translated into English by Dr William Burton in 1743.

^{xlviii} In 1788 Holcroft was canvassing support for the liberal Whig Lord John Townshend in forthcoming elections.

^{xlix}(tten me) inserted in MWS hand at bottom of page.

^lMWS spelling ‘Southern’ for Miss Godwin’s married name, ‘Sothren’.

^{li}‘Joseph Lunaticus’ is probably a satire by the student Godwin on Dr Joseph Priestley (1733-1804), chemist, leading dissenter, and founder member of the Birmingham Lunar Society. . See Jenny Uglow *The Lunar Men: the Friends who Made the Future* (London, 2002). A Church and King mob attacked and burned Priestley’s house and laboratory at Fair Hill, Birmingham on 14 July 1791, and Priestley moved his family to London, and in 1794 to Pennsylvania. In his maturity, Godwin developed a respect for Priestley’s independent stance in science and religion. See 2: *politics*.

^{lii}The affecting story of Yarico and her baby boy in Richard Ligon, *A True and Exact History of the Iland of Barbadoes* (London, Humphrey Moseley, 1657), 54-55. The name of the British sailor, ‘Mr Thomas Inkle’,

introduced by Richard Steele, *Spectator* 11, Tues. 13 Mar. 1711.

^{liii}MWS page numbers in c.606/1: 90) and seq. are in error for 60) and seq. Page 90) is verso of page 59).

^{liv}In c.606/1: 92) to 94), the paragraphs in double quotation marks are transcribed by MWS from Godwin's 'Autobiographical fragments' for 1778, 1779, and 1780 (MP 42-3). See below, c.606/2 'Autobiographical fragments' for 1781 and 1782 (MP 44).

^{lv}Samuel Clarke *A Discourse concerning the Being and Attributes of God ... Being sixteen sermons ... in ... 1704, and 1705, at the lecture founded by the Honourable Robert Boyle, Esq; ...* (London: James and John Knapton, 1732).

^{lvi}Hindolveston in Norfolk.

^{lvii}Scottish M.P. William Adam.

^{lviii}St Clair's Chapter 4 (C37-8) dates the friendly debates with Fawcett to the late 1780s, Godwin's years as a political journalist, coinciding with his awakening interest in the parliamentary debaters Charles James Fox and Richard Brinsley Sheridan. See 2: *politics*.

^{lix}As the regular spelling 'Fawcett' indicates, this paragraph is MWS commentary on Godwin's autobiographical notes. The heading '1780' resumes in Godwin's first-person but the double quotation marks have been accidentally omitted from the script. This paragraph '1780' is repeated in c.606/2 (below).

^{lx}[Joseph Fawcett's] opinions. The "immorality of the private affections" is given a context in dissenter orthodoxy by St Clair (C75).

^{lxi}William Hazlitt, *Memoirs of Thomas Holcroft, written by himself, and continued to the time of his death, from his diary, notes, and other papers* (3 vols.; London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1816).

^{lxii}Fawcett published *Sermons Delivered at the Evening Lectures at the Old Jewry* (London: Joseph Johnson, 1795), and *The Art of War: A Poem* (London, 1795), changing the latter title in *Poems* (1798) to 'Civilised War'. The poem contrasts 'the wild Indian's war', which is part of a state of uncivilised savagery, with 'This ... dreadful scene,/Acted on literate Europe's lucid stage; /Civiliz'd war!'. The scant sympathy shown for 'the wild Indian' ('In man no more than muscle he discerns'), may be protecting the reputation of George Washington, whose speech to both houses of Congress on 5 December 1793 declared that 'every reasonable effort has been made to adjust the causes of dissension with the Indians north of the Ohio', but that, 'amicable negotiations having been frustrated', military action against them is now required to secure 'the essential interest and dignity of the United States.' (Washington quoted in 'Public Papers', *New Annual Register*, 1793 (London: G. G. and J. Robinson, 1794), 111-115). Despite the warlike title, Fawcett's poem is preoccupied with English home affairs, civil dissent and its political suppression, reflecting the recent trials of his contemporaries and friends for high treason: 'The conscience-wither'd wretch a witness comes/Against himself .../... before his country's bar/When pale he stands, a crowd of curious eyes/The hall of justice choak ...'. *document Fawcett

^{lxiii}My reading 'Hedgegrove' in MWS script c.606/2: 95 is cast in doubt by letter from Joseph Fawcett in c.607/2: n. p., which I read 'Sledgegrove'. See *document Fawcett.

^{lxiv}MWS reference to 'Vol ii, p. 246', is to the second volume of the 1816 3-vol. first edition, of Hazlitt's *Memoirs of Thomas Holcroft*. See Howe, 'Bibliographical Note' [n.p.]

^{lxv}In vol. ii, *Memoirs of Thomas Holcroft* (1816), Holcroft's diary entry for 24th June 1798 reads in part:

‘Dined, Godwin and R_ee [Reece] present. Godwin mentioned a Mr. - - whom he and Mr. Fawcett, on a pedestrian ramble, went to visit at Ipswich: Godwin saying, that perhaps he would give them beds; if not, he would ask them to supper, and besides they would have the pleasure of seeing the beautiful Cicely, his daughter. They went, stayed some time, but received no invitation. ... and [did not see] Miss Cicely (who had not appeared)’ (Howe 171). Godwin’s anecdote recalls 1778-1779, the ‘particularly lonely year’ after graduation from Hoxton, that Godwin spent as a candidate for the pulpit in Ware, Hertfordshire (C10, 14).

^{lxvi}Texts of French Enlightenment philosophy were lent to the young minister, William Godwin, by Frederick Norman at Stowmarket (C59, 126, 320).

^{lxvii}Godwin’s *History of the Life of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham* (London, Printed for the author, 1783) *document *Life of Chatham*.

^{lxviii}*Sketches of History in Six Sermons* (London, T. Cadell, 1784). In 1836 ‘Mary Jane Godwin borrowed ... a copy of *Sketches of History in Six Sermons* (1783) from Sir Charles Aldiss, who noted that Mary Shelley ‘declared she did not know [Godwin] had ever written any’ (Bennett, ii, 272, citing Pforzheimer Library MS). St Clair notes that only some copies carried Godwin’s name as author (C519). Godwin’s ‘Autobiographical fragment’ for 1783, for which no MWS transcription has been located, writes: ‘Murray published my Herald of Literature for which I received nothing - and Cadell published on the same terms, and with the same effect, a small volume of my Sermons: this volume was dedicated to Dr Watson, bishop of Llandaff’ (MP 44). The same fragment also announces the three novels published in 1784, and emphasises the haste with which they were composed, ‘ten days (Damon and Delia) ... three weeks (Italian Letters)... and in the first four months of 1784 (Imogen)’. MWS apparently refers in c.606/1: 98) to this fragment: ‘When we remember that Mr Godwin always required twelve months & usually a year & a half for the composition of a novel we turn with surprize curiosity to these earlier productions *struck off with so much haste*’ [my emphasis].

^{lxix}MWS phrase ‘his horns ungilded’, odd to 21st-century ears, derives from a misreading in the King James Authorised Version of the Hebrew *Book of Exodus* 34: 29, 3: ‘gilded the horns of Moses’. *The Holy Scriptures* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1955) renders the phrase: ‘Moses’ face sent forth beams’.

^{lxx}MWS faithfully reproduces Godwin’s assessment of the superiority of his own talents to Marshall’s. *document Marshall 1817.

^{lxxi}‘This year’ 1784, when Godwin commenced as author of the British and Foreign History section of *New Annual Register for 1783*. Mark Philp dates this fragment ‘1783/4’ and notes that the following entry in b.226/2 is for 1785 (MP 45-6). Philp dates Godwin’s contributions to *NAR* ‘from 1784 to 1791’, in the alphabetical entry ‘Godwin, William’, *Companion to the Romantic Age: British Culture 1776-1832* (Oxford, 1999), 525. St Clair (C54, 55) writes that Godwin’s ‘last contribution’ was finished on 4 September 1791 for the *New Annual Register for 1790*, and that Godwin then began preparations for writing *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*. But elsewhere St Clair speculates that Godwin contributed ‘Possibly also part of volume for 1791’ (C519), and that ‘Helen Maria Williams[‘s] ... volumes of letters describing the exuberant days of 1790 had found their way into Godwin’s *New Annual Register* narratives’ (C158). This raises the question whether Godwin continued to contribute as late as 1792, a period when Mary Wollstonecraft and Helen Maria Williams were in Paris, the Girondins were brought down, and British public opinion firmed against the Revolution; or whether, as St Clair

writes, that was left to his ‘successors at the [New Annual] *Register*’ (C158). See 2: *politics*

^{lxxii}[William Godwin], *Italian Letters; or The History of the Count de St Julian* (London: Robinson, 1784).

^{lxxiii}[William Godwin], *Damon and Delia: a Tale* (London: T. Hookham, 1784) [BL 1784].

^{lxxiv}‘The only’ is run on from page 101).

^{lxxv}c.606/5, four pages in Mary Jane Godwin hand [MJG], numbered in MWS style 101)–104). Page 101) is engraved ‘Bath’ in top left-hand corner. MJG excerpts Mr Godfrey’s story from BL 1784, 102–112; 180.

^{lxxvi}MJG copy omits the beginning of Mr Godfrey’s account, which he is persuaded to narrate as ‘a piecemeal story’ to the *ingénu* couple, Damon and Delia. It begins: ‘Mr Godfrey was not born to affluent circumstances. At a proper age he had been placed at the university of Oxford ... and here his abilities had been universally admired. ... But Mr Godfrey had a stiffness and unpliability of temper’ (BL 1784, 102–3).

^{lxxvii}MJG omits Mr Godfrey’s further reflection that: ‘My talents perhaps point me higher than to the business of forming the minds of youth. But, at least, the youth under my care are destined to fill the most conspicuous stations in future life’ (BL 1784, 106). Godwin’s anonymously-published pamphlet *An Account of the Academy that will be opened on Monday the Fourth day of August at Epsom in Surrey* (London: T. Hookham, 1783), advertised a school for boys on modern reformed principles, but failed to secure an establishment or attract pupils. As an Oxford graduate and Church of England clergyman, the fictional Mr Godfrey tastes both the sweet and the bitter of tutoring boys of the ruling class.

^{lxxviii}BL 1784, 107, in line with Godwin’s spelling reform, lops the double consonant in both names: ‘a Churchil, a Smollet’. MJG perhaps balked at lopping the Churchill name in her copy script.

^{lxxix}A faint number 180) is legible beside 103). This page 103) of MJG copy amalgamates pages 109–110 in BL 1784. Page 180 in BL 1784 is page 104) in MJG script.

^{lxxx}BL 1784, 111–12, continues: ‘[W]ith much difficulty Damon prevailed upon him to accept of an assistance, that he assured him would be but temporary, if it were in the power of him, or any of his connections, to render him respectable and independent. ... Mr Godfrey inveighed with warmth, and sometimes with partiality, against the coldness and narrowness of the age ... [H]e had still the same warmth in the cause of virtue ... revered the divinity of innocence ... believed in a God’.

^{lxxxi}[William Godwin], *Things as They Are; or the Adventures of Caleb Williams* (London, B. Crosby, 1794).

^{lxxxii}MWS number sequence in c.606/5 had allowed only one page number, 101), for four pages of MJG copy from BL 1784 to be inserted.

^{lxxxiii}[William Godwin], *Imogen: a Pastoral Romance. From the Ancient British* (London, William Lane, 1784). Godwin’s ‘Autobiographical fragment’ for 1783, not located in MWS transcriptions, gives publication details of this and his other early novels (MP 44).

^{lxxxiv}c.606/1: [unnumbered] is verso page of an unnumbered leaf. The recto page of this unnumbered leaf, see 2: *politics*.

^{lxxxv}Godwin’s journal entry of 31 Dec. 1790 is queried by MWS, drawing attention to Godwin’s habit of ‘writing-up’ annual summaries on New Year’s Eve in his journal from (sometimes unreliable) memory. J.M.S. Tompkins’ introduction to her edition of Elizabeth Inchbald, *A Simple Story* (Oxford, 1977, x–xi), writes that Holcroft and Godwin both read the novel and offered criticisms before its publication in 1791. St Clair writes

(C149) that Godwin first met Inchbald ‘through his friendship with Holcroft’, and that she herself ‘in 1791 asked [Godwin] to read over the manuscript of her novel *A Simple Story*, which was published, with great success, soon afterwards’. But Pamela Clemit’s edition of *A Simple Story* (Harmondsworth, 1996, xiii), offers more detail: ‘At the end of 1790 Inchbald sent the book to George Robinson, her regular publisher, who passed it on to Godwin for his opinion, and then bought it for £200’ (xiii, n20 citing Inchbald biographer James Boaden, and James Marshall). Clemit also confirms MWS statement that Godwin and Inchbald first met in October 1792 (this rests on the evidence of Godwin’s journal entry for 29 October that year).

^{lxxxvi}The British Library at the British Museum in Bloomsbury, London.

^{lxxxvii}Richard Watson, Anglican bishop of Llandaff, Wales, a liberal churchman supporting religious toleration, dedicatee of Godwin’s volume of sermons in 1783.

^{lxxxviii}In b.227/2, another draft of this letter dated 24 January [?1787].

^{lxxxix}The *Political Herald and Review*, to which Godwin contributed as temporary editor in 1785-6. See 2: *politics*.

^{xc}Godwin recalls meeting Dr Gilbert Stuart in 1783 (MP 44-5), and underlines the name ‘Stuart’ ‘among people he knew best’ in 1784 (C37).

^{xc1}See above, c.606/1: 112): ‘Summary 1786 - Literary Parties - Thomas Holcroft’.

^{xcii}See 3: *law*, MWS commentary on Holcroft’s trial for high treason and subsequent acquittal in October/November 1794.

^{xciii}Thomas Holcroft, *The Road to Ruin: a comedy in five acts* (London, 1792; Dublin, 1793).

^{xciv}Godwin records meetings with ‘Hamilton’ in his journal for 14 July 1788 (c.606/1) and in his letter of 5 August 1788 to Holcroft (b.227/a). R. B. McDowell (*A New History of Ireland* (Oxford, 1986) iv 343-53), writes that in 1794, with Habeas Corpus suspended in an England at war, the Irish administration were determined to repress political activism and freedoms of the press. Archibald Hamilton Rowan was arrested in 1794 and convicted of distributing a seditious libel, the address of the Dublin Society of the United Irishmen to the Volunteers. Convicted and sentenced to two years’ imprisonment, Hamilton Rowan escaped from Newgate and fled abroad. Godwin claimed in his 1794 pamphlet, *Cursory Strictures*, that civil liberties and the freedom of the press were historically defective in Ireland. See 3: *law*.

^{xcv}John Philpot Curran, Irish barrister, famous for his defense of those charged with political offenses, was Godwin’s host on his visit to Ireland in 1800. Draft MS obituary for Curran by Godwin in b.214/8 *document Curran obit. Godwin’s novel *Mandeville: A Tale of the Seventeenth Century in England* (1817), is dedicated to Curran who died as it was going to press.

^{xcvi}MWS note (1), in lefthand margin, refers to William Henry Curran, *The Life of the Right Honourable John Philpott Curran, late Master of the Rolls in Ireland* (1819). In his lifetime Curran’s *Speeches* in the Irish Parliament were published in Dublin (Stockdale & Sons, 1805), and New York (Isaac Riley, 1809). Publication by the prestigious London firm Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown was posthumous in 1817.

^{xcvii}c.606/1 : 150)-152) and 154)-158), MWS holograph, is a sequence of quarto pages numbered in MWS style and on bluish laid paper, most sheets written r and v, matching pinholes on all sheets in top left corner, watermark J Green & Son 1835. Page 150) quotes from Godwin’s ‘Autobiographical fragments’ for 1790 (MP

48).

^{xcviii}Dunstan, historical adviser to a Saxon king, mythologised as a Saxon saint, the patron saint of Friar Tuck in Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1819). Godwin's verse tragedy *St Dunstan* was never published or performed; the unique MS is in the British Library. Godwin revised the MS at intervals from c.1791 to c.1795 (C116).

^{xcix}Three lines, slightly misquoted, from S. T. Coleridge, *France: an Ode* (1798).

^cThe sentence inserted in carets is continued to: 'The story of the plot of Dunstan is fictitious', on page c.606/2: 153). The remarks about 'writing in verse ... an unmanageable weapon' are written sideways in the left margin of page c.606/1: 152).

^{ci}The Saxon names 'Edwi' 'Edgar' and 'Eltruda' recall Helen Maria Williams's verse tale 'Edwin and Eltruda: a legendary tale' (London, 1782), dedicated to Dr Andrew Kippis.

^{cii}MWS script page c.606/1: 156) is slashed by a single vertical stroke down the page.

^{ciii}This is the sole mention of Sarah (Kemble) Siddons in MWS script.

^{civ}Godwin's note follows in double quotation marks.

^{cv}MWS comment on the severity of Holcroft's criticisms of Godwin's plays in manuscript might usefully be compared with Holcroft's diary record of a conversation with Godwin on 13 January 1799 (Howe 219-20). These excerpts from Holcroft's diary were published in vol. ii of Hazlitt's *Memoirs of Holcroft*, against Godwin's stated objections; and references in MWS script skirt the question they raise about Godwin's criticisms of Holcroft.

^{cvi}Holcroft's note follows in double quotation marks.

^{cvi}'This year', 1792.

^{cvi}Holcroft's *Anna St Ives: A Novel* (7 vols.; London: Shepperson and Reynolds, 1792). The seven-volume first edition was set in small-format duodecimo. If Godwin was commenting on the MS of a novel-in-progress it remains possible that Holcroft added to or altered the text after Godwin's criticisms. My copy, in the British Library, bound in three [1-2, 3-4, 5-6-7] (London, 1886-1888).

^{cix}Godwin's 'unsympathetic criticisms' of *Anna St Ives* (C118), have been separated from MWS script and are given here from b.227/6(b) .

^{cx}b.227/6(b), Godwin hand, single quarto sheet, written r and v, numbered MWS style 25) and 26), in sequence with c.606/2: 24). See *Bodleian rubric b.227/6(b). This is a handwritten copy with deletions and corrections, made by Godwin for his files, some time before 1795, when Tom Wedgwood made him a gift of a wet-press copier. Opening double quotation marks before each paragraph, closed at bottom page 26). Godwin may be jotting down from memory a previous conversation with Holcroft. It confirms MWS comment that Godwin and Holcroft conducted a running dialogue in person and in writing. The contentiousness of Holcroft's novel for Godwin arose from their conversations about the as yet unpublished *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*, which was to establish Godwin's priority in 'Political Philosophy'.

^{cx}'Same error' presumably means 'of supposing Anna's arguments inferior to Clifton's', since Anna's arguments against Coke Clifton echo the sentiments that she shares with Frank Henley. Frank's arguments in favour of rational sexual choice win Anna's regard (and Godwin's) but do not prevail against her father Sir Arthur St Ives's upper class prejudices, or (it would seem) against Holcroft's and his readers' conservatism with

regard to sexual morality.

^{cxii}The fourth volume rises for the most part till towards the close of Letter 79, & convalesces again in Letter 87, &c'. This indicates Letters 80 (Vol. iv) through 86 (in Vol. v in my copy), as unsatisfactory. Godwin's journal entry Dec 17 [1791], 'Read Anna-5', was transcribed by MWS in c.606/1: 14). In Letters 80 through 86 Anna is tempted to accept Clifton's proposals, swayed by his rhetoric and pressured by her father. For Godwin, this section of the novel is an invidious representation of doctrines of sexual emancipation in the mouth of the aristocrat libertine Clifton (a Lovelace/Rakewell figure). In Letter 87 ('Anna Wenbourne St Ives to Louisa Clifton'), Anna is suddenly challenged by the news that her disappointed admirer Henley is about to emigrate to America, and this provokes her to urgent reexamination of her relations with Clifton and begins her 'convalescence' in Godwin's good opinion.

^{cxiii}c.606/4, MWS holograph, wove paper, watermark Joynson 1839, with one large rusty pinhole matching on all sheets. See *Bodleian rubric c.606/4. Pages numbered 3-16 and 19-40, covering events and letters of 1793, are missing from folder, see below, note to c.606/4: 41).

^{cxiv}St Clair dates the move to Chalton Street, Somers Town, in 1791, 'as soon as [Tom] Cooper left' (C59). Variable MWS spelling of Chalton Street, sometimes 'Charton' sometimes 'Charlton'.

^{cxv}Items 14 and 15, written upside down in MWS hand on c.606/4: 2), on 1839 watermark paper, are continued from a list, numbered 1 to 13, written sideways, and headed 'Mrs G's Letters', in c.532/8, also on 1839 watermark paper. See 5: *women*.

^{cxvi}Item 14: Mary 'Perdita' Robinson, poet and actor, and friend of both Wollstonecraft and Godwin, died in December 1800. See 5: *women*. Joseph Jekyll, who administered the annuity granted her in 1782 after her affair with George, Prince of Wales, was appointed solicitor-general and King's Counsel in 1805, and died in 1837. Item 15: Edward Moxon published Thomas Noon Talfourd's edition of *The Letters of Charles Lamb*, with an introduction dated June 26, 1837. The illegible word (C Lamb's letter sent to [illeg.]) may be 'Coleridge', as Talfourd prints none of Lamb's letters to Godwin, and one only substantial mention of Godwin, in Lamb's letter to S. T. Coleridge of 16-17 [April] 1800 (Talfourd 1837: i 160). In 1839-1840 Mary Shelley may have jotted down these references to Jekyll and Lamb in the letters that Mary Jane Godwin ("Mrs G") had made available to her while she was composing *Life of William Godwin*. See 5: *women*.

^{cxvii}Cf. Godwin, *Thoughts on Man* (1831), 130: 'In most instances two or three hours are as much as an author can spend at a time in delivering the first fruits of his field, his choicest thoughts, before his intellect becomes in some degree clouded, and his vital spirits abate of their elasticity'.

^{cxviii}Godwin published a retrospective account of the interrupted composition, end-to-beginning narration, and changed conclusion, of *Caleb Williams*, in his Introduction to the revised edition of *Fleetwood: or The New Man of Feeling* (London, Colburn and Bentley, 1832). See also St Clair, who judges that the successive revisions and alterations still manage to 'flow ... credibly from the characters' (C121).

^{cxix}Fellow student at Hoxton, James Marshall. Cf. (above) c.606/1: [91v], MWS comment that Marshall 'remained [Godwin's] friend to the end of his life'.

^{cxx}b.214/5, 'Godwin-Marshall correspondence', Marshall hand, small fold, laid paper, decorative watermark, outer addressed 'Mr Godwin', seal, no postmark, pinhole at left top corner. See *Bodleian rubric b.214/5

^{cxxi}b.214/5, letter from Marshall dated May 31 [17]93. Note that in c.606/1:[101v] MWS transcribes Godwin's journal entries of 1793, 'May 25 - Prosecution of Political Justice debated this week'. Writing on 31 May, a Friday, Marshall refers to 'the affair of Tuesday'. Tuesday 28 May 1793 was the day - or day after - Pitt's famous remark in the House of Commons debate, that the booksellers' high price of 'three guineas' would be sufficient guarantee that Godwin's *Enquiry concerning Political Justice* would not be read by working class agitators. These dates indicate a close fit between the composition of *Caleb Williams* and the public reception of *Political Justice*. See 2: *politics*.

^{cxxii}'This year', 1793. 'Tom Wedgwood ... first made [Godwin's] acquaintance at tea on 21 May 1793 when [Wedgwood] was twenty-two' (C99). Wedgwood-Godwin correspondence, see 4: *pedagogy*.

^{cxxiii}The missing pages of c.606/4, numbered 36) to 40), are probably those so numbered in b.227/2(b), the draft of a 1793 letter from Godwin to the barrister Thomas Erskine following the first trial *in absentia* of Tom Paine in December 1792. See 2: *politics*.

^{cxxiv}'This year' is probably 1795, when Tom Wedgwood gave Godwin a copying machine. Dr Bruce Barker-Benfield, of the Bodleian Library, tells me that it used the wet-press method, and could copy only a freshly written recto page. In Duke reel 12, letter of Nov. 1795 from Tom Wedgwood to Godwin, gives detailed instructions about ink and copying paper to Godwin. See 4: *pedagogy*.

^{cxxv}*Complete Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. E. H. Coleridge (Oxford, 1969), 86, notes that between Dec. 1794 and Jan. 1795, Coleridge published 'Sonnets on Eminent Characters' in *Morning Chronicle*. Sonnet i, 'To the Honourable Mr Erskine' ('A hireless Priest before the insulted shrine'), honoured Thomas Erskine for the defense of twelve men tried in London for High Treason in 1794. Sonnet ix, 'To William Godwin, Author of 'Political Justice', 17 Dec. 1794', ('Nor will I not thy holy guidance bless'), appeared in *Morning Chronicle* 10 Jan. 1795. The opening line's double negative construction, so characteristic of Godwin, is perhaps intended as a tribute from Coleridge.

^{cxxvi}MWS cancels 1799 as the date of Godwin's renewed acquaintance with Coleridge. According to Richard Holmes, *Coleridge: a biography*, i (Harmondsworth, 1989), Coleridge began planning his trip to Germany in 1796 (117), left England on 16 Sept 1798 (204) and returned at the end of July 1799 (238). Charles Kegan Paul quotes Godwin: 'It was in the close of this year [1794] that I first met with Samuel Taylor Coleridge, my acquaintance with whom was ripened in the year 1800 into a high degree of affectionate intimacy' (CKP, i, 119). St Clair (C225), gives details of their renewed friendship when Coleridge returned from Germany, just about the time that Holcroft, badly scarred after a laboratory accident with sulphuric acid, left for Germany.

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***endnotes to documents**

^{cxxvii} c.516/1, Ann Godwin letter to Godwin. On the outer of this letter is a postmark '10 April 1798'.

^{cxxviii} c.516/1, Ann Godwin letter to Godwin, dated 30 May 1797.

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^{cxxix}c.607/2, draft of letter [from James Marshall to William Godwin], laid paper, no page numbers, lacks signature, undated watermark. Marshall had been acting as Godwin's agent in promoting sales and reviews of Godwin's *History of the Life of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham* (London, Printed for the author, 1783), published

anonymously, printed and sold by G Kearsley.

^{cxxx}In 1744 the publisher John Newbery started to specialize in children's literature, including the perennial favourite, *The History of Goody Two Shoes* (c.1765), and the traditional tale of Tom Thumb.

^{cxxx}ⁱThe publisher Joseph Johnson.

^{cxxx}ⁱⁱApparently, Mrs Marshall was in labour at the time of writing with the Marshalls' child, but apparently only a son, Lucas (Luke), born c.1801, survived infancy, see b.214/5, 'Godwin-Marshall Correspondence'. Also in b.214/5, Marshall writes to Godwin, 7 Jan. 1783, 'We go on triumphantly, Kearsley has been very officious. ... The paper I have chosen is beautifully white. But, O dreadful but! it is eighteen shillings a ream. ... Mrs M. is as you left her. As soon as she is delivered of her stripling, and I am delivered of yours, you shall see'. Marshall signs this letter, 'Father Paul'.

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^{cxxx}ⁱⁱⁱc.607/2, undated copy of letter from Joseph Fawcett to Godwin, laid paper, written recto only, undated watermark. See *Bodleian rubric c.607/2. Signature 'Joseph Fawcett' [sic] appears to be in different ink and hand. Godwin's reformist spelling system omits unsounded double consonants in proper names. Contents date the letter 1795, more than a decade after the acquaintance between Godwin and Fawcett commenced. See above c.606/2: 95), MWS account of Fawcett's friendship with Godwin.

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^{cxxx}^{iv}Duke reel 5, single page only, 'T Holcroft', dated Sepr. 23d. ?1804. The word 'essential' is underlined in the script. St Clair (C276-8), writes that 'after Holcroft's return from Germany in 1802' he and Godwin resumed close friendship but began to strain apart in 'the autumn of 1804' when 'they exchanged merciless comments'. Hazlitt dates Holcroft's return from the continent 'in the summer of 1803', and 'an unhappy misunderstanding' leading to the estrangement of the two men 'some time after' that (Howe, 163, 234).

^{cxxx}^vc.607/1, single sheet, Godwin hand, laid paper, written r and v, undated watermark 'Molineux Johnston'. I interpret this unsigned page as a draft of a reply from Godwin ten or eleven days after receiving Holcroft's letter of 23 September. Godwin's reference to 'my three last notes' indicates that in the interim more criticisms were advanced and responded to.

^{cxxx}^{vi}The tragedy in contention is likely to have been Godwin's *Faulkener; A Tragedy*. St Clair writes that 'in December 1807 ... it ran for three performances with no disaster beyond occasional outbreaks of laughing' (C237, and n. 35). This epistolary exchange between Godwin and Holcroft in 1804 casts before it an ominous shadow of the quarrel by letter over Godwin's novel *Fleetwood; or the New Man of Feeling*, completed in February 1805 (C275-6).

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^{cxxx}^{vii}Duke reel 13, following page of microfilm missing. In the February 1805 *Monthly Mirror* second instalment of the 'Biographical Sketch' of Godwin, the writer sums up: 'It was natural to conclude, from Mr Godwin's early passion for study, and the boldness (we had almost said, disdain) with which he contemned and cast aside all means of a livelihood but labour of mind in his own controlled manner, that, whatever were the objects of his research, they would not fail to be illumined by his passion and genius. Political Justice, at once, and unequivocally, answered that expectation' (*Monthly Mirror*, Feb. 1805, 85).

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^{cxxxviii}b.214/5, single sheet, MWS hand, wove paper, written r only, watermark Joynson 1839. Described in the Bodleian folder as ‘Copy of a note almost certainly written originally by Godwin’, this is a composite transcription of two extracts from Godwin’s letter or letters [to Percy Bysshe Shelley] in 1817. Above a line of dashes is a sample of Godwin’s activity in soliciting financial help for James Marshall. Below the line is an extract from Godwin’s letter on c.29 December 1817, announcing Hannah Godwin’s death. 30 December 1817 was the first wedding anniversary of the Shelley couple and until 11 March 1818 when they embarked at Dover for Italy, Godwin wrote frequently to Shelley imploring money for himself, and to Josiah Wedgwood asking it on Marshall’s behalf (C445-6). This single sheet in MWS hand appears to have been intended for inclusion, either in a second volume of the *Life of Godwin*, covering his life after 1800, or (more probably) as annotations to her first volume’s description of Godwin’s strong family feelings and solicitude for his friend Marshall.

^{cxxxix}As children, Mary and Fanny (Imlay) Godwin had known Godwin’s only sister Hannah, who lived and worked in London. I have found no reference elsewhere to their calling her ‘Aunt Godwin’, which is the name by which the boy Godwin had known Mrs Sothren before her marriage. Hannah Godwin’s death occurred on 28 December 1817 (C446).

^{cxli}b.214/5, quarto fold, [Marshall hand], laid paper, written 1r and 1v, fair copy with no cancellations, undated watermark, large pinhole left top matches pinhole in the note ‘Mr Marshall 1817’ (above), indicating that MWS pinned them together. I believe the handwriting is Marshall’s, acting in his capacity as amanuensis for Godwin, who is the ‘I’ of the letter-writer. A letter from Godwin to Josiah Wedgwood the second, asking for financial assistance to Marshall, in terms similar to this one, is cited by St Clair (C446, n2), in MS Keele, dated 5 March 1817.

^{cxli}Josiah Wedgwood’s younger brother, Tom Wedgwood, died in 1805. See 4: *pedagogy*.

^{cxliii}Howe 289, n91, and 300, n201, citing F. K. Brown, *Life of Godwin* (1926), 247, lists William Nicholson, William Godwin, and George Leman Tuthill as the *ad hoc* committee assisting Holcroft’s widow after his death in 1809, and ‘which undertook to supervise the publication of Holcroft’s autobiography, and presumably entrusted the task to Hazlitt’. Godwin’s advice in 1817 to Josiah Wedgwood that Marshall had performed ‘indefatigable exertions’ on behalf of Holcroft’s family in 1809-1810 was presumably correct, as he had certainly done so in 1797 for Godwin himself after Mary Wollstonecraft died, and in 1799 for Maria Reveley when her first husband died. See 5: *women*.

^{cxliiii}b.214/8, quarto fold, unidentified hand, undated fair copy, no page numbers, no signature, watermark O Wilmott, 1813. A comparison with other 1817 letters in folder suggests this may be MJG copy. St Clair writes (C445-6): ‘In October 1817 John Philpot Curran had died in London after a long illness. ... Godwin ... was at his home on the day he died’. Philp’s Chronology lists Godwin as author of ‘Obituary notice of J. P. Curran, *Morning Chronicle*, 16 October, 1817’ (MP 51).

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Chapter note 1: literature

This first of six chapter notes introduces our editorial procedures for this hypertext edition of Mary Shelley's *Life of William Godwin* and invites the reader to study the congruence of those procedures with the unfinished text composed by Mary Shelley between 1836 and 1840.

It is evident from the manuscript *Life of William Godwin* that Mary Shelley was preoccupied throughout the four-year period of writing by two competing projects, one a biographical and personal memoir, the other (and perhaps the dominant) project an editorial redemption of Godwin's written *oeuvre*, to revive his flagging reputation for literary eminence. Both aims were loosely accommodated in the formula of *Memoirs and Correspondence of the late ...*, as specified in the contract signed with publisher Henry Colburn by the widow Mary Jane Godwin and Godwin's literary adviser John Hobart Caunter on 19 July 1836. But there was reason to doubt that a candid account of Godwin's political and religious ideas would be well received by early Victorian readers, or that his trenchant private letters would accord with their notions of literary merit. Mary Shelley's handling of her materials illustrates the peculiar dilemma of a daughter-biographer who is also a literary executor. Filial duty and editorial accuracy serve opposed interests.

As recently as 1832, the elderly Madame d'Arblay née Fanny Burney had published a *Memoirs* of her late father Dr Charles Burney, and John Wilson Croker, the anonymous chief reviewer for the *Quarterly* had had this to say:

Madame d'Arblay gives a hint that the original correspondence of Dr Burney is destined to the flames. We venture to intreat that this design may not be executed ; the extracts from his own pen are ... the most satisfactory parts of these volumes, and without rating very highly the importance of Dr Burney to the general literature of the country, we think that the public would be glad to see a good life of him. ... Madame d'Arblay, with consummate art--or a confusion of ideas which has had the same effect as consummate art, --conceals from her readers, and

perhaps from herself, that it is her own Memoirs, and not those of her father that she has been writing; and we confess that we have a strong suspicion, that it was because her father's auto-biography did not fulfil this object, that it has been suppressed.

The reviewer de-authorises d'Arblay's book and calls for a biographer who will "give out" Dr Burney in the original, as a man endeared to public memory by abilities not above the middle-rank. This will rescue Burney's writings from 'the flames', and guarantee them safe passage to posterity under the *Quarterly's* influential imprimatur. When Frances d'Arblay herself died eight years later, the same reviewer returned to the attack on 'that strange display of egotism which Madame D'Arblay was pleased to call 'Memoirs of her Father'. It is quite possible that Mary Shelley and Godwin both took note of the 1833 review. From the start of her work on Godwin's life and writings, Mary Shelley takes pains to subordinate her editorial persona to Godwin's authorial presence. And if she invites the judgment that she is giving out Godwin in his own unembellished words, she is still cautious enough to preselect them.

A note attached to Godwin's will had explicitly instructed Mary Shelley to publish his long-pondered work on Christian theism, titled in draft *The Genius of Christianity Revealed*. There was evident reluctance on Shelley's part to publish a work that would so offend orthodox religionists and, as she put it in 1837 'to meet the misery that must be mine if I become the object of scurrility and attacks' (Bennett ii, 281). A draft letter to John Hobart Caunter¹ and a memorandum (probably to Caunter) in May 1840 (see my chapter note to 5: *women*) refer to a one-volume work, combining Mary Shelley's commentary and letters to and from Godwin, the number of letters still to be decided. But this announcement of a single volume only might be a decision taken *faute de mieux*.

¹ Bennett ii, 268, n1.

In late 1836 Shelley embarked on the *Life of William Godwin* as a compensatory exercise for her suppression of the restive *Genius*. The split that I have posited between her two projects, the one a vindication of Godwin the man and her father, the other a renovation of his literary reputation, colluded in the truncation or *askesis* of both man and writings at the approximate date December 1799, when Godwin published *St Leon: A Tale of the Sixteenth Century*, enshrining Mary Wollstonecraft's image in its portrait of the ideal wife and mother, Marguerite de Damville.

Shelley's procedures take their lead first of all from Godwin's writings, published and unpublished. Our six chapters follow this lead from Chapter 1: *literature* (his early works listed from 1773 and published from 1783 to 1784) through to Chapter 6: *writing* (his unpublished letters to Harriet Lee in 1798 and his novel *St Leon: A Tale of the Sixteenth Century* published in December 1799). The arrangement in chapters is our editorial construct, as is the decision to group all the materials under six thematic headings. There is no extant draft or outline of Mary Shelley original plan of the whole biography. Nor do any of the Abinger papers convey information as to which and how many chapter divisions Shelley wanted to make. Our Chapter 2: *politics* carries Godwin's political journalism from 1785 through the intense two-year period 1791-1793 of preparing and publishing his major work, *An Enquiry concerning Political Justice*, and concludes on his fortieth birthday in March 1796. Mary Shelley almost certainly designed to shape several chapters from these rich materials. Again, as will appear in our Chapter 5: *women*, Mary Shelley indicates that she planned to include a selection of Godwin's correspondence of 1798, in a separate section from that treating of the death of Mary Wollstonecraft in September 1797, 'which set a dark seal upon that year' (c.606/4). And we have not located those letters or that portion of MWS script for inclusion in this edition. The correspondence between Godwin and Harriet Lee in 1798, in our chapter 6: *writing*, would not answer at all to the purpose.

Mark Philp's pathbreaking 1992 introduction² to Godwin's *Autobiographies* reports (MP 58-9), that the papers of the 3-chapter 'Autobiography 1756-1772' (MP 3-38), in b.226/1, and the 'Autobiographical fragments 1772-1796' (MP 39-51), in b.226/2, bear watermarks of differing dates between 1796 and 1819. The Bodleian shelf numbers correspond to the mistaken supposition that Godwin followed a consecutive chronology for his autobiography-in-progress. That had not been his habit and was not the path he took in this case either. Godwin composed the 3-chapter manuscript 'Autobiography 1756-1772' (in b.226/1) in two segments in reverse chronological order. What Philp calls 'the main section', from his birth in 1756 to the death of his father in 1771 and his entry into Hoxton College in 1772, 'was probably written in the last two years of the century' (MP 58). But 'the opening section on Godwin's family background' was not written until after 1807. There is only one indication in MWS script that she had read this least interesting of all portions of the manuscript, and that is by default when she itemises the chapter heads of 'Chapter II Continuation of autobiography' (Duke reel 2, Page 13), presumably after she had itemised Chapter I, now missing from the folders of MWS script.

Godwin's first venture into writing his own lifestory between 1772 and 1796 is at the core of MWS script. Philp believes that Godwin began on the 'Autobiographical fragments 1772-1796' (in b.226/2) some time in 1798, and carried the summary story up to 1796, at the time of his fortieth birthday, when he attended Lord Lauderdale's parties for Whig supporters, along with 'Mrs Wollstonecraft' and other friends (MP 51). These autobiographical passages are all the more suggestive for Mary Shelley's biographical project in that they take the form of laconic summaries, an alternative expression of the daily jottings in the journals. The crucial twenty-one months January 1796 to September 1797, that saw 'Mrs Wollstonecraft' become 'Mrs Imlay'

² William Godwin, *Collected Novels and Memoirs*, i, ed. Mark Philp (London: William Pickering, 1992), [MP]. Philp notes that MWS transcriptions in c.606/1 and c.606/2, of the fragments for 1781, 1782, 1790, 1791, 1792,

and then 'femme Godwin,' and ended with her death twelve days after daughter Mary's birth, that period Godwin does not cover autobiographically, although writing it biographically in the Wollstonecraft *Memoirs*. See 5: *women*.

A subsidiary consideration for Mary Shelley was Godwin's journalistic habit of dating the affective highs and lows of his career to epochal turning points. The autobiographical fragments spanning the years 1772 to 1796, each carries an annual date of identification. This identification is somewhat misleading as the fragments were all composed in retrospect. But Mary Shelley adopts these annual markers with enthusiasm. And this not altogether reliable technique of compiling historical *Annales* has served us as a provisional guide through the scattered scripts of the *Life of William Godwin*. If it be conceded that our six-chapter plan does not directly represent Mary Shelley's authorial intentions, it might also be allowed that chronological representation of Godwin's writings between 1773 and the end of 1799--including his retrospective revisitings of each of those years in later memoranda or revisions to the published texts--is critically congruent with her realised intentions in the script.

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The Bodleian library has located its holdings of Abinger Shelley-Godwin manuscripts in manila folders labelled with shelf deposit numbers. The Bodleian folders' division of manuscripts by chronology and handwriting spans the writings of two generations of the Godwin-Shelley family, and two periods of English history: London in Godwin's first forty years 1756 to 1800; and London in the four years 1836 to 1840, when Mary Shelley, assisted by Mary Jane Godwin, worked at a single-volume *Life of William Godwin*, covering events in Godwin's life before 1800. A set of six manila folders Dep. c.606/1- 5 [see *Bodleian folder rubrics] describe

and part of that for 1788, are now the sole extant version

their contents as “Material for a biography of William Godwin”, sometimes but not always naming Mary Shelley as biographer or compiler.

The manuscript archive is replete with material clues like watermarks and handwriting, and legible signs such as page numbers, dates and signatures. In our edition a shelf deposit number appears at the left margin above the page of script, changing each time the page of script is located in a different folder. By playing off material clues from paper and handwriting against thematic continuities that cross over the arbitrary folder ‘line’ we have been able to link up sequences of the papers now scattered into separate Bodleian folders.

Our transcriptions from the Bodleian MSS are supplemented from the set of microfilms of the Abinger Shelley-Godwin papers on loan to us from the Library of Duke University, Durham, North Carolina. The ‘Duke reel’ number appears in the left margin above each microfilm page of script, as for the Bodleian MSS. The disadvantage of microfilm is its imperfect reproduction of legible signs, and the loss of material evidence of watermarks, paper, and content on verso; the advantage is that the filmed page can be printed off and studied.

Mary Shelley dealt with her massive manuscript legacy from Godwin according to two working methods. She either transcribed original documents, or pinned them, with page numbers and/or headings in her own hand, to her script-in-progress. Shelley’s transcriptions of Godwin’s original letters and memoranda are faithful to the original, with which they can be compared thanks to the Abinger archive. Her transcriptions culled from Godwin’s journals (in c.606/1 and c.606/2) are more properly described as ‘citations’, in a diplomatic procedure of abbreviation and selection. This is still more the case in her brief citations of the affectionate notes that passed between Mary Wollstonecraft’s and Godwin’s London lodgings during their courtship in 1796. Shelley’s practice compares favourably with the editorial

standard of Godwin's Victorian official biographer Charles Kegan Paul, who exercised an unseen hand over Godwin's letters by introducing a number of silent omissions and emendations, as may be seen in our chapter 6: *writing*.

We have sought to place original letters, drafts, wetpress copies, and memoranda in the hands of Godwin and his contemporaries, written on a variety of papers between 1773 and 1801, in the context prepared for them in Mary Shelley's script. We have restored sequences of page numbers, occasionally matched up the pinholes which formerly attached the leaves of her script, and been guided by Mary Shelley's preamble to their contents. Shelley sometimes gives notice of an insertion: 'I give these some of these; they are at least specimens of the manners of the times' (c.606/5: 128). In a few cases, such as (in our chapter 6: *writing*) the original letters that passed between Godwin and Harriet Lee in 1798, these are still in the folder Dep. b.228/4, held together with Mary Shelley's comments on their courtship, on 1839 watermark paper.

Most of those original documents that Mary Shelley selected and pinned to her commentary on Godwin's life have since been separated from MWS script and located in other folders, for example, among other letters written by that same person, or by various authors at a particular period. In cases where there is no certainty that Shelley selected a particular document for inclusion, but it has demonstrable relevance to her composition, it is shown in the *documents appended to the chapter, and contextualised in the endnotes.

Mary Shelley delegated the task of transcribing chapters and parts of chapters from Godwin's published books to her stepmother Mary Jane Godwin. As an amanuensis and copyist, Mary Jane's legible handwriting had served Godwin well in his last years, after his longstanding assistant James Marshall had retired. Her transcription in c.606/5 from the 1st edition of Godwin's novel *Damon and Delia*

[BL 1784] is shown in this chapter 1: *literature* in the section 'early works'. Her transcription in c.532/8 from the 1st edition of Godwin's *Memoirs of Mary Wollstonecraft* [*Memoirs* 1798], on 1839 watermark paper, is shown in Chapter 5: *women*. In both cases there is internal evidence that Mary Shelley marked out the passages she wanted copied and introduced them in her commentary. In chapter 4: *pedagogy*, Amelia Alderson's letters of 1795 to 1797 to Godwin and Wollstonecraft (addressed as Mrs Imlay) were numbered and annotated by Mary Jane Godwin. A reference by Mary Shelley in Dep. c.532/8 shows that she had read these letters (in b.210/6) as part of her work on the biography, and drew on them for her comments on Godwin's relationship with Amelia Alderson, shown in Chapter 5: *women*. The absence of any contribution by Mary Jane to chapter 6: *writing* is noted in the chapter note to that chapter.

The materials in the five folders of Deps. 606/1-5 consist throughout of Mary Shelley's holograph script [MWS script] with the one exception noted above, Mary Jane's transcription from *Damon and Delia* [BL 1784]. The papers of MWS script in c.606/1 are dated by watermarks 1835; in c.606/4 are dated 1839, and in the other folders of c.606 are mostly undated. Mary Shelley's page numbers, displayed in semicircular parenthesis at the top left margin of the manuscript page, are important guides to continuity of subject matter. And watermarks are reliable clues for establishing the sequences of her composition of the *Life of William Godwin*.

On all too few occasions these legible and material clues complement and reinforce each other, as in the first pages of *Chapter 1: literature* where Mary Shelley's pages numbered 1) and 2) are written on 1835 watermark paper, and located in the Bodleian folder c.606/1. For the most part the sequences of page numbers are not complete and fail to accommodate Mary Shelley's practice of adding afterthoughts on the verso of already completed recto pages, and cancelling passages in one page only to rewrite them on another. Accordingly there are numerous broken

sequences in our arrangement, signalled by editorial signs “[blank]” and “[...]”. And although some sequences scattered into separate folders have been reconstituted, both missing sheets and duplicated page numbers have to be noted.

Mary Shelley’s holograph [MWS script], a major portion on paper watermarked 1835 and 1839, includes her transcriptions of portions of Godwin’s autobiographical essays, his journals, and his private and public letters. It is complemented by Mary Jane Godwin’s [MJG] transcriptions from Godwin’s published texts, some of which is on unwatermarked paper and may have been undertaken at dates earlier than 1836 and handed over to Mary Shelley for incorporation into the *Life of Godwin*.

Mary Shelley knew that her father had first met her mother Mary Wollstonecraft at a Sunday evening gathering at the radical publisher Joseph Johnson’s in November 1791: and an unpublished autobiographical fragment hailing 1791 as ‘the main crisis of my life’ opens the *Life of William Godwin*, transcribed by Mary Shelley on 1835 watermark paper. With that ringing announcement Godwin was reshaping his immediate past endeavours for fame and influence, picturing himself as devoting his attention in 1791 exclusively to the ambitious project realised by the publication in February 1793 of his major book *An Enquiry concerning Political Justice*. And in fact that first meeting with Wollstonecraft had led to no further personal acquaintance until January 1796; and was not publicly inscribed until January 1798 when Godwin’s *Memoirs* of his late wife were published. The productive tension between Godwin’s public career and his private relationship with Wollstonecraft is articulated throughout Mary Shelley’s script. It draws to its solemn denouement with Wollstonecraft’s marriage and death, written on 1839 paper (in Deps. c.606/4 and c.532/8) and shown in our Chapter 5: *women*. A long transcription in Mary Jane Godwin’s hand, on 1839 paper, of chapters 9 and 10 of the 1st edition of *Memoirs of the Author of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, fulfils the intrinsic shapeliness of the biography in Godwin’s own words about their first meeting in November 1791.

Our final chapter *6: writing* is in the nature of a postscript and even an anti-climax. The chapter consists of letters that passed between Godwin and Miss Harriet Lee of Bath during the spring and summer of 1798. The original letters are located in Deps. b.228/4, and c.507/6, together with MWS script on 1839 paper. Supplementary *documents to the chapter consist of letters from Harriet Lee and her elder sister Sophia to Godwin in June and December 1799, when Godwin published *St Leon*. And for once the entire contents of the two relevant folders b.228/4 and c.507/6 have found a place in the chapter. The chapter note to this sixth chapter outlines our thinking in presenting this material from 1798, with a 1799 sequel in *documents as a separate chapter following after the Chapter *5: women*, which spans events from 1796 to mid-1799.

Chapter 1: *literature* is set out in subsections:- autobiographies; letters; journals; early works; sermons and novels 1783/4; Holcroft and *Dunstan*; literary London. These sections are followed and supplemented by :- *documents: Ann Godwin; *Life of Chatham*; Fawcett; Criticisms; *Monthly Mirror*; Marshall 1817; Curran obit. 1817. The materials of this chapter are drawn from (in order of first appearance): Dep. c.606/1, Duke reel 2, Deps. c.532/8, c.606/5, c.606/2, c.516/1, c.607/2, b.227/2(a), Duke reel 5, Deps. b.227/6(b), c.606/4, b.214/5. Endnote and *document references to c.516/1; c.607/2; Duke reel 5; c.607/1; Duke reel 13; b.214/6; b.214/8.

Chapter 1: *literature* opens with two pages of c.606/1, numbered 1) and 2), on 1835 watermark paper. These pages transcribe in MWS holograph Godwin's unpublished autobiographical fragment for the year 1791. Godwin characterises 1791 as 'the main crisis of my life', a portentous announcement of his decision to become a full time freelance author un beholden to any one political faction or publishing house.

Deps. c.516/1, b.227/2(a), b.227/6(b) and b.214/5 contain original letters and drafts of letters, to and from Godwin, in various hands, some dated. Most have no signature and may have been unsigned drafts. Godwin's correspondences with his widowed mother Ann (c.516/1), his early mentor Rev. Joseph Fawcett (c.607/2), his friend Thomas Holcroft (b.214/6, c.607/2, b.227/2(a) and b.227/6(b)), and his fellow collegian and amanuensis James Marshall (b.214/5), are shown in the context announced for them by MWS script.

Dep. c.532/8 contributes only two pages of MWS script (pages 45) and 46)) to this first chapter. On undated paper, these two pages contain MWS summaries of Godwin's unpublished autobiography, the same topic as the page from Duke reel 2 with which we have grouped them. The random allocation of papers in the folders and pages in the microfilms is illustrated in this chapter by the division of two

undated scraps of MWS script on the topic of Godwin's unpublished autobiographical writings between Duke reel 2 and Dep. c.532/8. Most of Duke reel 2 contains film of Godwin's journals; most of MWS script on Godwin's unpublished journals and autobiographies is in c.606/1 and c.606/2, and is shown in chapter 1: *literature*, and in chapter 2: *politics*. For the rest, Dep. c.532/8 is a major contributor to our chapter 5: *women*. It contains a mixture of papers, including MWS script on Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft, and MJG transcription of the 1st edition of Godwin's *Memoirs of Mary Wollstonecraft* [*Memoirs* 1798], both on 1839 watermark paper.

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We title our first chapter, 1: *literature*, to exemplify the thematic priority Mary Shelley gives throughout *Life of William Godwin* to Godwin the author of English literature. The MWS script is shaped as a retrospective sweep of Godwin's earliest experiences and the origins of his thought, towards a high valuation of literary culture and a self-concept as secular theologian, pedagogue, and novelist-anatomist of the English character. Godwin's novel of May 1794, *Caleb Williams ; or Things as They Are*, epitomises the essential Godwin for Mary Shelley. Mary and Percy Bysshe Shelley had collaborated to publish her *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* in 1818 with a dedication to 'William Godwin, Author of Caleb Williams'. Commencing work for the biography on 1835 paper, Mary Shelley combs through Godwin's papers dating from the 1770s in search of the seeds of Caleb Williams embedded in those immature 'early works':

& several years passed before the idea of Caleb Williams was generated conceived - & those powers ideas were yet as it were in chaos, assumed the shape which still haunts the work with forms of power & excellence. (c.606/5: 105)

An echo of Percy Bysshe Shelley's poem of 1816, Mont Blanc, haunts this attempt to shape a secure future for Godwin in canonical English literature.

This concentration on imaginative fiction converges in our chapter 2: politics with MWS script's revisionist reading of *Godwin's Enquiry concerning Political Justice*. Between the two publication dates, *Political Justice* February 1793 and *Caleb Williams* May 1794, Mary Shelley sites a turn towards literature, a prelude to Godwin's realisation of his fullest powers as author. She draws an invidious comparison between these two publications, Godwin's 'twin peaks of Parnassus', subsuming in the process Godwin's retrospective tamperings with the published text of *Political Justice*, and his antithetical stance against intolerable 'Things as they are'.

Published in 1794, a year marked by the trials for sedition and high treason that devastated Godwin's political associates, *Caleb Williams* represents Godwin's interrogation of the social and psychological consequences of Jeremy Bentham's *Panopticon; or The Inspection House* (1791).³ Bentham's Advertisement ([i]-iii) proclaims the advent of 'A new mode of obtaining power, power of mind over mind, in a quantity hitherto without example: such is the engine: ... such the work that may be done with it'. Horror and claustrophobia define Godwin's reaction to such an 'engine' of surveillance, and his fiction attempts to defend against such institutionalised power by dramatising an internal psychological agonism --Jacob's wrestle with the dark angel--as an exemplary contention *against politics*, politics itself extruded into externality.

The corollary of this conversion to 'second nature' in imaginative literature is a turning away from political activism, and a desire to wean Godwin off radical politics and political 'theory' prompts the MWS script's emphasis *Caleb Williams* as *nonpareil* in Godwin's corpus of writings. Mary Shelley's plotting of Godwin's half-decade 1793 to 1798 demonstrably abets a movement away from radical political engagement, a movement stamped all over with the poetical signature of William

Wordsworth. By committing her account of Godwin's life and work to the figure of conversion, Shelley entails her narrative in a series of half-turns, as our chapters 1 to 6 will serially illustrate.

At the outset of her work for *Life of William Godwin*, writing on 1835 watermarked paper, Mary Shelley announces that her biography will consist in large measure of words written by Godwin himself and demonstrates this plan by selecting passages from his unpublished autobiographical fragments, 'brief annals' she calls them, covering the active years 1772 to 1796 (c.606/5: 54). Shelley is a 'constant reader', reading even as she is transcribing, and evidently hearing Godwin's words in her head, since she will frequently catch and echo his turns of phrase, within the space of a page or so.

The first section in this chapter *1: literature*, subheaded 'autobiographies', and its first document, on 1835 paper, replicates a fifty-year-old Godwin script, and dramatises a turn, or half-turn, from political journalism on a paper subsidised by the Whig party, to the independent pursuit of scholarly writing, philosophy, and ultimately 'literature'. MWS holograph script in Dep. c.606/1, on Green & Son 1835 watermark paper, on two pages numbered in MWS style 1) and 2), is a transcription in Mary Shelley's hand of Godwin's autobiographical fragment summarising the year 1791. This indicates the successive layers of MWS and Godwin script in the c.606 folders. The 1835 paper and the page numbers combine to make it an obvious starting point for our first chapter, yet the script is enclosed in double quotation marks, a muffled opening gambit for Mary Shelley's *Life of William Godwin*.

Godwin's April 1791 open letter to Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and a companion letter to Charles James Fox which has strayed from the fold of the Bodleian folders,

³ Bentham, Jeremy *Panopticon; or The Inspection House* (2 vols.; Dublin rpr London: T. Payne, 1791)

are commemorated in Godwin's autobiographical fragment for 1791. (Mary Shelley's partial transcription of the Sheridan letter is shown in our chapter 2: *politics*.) Mary Shelley's emphasis on Godwin's 'literature' is embedded in the draft, on which Godwin had written a heading 'from a well-known literary character'. This self-naming is the rubric under which Shelley places the letter and moreover places Godwin's politics themselves, the politics according to her of a man of literature and of a literary character that transcends political faction, conflict, and ambition.

MWS script habitually reacts with a negative to the massive archive of papers with which Mary Shelley was confronted. She nominates the unpublished autobiographies, fragmentary and inconclusive though they are, as the only proper resource for a biographer of Godwin's early life:

The following skeleton of his life Indeed nothing but conjecture is left us with regard to the early manhood of Mr Godwin - & we are glad to see the path through these years traced by his own hand, however slight the sketch may be - (MWS script, c.606/5: 54)

Here we find Mary Shelley divesting and impoverishing her text in the name of an oral and embodied priority which forswears print publication. MWS script subsumes the occasion and place of writing under the recorded event, accords literal privilege to 'the operations of mind' (c.532/8: 46), and sets herself on 'the path traced through these years by his own hand' (c.606/5: 54). Her work-in-progress is venerated over this indelible tracery. She moves back and forth from these summaries to the daily journals on which they are based. Godwin habitually wrote up his journal for the year just past on New Year's Eve, as a supplement to his journal-keeping during the year, and as a full-dress rehearsal for a future biographer. He drew on these laconic notes when he began to write his folio of

autobiographical 'fragments', first published with that title by Mark Philp [MP] in 1992.

At one juncture, Mary Shelley breaks away from the fragmentary autobiographies, and secures her script with quotations from a published text, 'one of the last - & in many respects the wisest of Mr Godwin's works' (c.606/1: 53)-[53v]). This was *Thoughts on Man, his Nature, Productions, and Discoveries*, published in 1831 at the grandfatherly age of seventy-five.

MWS script for the section 'letters' halts to survey Godwin's archive of papers, objectifying as gaps in the record what we might guess was the subjective strain between the evidence in Godwin's autograph and the aim of a memorial biography. Choosing to place Godwin's writings at centre stage: 'The briefest outline written by the man himself contains more real information in matters of biography than pages of uncertain guesses' (c.606/5: 54), nevertheless Shelley laments a paucity of firsthand materials:

No letters of his remain written during this period. I find a correspondance with [illeg.] that concerns the carrying on the Annual Register & a few letters from his family. ... there are some few memoranda & notes which continue the history of his life - together with scattered remarks on the progress & formation of his opinions. These were written later in life. (MWS script, c.532/8: 45)
A few notes carry on Mr Godwin's personal history for some years - & in process of time a good many letters fill up the void. (MWS script, c.606/1: 53)

Until 1795, when Thomas Wedgwood gave Godwin a wet-press copier, Godwin could not regularly make and keep copies of his own letters. This did not stop him from making handwritten copies and drafts, and in 1788 he began to keep a journal to supplement the record. MWS script takes note of Wedgwood's gift, and the contribution it made to Godwin's librarianship of his own writings, at the latest

stage of her composition of *Godwin's Life*, on 1839 paper, in chapter 4: *pedagogy* (c.606/4: 41).

By 1792 Godwin was settled in his bachelor lodgings and writing fulltime as an independent author, and MWS script c.606/2 announces 'a series of letters which mark & illustrate a very interesting portion of Godwin's Life'. This happily coincides with Mary Shelley's declared interest in Godwin's authorship of literature as coeval with his life in the best sense. 'Unfortunately' she adds, 'many of these letters are to him, instead of from him'. She will proceed by selecting from among them those which throw light '^in a just measure^ on my Father's feelings & opinions' (c.606/2: 8, [8v]). Whether or not because of the Bodleian's shelving of original letters in other folders, the only letter that can be identified as one of this announced series is 'the first of the series', a letter from Ann Godwin to her son, and a letter from Godwin to his mother, which is definitely not, as Mary Shelley proposes, a letter in reply to the first.

In the section 'journals', the name of Thomas Holcroft first appears, in MWS script c.606/1, written on 1835 paper, and introducing a three-page letter from Godwin to Thomas Holcroft, written in August 1788 from Guildford, where Godwin had evidently gone to collect the boy Tom Cooper. Holcroft's part in Godwin's life was undoubtedly central, and his name will recur in four of the six chapters of this edition. Throughout her script, Mary Shelley pursues a dialectical opposition between the political leanings and literary achievements of Godwin and those of the somewhat older Holcroft. In the final section 'literary London', we read that Godwin dated his acquaintance with Holcroft to 1786, two years earlier, but MWS is drawing her material from the journals that Godwin started to keep only in 1788. Shelley describes this as '[t]he earliest letter that I possess of [Godwin's]', and attaches it to several pages of extracts from the first volume of Godwin's journals, in which the name Holcroft is already prominent (c.606/1: 123)-124).

Shelley then sums up the friendship as follows:

From these brief notices we find the intimacy between that Godwin & Holcroft are already intimate friends see each other several times a week & communicate their writing & aid each other by mutual criticism. [illeg.] the more polished education & great acquirements of Godwin led him to be of most use to his friend - but when he undertook the writing a drama Holcrofts criticisms became valuable & important. (c.606/1: 123)

Twice MWS script cancels the term 'intimate', even though it bears Godwin's warrant from his autobiographical note to 1788, transcribed on the previous page 122): 'It was at this time that I became extremely intimate with Mr Holcroft'.

The friendship between Godwin and Holcroft is a source of agitated comment throughout MWS script, especially when it touches on Holcroft's radical political opinions.

In the section subheaded 'Holcroft and *Dunstan*' MWS script heightens the contrast between Godwin and Holcroft as literary critics, and as dramatists. Holcroft's critique of the manuscript of Godwin's verse tragedy *St Dunstan* was 'unsparing', she writes. 'He detected every fault & laid it bare without pity' (c.606/2/159). Note however that in the section 'literary London' that ends this chapter, MWS script introduces an attached note from Godwin (b.227/6(b)) criticising Holcroft's novel *Anna St Ives* in comparably harsh terms.

Contrasting with this stringency, MWS script's references to 'Hazlitt's Life of Holcroft' (c.606/2: 95) are positive throughout. The first volume of *Memoirs of the late Thomas Holcroft* (1816) is in Holcroft's own words, dictated in his last illness to his favourite daughter Fanny. Volumes 2 and 3 were composed by Hazlitt from whatever materials came to hand, splicing Holcroft's single autobiographical

volume, together with original first-person documents, letters, diaries, informal memoranda, into his third-person narrative. Thus Holcroft and Hazlitt may be regarded as co-authors of an auto/biographical compendium. Mary Shelley went to Hazlitt purely as a technical model for *Life of William Godwin*, since her preferred models for biography, especially the 1828 biography of Samuel Parr by William Field, were ideologically conservative and hagiographic. She probably had also read Hazlitt's preface to *Memoirs of Holcroft*, dated 1810, referring to Godwin's objections to the publication of certain letters of Mary Wollstonecraft, objections which delayed publication for a further six years. Mary Shelley kept to a policy of editorial discretion on the issue of private letters, and at the same time, pressed Hazlitt's innovative technique of splicing informal with formal texts into service for her account of Godwin.

By the date of his death, Godwin had outlived many correspondents and all the friends of his youth, and only a few of those men whom Mary Shelley contacted after Godwin's death to request the return of Godwin's letters, obliged her (Bennett ii 269-77). At the same time Shelley was in possession of Godwin's published works, the unpublished essay on religion which Godwin had adjured her to publish, a multi-volume daily journal kept from April 1788 to March 1836, a mass of private correspondence, open letters to public men, as well as the autobiographies with which she begins. The cautious circumspection which constrains Shelley's undertaking enters into MWS script-in-progress as a legible struggle with the topic of Godwin's agnosticism and his defection from the dissenting ministry:

There are few written documents & few survivors to tell the story of the years intervening between 1773 & 1793 - twenty years during which ^a double^ the momentous struggle was going ^forward^ - mentally it brought Godwin from being learned & a teacher the learning & teaching of the Latinistic form of Christianity into the character of an apostle of disbelief In a more worldly view
(c.532/8: 45)
[cancellations in script shown as underlines]

The tell-tale pretext: 'There are few written documents & few survivors to tell the story' belies Mary Shelley's constant reading of Godwin's testimony in his autobiographies of the 'Principal revolutions of opinion' that decided his views on religion 'till 1788, when I took my last farewell of the Christian faith' (MP 52-54, from b.228/9). On the following page (c.532/8: 46), Shelley moves clear of these embarrassments (if we overlook a subheading 'Chapter IV', followed by a blank space):

During these years Mr Godwin prepared for the ecclesiastical state; became a preacher of the gospel - seceded from the church - entered on an arduous struggle// for a maintenance by the literary labour & finally established his fame as a man of genius.

Even when his thoughts are fixed on his literary vocation, Godwin's personal circumstances occasionally surface, as in the note 'My residence this year was in Titchfield Street, Marybone' that closes the autobiographical summary of 1791 (c.606/1: 2). His changes of address after Tom Cooper left his household were dictated by the need to retrench expenses, but also served as occasion to dedicate himself to the work of writing, governed solely by 'the promptings of my own mind' (c.606/1: 1). This is hailed by Mary Shelley as a turn to literature in the literary London that Samuel Johnson had brought to pass, a metropolitan instantiation of the individual's scholarly acquirements and creative talents, surrogates for the landed property, wealth and rank which had qualified an earlier generation of men. Yet at the same moment when Godwin farewelled his employment by the Foxite Whigs, April 1791, he wrote his open letter against heritable advantage to R. B. Sheridan. And this demonstrates that he had not disentangled his writerly ambitions from politics, and still had not done so at his fortieth birthday in 1796, nor in 1798 when he was writing up 1791 as 'the main crisis of my life'.

A concluding page of our second chapter 2: *politics*, like the opening page of this chapter 1: *literature*, is a Janus gate. Writing in 1796 on the eve of turning forty, Godwin states: 'I ought to be in Parliament'. But Mary Shelley interrupts this musing, with a judgment that Godwin was temperamentally unfitted for a career in politics, and that she has found no evidence that Godwin sustained his political aspirations beyond the date of this memorandum:

There is something in this paper that looks rather like consoling himself for not being in parliament rather than exciting himself to undertake the responsibility (c.606/5: 120).

Spanning our first two chapters, MWS script opens the first with Godwin ending his stint on a Whig journal, in order to concentrate on literary authorship, and ends the second with Mary Shelley contradicting his wish to be bought into a seat in parliament for the Whigs.

.....

Frequently cited texts +abbreviations:

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William Godwin *Political and Philosophical Writings: Political Writings* ii Mark Philp ed. London: William Pickering, 1993 [Mph 1993]

[William Godwin] *Damon and Delia : a Tale* London: T. Hookham, 1784 [BL 1784]

William Godwin *An Enquiry concerning Political Justice, and its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness* 2 vols.; London: Robinson, 1793 [*Political Justice*]

William Godwin *Thoughts on Man, his Nature, Productions, and Discoveries* London: Effingham Wilson, 1831 [*Thoughts on Man*]

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William St Clair *The Godwins and the Shelleys : the Biography of a Family* London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1989 [C]

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Betty T. Bennett ed. *The Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley* 3 vols.; Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980-1988 [Bennett]

Ralph M. Wardle ed. *Collected Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft* Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1979 [Wardle]

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Mary Shelley, Life of William Godwin
2: politics

London journal 1784-1792

c.606/1

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[112v]ⁱ

Chapter VI

Summary of 1785. Dr Kippis - The Political Herald.

Summary 1786 - Literary parties - Thomas Holcroft - Nicholson - Hamilton Rowan - Summary of 1787 - Acquaintance with Sheridan. Summary of 1789 Considerations concerning being a Member of Parliament ⁱⁱ - Summary of 1788 - Journal Anecdotes preserved - personal

....

”””

98)

[“] Towards the end of this yearⁱⁱⁱ an incident occurred which I considered as a lightening in my circumstances: Mr Robinson, the bookseller, called on me, in company with my tutor at Hoxton, Dr Kippis, to inform me, that Dr Gilbert Stuart,^{iv} who had undertaken to write the historical part of the New Annual Register for 1783, had thrown up his task, before it was brought to a conclusion, & to request me to write two or three short chapters to wind up the year - for this undertaking I received the compensation of ten guineas; & what I did being approved, I was installed in due form writer of the historical part of the New Annual Register at the stipend of 60 guineas & the contract was sealed by a dinner in trio between Mr Robinson, Dr Kippis, & myself at the Crown & Anchor in the Strand.”^v

[...] ^{vi}

.....

c.606/2

”””

48)

In the anecdote here mentioned of his declining a regular stipend from the heads of the Whig party^{vii} - we may see how sometimes disinterestedness defeats itself - “After the summer of this year” he remarks - “I heard no more of Mr Sheridan” - ^{viii} In public & private life it requires

something extraneous to keep an object alive in the memory. Declining the offer, & connected with no other leader, it required a voluntary act of remembrance recollection to recall Godwin to the busy & engrossed mind of Sheridan. Had he accepted the offer he had at once been linked - the givers of the annuity would have wanted their money's worth. I of course do not use this expression in a sordid sense - but the desire to find their effort fructify would ^such is human nature^ have given them an interest in their author protegé - perceiving ^becoming familiar with^ his temper & tone of mind, they would probably [have] pushed him higher up the ladder - & his genius ^genuine political predilections^ would have enabled him to render them considerable services without injury to his integrity - for Godwin was to the end of his life a party man & a staunch Whig. The name of Fox was always spoken by him with reverence enthusiasm that of Grey with deep respect - he was passionately solicitous for their ^the elevation of the Whigs^ to the administration. He never practically sided with the Radical Reformers he desired that change should be gradual - he was convinced of the integrity of the Foxite leaders & esteemed

[blank]

....

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122)

1788 At the parties of Mr Brand Hollis, whom I first saw at Mr Timothy Hollis's of Ormond St,^{ix} I became acquainted with Mr John Adams, American Ambassador[,] Mr Romilly, Mr Richard Sharpe, Mr Capel Lofft, Mr Woodfall,^x Mr Grose, Thomas Taylor the Platonist, Dr Geddes, Mr Gilbert Wakefield, Mr George Walker of Nottingham, Mr Paradise, &c, &c. - In the summer of this year I took lodgings for two months at Guilford in Surry, & received as an inmate my kinsman Mr Thomas Cooper, then twelve years of age, who had just lost his father in the East Indies, by whose premature death, his family were left unprovided[.] I pass over some insignificant matters of literature in which I was engaged in these years - but, about the period at which I am now arrived, I found my disbursements clearly exceeding my receipts, & had foolishly anticipated in future receipts, & being under the necessity of retrenching I took a cheaper lodging than I had lately been accustomed to, in Great Marybone St. It was at this time that I became extremely intimate with Mr Holcroft.^{xi}

.....

c.606/1

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133)

1789 In the journal we have before quoted the memoranda of this year are equally brief.^{xii} The

dinners at Mr Hollis & Robinson^{xiii} continue & a few public events are mentioned in red ink - a few of the notes of this year mark the course of time & are therefore inserted

“May 26 Tu. Dine at Hollis’s with B. Hollis, Lindsey, Kippis, [illeg.] & J. Hollis. Barry [?and] son Duel of Colonel Lenox.

June 4th. Th. Dauphin dies. Prince of Wales refuses to dance with Lenox.

5th Fr. Grenville secretary of State. Duke of Clarence’s Establishment.

17 W. National Assembly

24 W. Necker is restored.

27 Sa. Revolution in France

July 2. Dine in Billingsgate with Robinson [,] T. White, Young [,] Payne & Stirling - (a dinner in Billingsgate in those days was what a dinner at Blackwall is now.)^{xiv}

July 29th. W. Tea Mrs Barbould’s.

Nov 5th. W. Dine with the Revolutionists:^{xv} see Price, Kippis, Rees, Lindsey, Disney, Bileham, Forsaith, Morgan - [?Lister], S. Rogers,^{xvi} & B. Wits. Present Earl Stanhope, Beaufoy, H. Tooke^{xvii} & Count Zenobio. See B. Hollis, Jennings, Lofft & Robinson. Sup with Fawcet.

Nov. 8 Su Dine at Holcrofts. Elopement de son fils.

9 M. to Gravesend

Nov. 15. Sun. Dine at Holcroft’s: set out for Deal. Call upon Crosdil with Holcroft.

16 M. Mort de son fils.^{xviii}

Dec. 1 Tu. Dine with Robinson seul - Undertake Rousseau’s Confessions.

What he undertook with regard to the confessions

11 F. Tea Miss Williams’s with Misses Bailey, Marriot & More, Mrs Nichols & Dr Moore.^{xix}

....

”””

[133v]

In addition to this journal there are several notes dated this year - drawn up evidently at

the instant, which record anecdotes ^of public persons^ detailed in conversations which he thought worthy of record. As doubtless he believed these to be authentic the following is a specimen: of these

[blank]

.....

c.606/2

”””
134)

One of the records of this year is the unfortunate death of Holcroft's son. The details of this disaster are to be found in Hazlitt's Memoirs of Holcroft.^{xx} Godwin's journal shows that he was the friend who accompanied the father to Deal Gravesend first & afterwards to Gravesend Deal to seek the fugitive.

The youth was of an unfortunate disposition & his conduct was very reprehensible - at the same time it is certain that Holcroft carried further than Godwin a certain unmitigated severity; an exposition of duty & truth & of the defalcation from these in the offender conceived in language to humiliate & wound [,] a want of sympathy in the buoyant spirits of youth when inspired to heedlessness & perhaps it may be added ^reprehensible^ dissipation; all of which tended to set still wider apart the distance too usually observed between father & child. Something of this Godwin detected in himself in his conduct towards Cooper. I mention this circumstance the more particularly as it ^several years afterwards^ caused the breach between Holcroft & Godwin which was never healed until the deathbed of the former.^{xxi}

.....

c.606/1

”””

[unnumbered]

1790)^{xxii} At this time, while on the eve of his great work, but the idea yet unborn, Godwin revolved a multitude of plans of literary labor - Something was to be done as well as for his support to satisfy his ambition - a subject chosen worthy of the powers which as yet were latent within him - Nearly on the last day of the preceeding year there is a note that he “proposed Livy to Robinson” - but this idea yielded to the grander scheme of writing a tragedy at January [?31] - we find this note “Dine at Holcroft's. *Dunstan* “

This year he began to take lessons from Curran in Italian.

The concise style of his journal renders the following note enigmatical - but as it was during this year that he became an entire convert to republican principles we may suppose that the words recorded were addressed to himself (by one of the persons whom it would seem met to

commemorate the anniversary of the day when the King of France submitted to the National Assembly)

July 14. W. French Revolution: Stanhope, Sheridan, Tooke. - O'Brien, B. Hollis, Geddes, Lindsey, Price, Paradise. Sup with Fawcet, "We are particularly fortunate in having you among us; it is having the best cause countenanced by the man, by whom we most wished to see it supported."^{xxiii}

Another more decided testimonial made to his talents which he seems to have recorded with pride occurs

Aug 5. Th. Dine at Robinson's: Monkhouse. "I do not think H(olcroft)^{xxiv} too great for the drudgery of translation. There is no comparison between you & him."

....

''''

13)

I insert some extracts from the journal of 1791

Jan 3. M. Remove to Titchfield St.^{xxv}

Feb. 17th. Burke swears himself 60, to disqualify for election committees.

22 Tu. Paine's Pamphlet appears.^{xxvi}

27 Su. Call on Paine

March 16 W. Robinson calls: proposes a Naval History

19. Sa. Write to Robinson: propose £1050, i.e. £525 per volume

25 F. Demêlé avec Robinson.

April 29 F. Letter to Sheridan.^{xxvii} Wild Oats.

Major misunderstanding of Fox & Burke. House of Commons.^{xxviii}

14 Sa. Dine at B. Hollis's. Scott, a believer in spiritual intercourses, lends Paine £40,^{xxix} to aid the publication of his pamphlet, suspended for want of money (Lewis). H. Tooke states to the Lond Soc. Paine's offer of £300. (B. Hollis)^{xxx}

June 30th. Dine with Robinson - Propose Political Principles.

Sep. 5th Walk to Hampton Court with Dyson^{xxx}

25th. Fawcett dines; talk of genius & virtue of Christianity

Oct. 3d Cut off my hair. (To searchers after minutiae this note is curious. Until now men wore their hair in flowing ringlets; & the shaven & shorn appearance of the present day would have been scouted - but the fashion changed & in 1791 men cut off their hair.)

Oct. 16th. Holcroft's novel. Dyson dines - talk of self-interest

Nov. 2. W. Locke: Voltaire. Dine at Holcrofts with Pethion.
Burke's speech 1774. Talk of constituents, oaths & property

Nov. 13 Su Correct. Dyson & Dibdin call; talk of virtue & disinterestedness. Dine at Johnsons with Paine Shovel & Wollstonecraft^{xxxii} - talk of Monarchy, Tooke Johnson Voltaire, pursuits & religion Sup at Holcrofts.

Of this dinner Mr Godwin observes in another place^{xxxiii}
[blank]

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14)

22. Tu. Holcroft calls: Webb calls: talk of necessity, virtue & perception. Call on Jacob. Sup at Hollis's - talk of David - Canaanites & the use of conversation.

Dec 17 Sa. Call on Robinson: on Webb- talk of truth, oaths, monasteries & property: & on Lister. Mr Cooper^{xxxiv} dines. Holcroft at tea. Read Anna-5.^{xxxv}

The journal is augmented this year as may have been observed, by a mention being made of the topics of conversation. In an other place Godwin mentions the excitement given to conversation, by the introduction of politic[s] & metaphysics, introduced by the agitation caused

by the French Revolution. As he proceeded also in Political Justice he was anxious to consider all the topics introduced into that book in every possible light, & eagerly advanced arguments & heard those on the other side - being desirous of attaining the truth with a sincerity & directness of purpose seldom met with. Yet this did not prevent mistakes which he afterwards detected & acknowledged^{xxxvi} - so great a deceiver is preconceived opinion & habits of thought, bent by the stream of society in which they lay - all one way.

It was at the dinner recorded on November 13th that Godwin met Mary Wollstonecraft - but the meeting produced no desire on either side to follow up the acquaintance.

The Political Principles^{xxxvii} proposed to Robinson on Mr Marshall [illeg.] idea of Political Justice

....

”””

15)^{xxxviii}

1792

“During this year I was in the singular situation of an author possessing some degree of fame for a work unfinished and unseen. I was introduced on this ground to Mr Macintosh, David Williams, Joel Barlow & others, & with these gentlemen together with Mr Nicholson^{xxxix} & Mr Holcroft, had occasional meetings in which the principles of my work were discussed - towards the close of the year I had become acquainted with Mr Horne Tooke,^{xl} to whose etymological conversations & various talents I am proud to acknowledge myself greatly indebted; though these came too late to be of any use to me in the concoction of my own work, which was nearly printed off before I had first the pleasure of meeting this extraordinary & admirable man. I resided this year in Devonshire Street - Portland Place. [“]

.....

public letters

c.606/1^{xli}

”””

1)

“(1791) On the 29th of April of this year Mr Holcroft and I wrote two anonymous letters, he to Mr Fox & I to Mr Sheridan. Mr Fox in a debate on the bill for giving a new constitution to Canada, had said, that he would not be the man to propose the abolition of a house of Lords in a country where such a power was already established, but as little would he be the man to recommend the introduction of such a power where it was not - this was by no means the only public indication he had shewn how deeply he had drunk of the spirit of the French revolution -

the object of the above mentioned letters was to exite [sic] these two illustrious men to persevere gravely & inflexibly in the career on which they had entered - I was strongly impressed with the sentiment, that in the then existing circumstances of England & of Europe, great & happy improvements might be achieved without anarchy & confusion - I believed that important changes might must arise, & I was inexpressibly anxious that such changes should be effected under the conduct of the best & most important leaders.

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I have before me a copy in my father's Mr Godwin's handwriting of the ^abovementioned^ letter he sent in April 1791 to Mr Sheridan, as from "a well known literary character". It begins by saying: "There are few men capable of the glorious task of eradicating the vices of political government, & rendering liberty & justice as extensive & complete as they ought to be. Perhaps every such man is able to place himself precisely in the situation in which his efforts shall be most successful. But it is peculiarly fortunate when the man & the situation are already united. You are that man." The letter goes on to deprecate the aversion of the Whig leaders to the discipline of general principles of government - and remarks "You would willingly promote the true interests & happiness of the human race. You would willingly enrol your name with the benefactors of mankind; or, which is still better, would rejoice in the extension of justice, though your efforts in promoting that extention should never be acknowledged. An[d] can you really think that the 'New Constitution of France is the most glorious fabric ever raised by human integrity since the creation of man' & yet believe that what is good there, would be bad here? does truth alter its nature by crossing the straits & become falsehood? Are men entitled to perfect equality in France, & is it just to deprive them of it in England? Did the French do well in extinguishing hereditary honors nobility, & is it right that we should preserve hereditary honors? Or are these questions so very trifling in their nature, as uninteresting to the general weal, that it is no matter which side of them we embrace? - If you speak out, you must be contented to undergo a temporary proscription. That proscription you

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at present suffer, & the period of obloquy which the true friends of mankind must endure, will be very short. Had you rather be indebted to [sic] your eminence to the caprice of monarchs, than to the voice of a whole nation, accumulating its gratitude on the head of the general benefactor?

Had you rather have the nominal profession of power, with your hands free for the purposes of corruption, but chained up from the exertion of every virtuous effort; than have the real profession of power; able to make every act of your administration a blessing to Britain, to Europe & to mankind

- The letter then goes on to expose the defects that at that time deformed the English constitution - the venality of elections [-] & exclaims "Is this liberty? Liberty teaches men to distinguish between what is intrinsically valuable, & what only seems to be so. Even Montesquieu knew that the principle of a free state was virtue. Liberty strips hereditary honours of their imaginary splendour - shews the noble & the king for what they are common mortals, kept in ignorance of what other mortals know, flattered & encouraged in folly & vice, & deprived of those stimulatives which perpetually goad the hero & the philosopher to the acquisition of excellence. Liberty leaves nothing to be admired but talents & virtue; the very things which it is the interest of men like you, should be preferred to all the rest. Pursue this subject to its proper extent & you will find, that - give to a state but liberty enough, it is impossible that vice should exist in it."

This sweeping & somewhat astounding assertion proves the excess of Godwin's enthusiasm on the subject

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of political liberty, ^and^ who from his heart could believe that no vice could coexist with perfect freedom & not fervently desire the emancipation of mankind from all arbitrary authority. That any one should in the sincerity of his heart entertain this belief seems strange - but my father did - it was the basis of his system, the very keystone of the arch of justice, by which he desired to knit together the whole human family. It must be remembered however that no man was a more strenuous advocate for the slow differentiation operation of change - no one more entirely impressed with the feeling that opinions should be in advance of actions - perhaps even to a faulty degree in the minds of many, he desired nothing to be done but by the majority - while he ardently sought by every means to cause the majority to espouse the better side.

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The very cyphers of these years ^are to the political enthusiast^ full of thrilling associations - In 1791 Burke published his Reflections on the French Revolution^{xliv} - which was the igniting spark to inflame Tory zeal - & before which even the partizans of Liberty quailed^{xlv} -

The Birmingham riots followed,^{xlvi} animated by a fury that cast an eternal stigma on the cause they espoused. Such is Man. In France, the Jacobins, advancing in proud triumph - their hands dyed in blood, they cast hecatombs at the feet of Liberty who paled & died expired as if destroyed by the sanguinary stream. In this country Toryism was at its strongest, & ^its advocates^ proceeded to assert their power by no dissimilar acts. The passions of Mankind were in a flame, & party differences became the watchword of persecution & attempted Death.

Many ^authors of eminence wrote^ answers^{xlvii} to Burke's eloquent & impressive appeal to the prejudices & softer feelings of Men.^{xlviii} None were supposed to succeed so well as Paine's Rights of Man,^{xlix} whose sober reasoning & attempt to reduce the theory of government to simple & plain principles, was particularly adapted to excite the admiration of Men whose philosophy it was, that each Man was king in himself complete

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the inherent ^legitimate^ judge of his own actions as well as opinions to be enlightened by the reason of their own fellow creatures but not coerced by their authority

Godwin, who was eminently classical in his literary tastes - who to the end of his life almost adored the name of Burke, & eagerly refuted any notion of his political change being served from ^indignantly repelled the notion that his political change had been actuated by^ unworthy motives^l - yet Godwin as an advocate for the dissemination of knowledge & the enlightenment of the many, warmly admired Paine. In the enthusiasm of the moment he praised him more than he would subsequently have done & he wrote hastily to some friend in eager encomium on his work.

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b.227/6(b)^{li}

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Though I have as yet given only of a cursory perusal to the pamphlet with a sight of which you have favoured me, I will nevertheless take the liberty to express to you the feelings excited by that perusal. I shall trespass upon your goodness by begging leave to detain it, while I give it a more careful examination. Few things indeed ever mortified me more than the recollecting, that shortly I must cease to have a copy in my possession, and that, even for the mangled remnant that is to be left, I must depend trust to the accidents that may attend its future publication.

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“The pamphlet has exceeded my expectations, & appears to be nearly the best possible performance that can be written upon the subject. It does not confine itself, as an injudicious answerer would have done, to a cold refutation of Mr Burke’s errors, but with equal discernment & philanthropy, embraces every opportunity of impressing the purest principles of liberty upon the hearts of mankind. It is perhaps impossible to rise from perusing it, without feeling oneself both wiser & better. It contains the seeds of revolution it contains are so vigorous in their stamina, that nothing can overpower them. It only All that remained for the illustrious author, after having enlightened the whole western world by the publication of Common Sense, was to do a similar service to Europe, by a production equally energetic as that was, & adapted with equal skill to rouse & interest the mind. The effects, it may be, of this work will not be disseminated so rapid; but, if properly disseminated (& persecution cannot injure it), will be as sure
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of political liberty. Who could from his heart believe that no vice could exist in conjunction with perfect freedom, & not fervently desire the emancipation of Mankind from all arbitrary authority. That any one should in the sincerity of his heart, entertain this belief may seem strange - but my father did it was the basis of his system - the very keystone of the arch of justice by which he wish[ed] to knit together the whole human family.^{liii}

These feelings naturally led him to his warm admirer to desire the acquaintance of Tom Paine. He sought to be acquainted with him, & on having his wish gratified, wrote the following letter:

“Sir,

“I was yesterday at my own request introduced to you by Mr B. Hollis^{liv}; but in the hurry & confusion of a numerous meeting, I had not an opportunity of saying some things, which I have long wished to say to you in person. I have wished for an occasion of expressing to you my feeling of the high obligation you have conferred upon Britain & mankind by your late publication of the Rights of Man. I believe few men have a more ardent sense of that obligation than myself; & I am sure that it is a duty incumbent upon persons so feeling to come forward with the most direct applause of your efforts. I regard you, Sir, as having been the unalterable champion of Liberty in America, in England, & in France, from the purest view to the happiness & virtue of mankind. I have devoted my life to these glorious purposes

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12)

and am at this moment employed in a composition, embracing the whole doctrine of politics, & in which I shall endeavour to convince my countrymen of the mischiefs of monarchical government & of certain other abuses not less injurious to society. I believe that a cordial

unreserved intercourse between men employed in the same great purposes, is of the utmost service to their own minds & to their cause. I have therefore thought proper to break through all ceremony in thus soliciting the advantage of a personal acquaintance & if you entertain the same opinion, you will, I am confident, favour me with an interview either at my apartments or at any other place you will please to appoint.

“I am, Sir, already the ardent friend of your views, your principles & your mind

William Godwin

Notwithstanding this letter no familiar intercourse ensued between Mr Godwin & Paine. They met at dinner at various houses but the intimacy proceeded no further. The following are notes of anecdotes gathered from Paine’s conversation but they are few - “Paine & Burke talking together observe what a government of pensions & corruption ours is - ‘And distributed by such a fool’, said Paine - ‘I wish however’, said Burke, ‘this fool would give me one of his places’ - Paine communicated intelligence to Burke negotiating with Pitt respecting Nootka Sound. ‘You must carry this’, said Burke, ‘to Grey; I cannot bring it into Parliament; I am at this moment negotiating with Pitt respecting the impeachment of Hastings.’

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Duke reel 13^{lv}

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Holcroft -as was natural wrote with much greater enthusiasm

“I have got it - If this do not cure my cough it is a damned perverse mule of a cough - The pamphlet - From the row - but mum - We don’t sell it - Oh no - Ears & Eggs - verbatim except the addition of a short preface which as you have not seen I send you my copy - Not a single castration God ^Laud be unto God and [illeg.]^{lvi} ! can I discover - Hey for the New Jerusalem!

The Milenium ! And peace and eternal beatitude be unto the soul of Thomas Paine

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[11v]

Early in this year this author published his ^pamphlet^ answer to Burke’s Reflections on the French Revolution. Of this work Godwin gives as his opinion:

“The pamphlet has excelled my expectations, & appears to be nearly the best possible performance that can be written on the subject. It does not confine itself, as an injudicious answer would have done, to a cold refutation of Mr Burke’s errors, but with equal discernment & philanthropy embraces every opportunity of impressing the purest principles of Liberty upon the

hearts of mankind. It is perhaps impossible to rise from perusing it, without feeling oneself both wiser & better. The seeds of revolution it contains are so vigorous in their stamina, that nothing can overpower them. All that remained for the illustrious author, after having enlightened the whole Western World by the publication of Common Sense, was to do a similar service to Europe, by a production energetic as that was, and adapted with equal skill to rouze & interest the mind. The effects, it may be, of this work will not be so rapid; but, if properly disseminated (& persecution cannot injure it), will be as sure”

Coincidence in political opinions led Godwin to wish

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[across top in MWS hand]

copy of a letter sent to Mr Sheridan, April 1791, by a well known literary character.

Sir

There are few men capable of the glorious task of eradicating the vices of political government, & rendering liberty & justice as extensive & complete as they ought to be. Perhaps every such man is capable of to placeing himself precisely in the situation in which his effort shall be most successful. You are that But it ^{is} peculiarly fortunate when the man & the situation are already found together united. You are that man.

Any attempt, like the present, that can be made to stimulate you, could promise but little success, if you had not already felt your situation, & begun to do well. You declared early in favour of the French Revolution; you are reported to have felt some ^{no inconsiderable} inclination to answer Mr Burke. Mr Fox discovered, particularly in the course of the present month,^{lviii} unequivocal symptoms of the same mind opinions.

What is it that has recently alarmed you? Why do you *deprecate the discussion of general principles of government?* Why does Mr Fox complain of *being misunderstood?* Why appear anxious to declare that he is not so much a friend to the universal diffusion of equal liberty, as he was app-

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rehended to be? Was that apprehension injurious to him? Yet such are the sentiments ^{each of} you are represented as having expressed.

If I thought personal ambition was ^{were} the motive that had most influence in your mind, I would observe to you, that this is a period of revolutions. Man has grown alive to the perception of his rights. Truth has gone so far, that it must go farther. It can not stop. The true principles of government are studied, reasoned upon, &

understood. France, that has so long set an example the fashion to the world in trifles, cannot secure to herself all that is most worthy of man to possess, without being imitated. Men will not long say, as Mr Fox does, that *^to give existance to^ hereditary honours & hereditary powers , in countries where they did not exist before, is exceedingly unwise*, without going farther; & thinking that their absence, in countries where they do exist, is exceedingly desirable.

What is the consequence of all this? Why that a man, who wishes for the speedy possession of power, must take care not to be *^beware of being^* thought too much the friend of the French Revolution. He must take things as they are, & be the contented instrument of all the corruptions & vices that at present exist (are to be found)^{lix}. He must endeavour to secure as much emolu-

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ment for himself & his friends as he can; & in a little while be swept away with the rest of the insects of the day, to make room for a better order of things, the progress of which not all the efforts of all the enemies of human nature can avert, but which though by attempting to counteract them *^it^*, he may make himself execrable & contemptible.

But, sir, you have a better object than personal ambition. You would willingly promote the true interests & happiness of the human race. You would willingly enrol your name with the benefactors of mankind; or, which is still better, would rejoice in the extension of justice, though it your efforts in promoting that extension should never be acknowledged. And can you really think that the French Revolution *new Constitution of France is the most glorious fabric ever raised by human ingenuity ability integrity since the creation of man*, & yet believe that what is good there would be bad here? Does truth alter its nature by crossing the straits to become falshood? Are men entitled to perfect equality in France, & is it just to deprive them of it in England? Did the French do well in extinguishing nobility, there, & it is it right that we should preserve hereditary honours? here? Or are these questions so very trifling in their nature, so altogether

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uninteresting to the general weal, that it is no matter which side of them we hold? embrace?

But perhaps, though we should rejoice in the establishment of liberty, & truth, & right general principles of government, when th it comes, yet we ought to *hear with regret* the premature *discussion of them*. And how are they is it to come at all? How have they made the progress which has already produced such memorable effects? Because Rousseau, & Raynal & Mirabaud *^the writer of the Systême de la Nature^*^{lx} & Helvetius, far from hearing the discussion with regret, were eager to provoke it. You can not mean to say, let other men stand in the breach, let them be made the sacrifice, & we will enjoy the fruit of their labours. Other men, one man especially *^Mr Paine^* has stood in the breach, but the period of sacrifice is past. He is in no danger, & he has secured to himself the gratitude of ages. *^You live among men of rank & members of the legislature, men, who some way or other profit by the present order of things, & you are not aware of the progre* impression the French revolution has already produced. Perhaps at last, if you be not upon your guard, it will take you by surprise.[^]

If you speak out, you must be contented to undergo a temporary proscription. That proscription you at present suffer, & the period of the obloquy which the true friend to mankind must endure, will

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be very short. Had you rather be indebted for your eminence to the caprice of a monarch, or ^than^ to the voice of a whole nation, accumulating its gratitude upon the head of the general benefactor? Had you rather have the nominal possession of power, with your hands free for the purposes of corruption, but chained ^up^ from the exertion of every virtuous effort; or ^than^ have the real possession of power, able to make every act of your administration a blessing to Britain, to Europe & to mankind?

What would Aristides & Cato & Tulli^{lxi} & sir Thomas More have given to be placed in your situation - at liberty to purpose the boldest visions ^conceptions^ of universal advantage, & sure of success in the pursuit? Twelve ^six^^{lxii} years only elapsed before the emancipation of America brought forth the Revolution in France, though America was so distant in situation, and had so few means of rendering her example imposing & brilliant. Will France, the most refined & considerable nation in the world remain six years without an imitator? You live among men of rank & members of the legislature, men, who some way or other profit by the present order of things, & you are not aware of the impression the French revolution has already produced. Perhaps at last, if you be not upon your guard, it will take you by surprise.

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There are two very different objects that offer themselves to your ambition. You may seek to profit by the vices of mankind: that profit is at best ambiguous, can be but temporary ^& must degrade its votary^: or you may assist them in their progress towards the goal of liberty & virtue. In this country we have the shadow of liberty without any of its substance & any of its effects.

Are the lower classes animated with that independence, that fearless inflexibility, that conscious equality, which true liberty must infallibly inspire? No. On the contrary, their most intimate persuasion is, ^or has been^, that it would be folly in them to trouble themselves about political government & political truth, that government is not influenced by the sentiments of them, or such as they, but is wholly at the disposal of the higher ranks of the community. Where the people are degraded & corrupt, their superiors never fail to be contemptible. Is there any spectacle more painful to an honest mind than a British house of commons; where men obtain their admission by bribery, by riot & vice, & when hundreds, brought ^in^ by some titled patron, dare not vote & dare not think but as he directs. them. Is this liberty? Liberty teaches men to distinguish between what is intrinsically valuable, & what only seems to be so. Even Montesquieu^{lxiii} knew that

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the principle of a free state was virtue. Liberty strips hereditary honours of their imaginary splendour - shows the noble & the king for what they are, common mortals, kept in ignorance of what other mortals know, flattered & encouraged in folly & vice, & deprived of those stimulations, which perpetually goad the hero & the philosopher to the acquisition of excellence. Liberty leaves nothing to be admired but talents & virtue; the very things, which it is

the interest of men like you, should be preferred to all the rest. Pursue this subject to its proper extent, & you will find, that - Give to a state but liberty enough, & it is impossible that vice should exist in it that state.

How bold & paradoxical an opinion would it have been thought a few years ago to assert that all distinctions of rank & hereditary greatness should be abolished? And yet Mr Fox must himself have been of that opinion, whether he knew it or no, when he asserted the new constitution of France to be the noblest of all the efforts of the human mind. [illeg.] I will never believe that Mr Fox has gone so far in the subject of the French Revolution as to have left you behind. Enquire into the nature of royalty & you will find it liable to precisely the same objections. It is not conspicu-

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uously unfortunate to [^]ridiculous in[^] the wretched mortal who is raised to this unnatural situation. In a despotic government, he must pretend to know every thing & do every thing, when in reality he neither sees with his own eyes nor acts with his own hands. Deceived by his servants, & by the servants of his servants, the people are the slaves of whores & lacqueys & pimps & confessors, while they appear to be only the slaves of a tyrant. In a limited government, the king ought to do nothing, his ministers, who are responsible for his measures, ought to be the authors of them; he ought to be a pageant or a statue. (Happy would [^]it[^] be for the people if this were the fact; & if to degrade their understandings & cheat their virtues by a solemn farce comprehended the whole of the mischief.)^{lxiv} But he may choose his own ministers. That is, if he have bad ones he may keep, & if good dismiss them. This will always be his choice, except so far as he is controlled by the public voice. He to choose? How came he by the penetration, that should see the human heart through all the vests of hypocrisy [^]its disguises[^]? What are the scenes he has visited, that should enable him to contrast the courtier dressed in all the hypocrisy of a levée, with that courtier, unmasked at his ease? But, possessing the power of choosing men, he will infallibly choose measures too. How many ministers are there

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who will sacrifice their places to their virtue? The king wants at first but little. Only a bishopric for a pimp, or a judge's gown for the venal instrument of corruption. Only impunity for this villain & proscription for that man of illustrious talents or uncomplying virtue. And the minister that gives them these will hardly scruple in the sequel an unjust war or the coercion of men animated with the love of freedom. Where true liberty exists, rewards will be given only to virtue. Where there is no king, men can obtain honour only by recommending themselves to the favour of the people at large.^{lxv} But in courts every thing is cabal, faction & intrigue. The sycophant, the flatterer, the time serving knave will be sure of promotion; the man of generous virtue sure of discouragement. What sort of character will this circumstance diffuse through every recess & corner of the land?

Glance your eye over the rest of our happy establishment. The criminal law, which by awarding the same punishment to all offences, destroys those it should reform, & encourages all by the prospect of impunity. The church establishment - of [?which]^{lxvi} Mr Fox has given his opinion - respecting the unequal distribution of income

there cannot be a dispute - What do you think of the 39 articles, by which every clergyman subscribes *ex animo* to a creed (the predestinarian)^{lxvii}

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which not one clergyman of any eminence in the island believes to be true? What of the oaths of tradesmen, custom-house-officers, church-wardens, &c, so constructed that obedience is impossible; & thus the laity are taught by law & the constitution to despise veracity & justice, as effectively as the clergy are taught it by the thirty-nine articles. This last evil can never be completely removed, till we abolish all taxes upon trade, & substitute one only tax upon the produce of the land, which upon every system must pay the tax at last.

What a scene does this island governed as it is exhibit? A clergy, obliged to forswear themselves before they can be admitted into their profession, obliged to oppress & tyrannize upon the very people they are appointed to teach. False oaths imposed by law upon one half of the nation. The gallows converted into the prolific parent of crimes. (A nobility trampling upon the minds & exterminating the virtues of mankind. A king.)^{lxviii} - Is this liberty? The muse of heroism, the patron of genius, the support of truth, the mother of virtue?

But this fabric, this government, this constitution is tumbling into ruins. Do not let us have the mortification to see men like you, born for the redemption of mankind, employed ^enlisted^ for the preservation

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of their worst calamities. Above all do not be afraid of discussion. Do not temporise. Do not catch at a phantom, to let slip the substance. Fix your attention upon the great principles of government, & follow them undauntedly into all their consequences. Serve the great cause of justice of & human nature, & cast yourself upon the gratitude of mankind. As sure as the world exists, you will be rewarded - rewarded by the approbation of your own mind - by the applause of everlasting ages - by the success of your endeavours, & the inestimable value of the benefits of which you will be the author

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The name of Major Jardine^{lxix} frequently occurs in Mr. Godwin's journal - They were certainly intimate

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The occasion of the present letters ^both of which are fragments^ I cannot discover; but to a certain degree they speak for themselves. The first is to Major Jardine. It is a specimen & a mitigated one of the tone which the annunciation of the strict principle adherence to truth caused Godwin & many of his friends to adopt. This gives a very disputative air to much of his

correspondance. As according to the old adage, "Silence gives consent" - so silence usually announced approval - or oral communication sufficed for the purposes of applause. But even these ^fearless^ philosophers found it difficult to censure a friend, and when they thought it right to express disapprobation they

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87)

found it convenient to have recourse to writing. Then the pride fervour impetus of composition added to the fervor of a love of truth, & the eye & voice of the friend not being there to check or soften, the rounded sentences ^often^ gathered asperity as they rolled along. A different An opposite system were certainly best - it would better further the charities of social intercourse, that we wrote from our praise (I do not think we are ever too lavish of it) so that it may make a lasting impression; & spoke our blame, that manner might soften rebuke - & the airy words flying away quickly, might impress without deeply wounding the sensitive self-love of the listener. As I have said, Godwin & his friends, from the purest motives, & in hatred of hypocrisy, chose the contrary method - of this there are many proofs in the correspondance - & if we do not advert to their peculiar system, we should call those quarrelsome, who after all meant only to use the frank language of friendship, & to do the best office of that tie, by contributing to the amendment & virtue of another excellence of the person they loved.

In the foregoing autobiographical sketches Godwin has mentioned, how soon he began to disapprove of the violences of the French Revolution & above all of mob commotions - & yet here we find him vindicating Robespierre. This is easily explained. The theories of the philosopher were in favour of slow changes & benign government, but when change was operating in a neighbour country - a change tending not only to confer the blessings liberate that country from the intolerable evils of a worn out despotism but to shew to light other lands in the same path, he was willing to afford every excuse to the popular leaders, & to regard as long as he could the enormities committed in the name of freedom, as necessary to the extermination of slavery.^{lxx}

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b.227/2(b)

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88)^{lxxi}

You are one of the men, my dear major, with whom I know not how to settle accounts. You have certainly some good qualities; & as certainly some that by no means produce approbation or pleasure. The shortest way to

settle adjust the contention is to love you for the one, & hate you for the other, & leave them to fight it out as well as they can.

Are you the friend of liberty or the enemy? This is a problem beyond my ability to solve. You are the “friend of peace:” Aye, I grant you: so much so I fear, *ut mavis quietum servitium quam tumultuosam libertatem*.^{lxxii} You think little of independence, of energy, of manly confidence & manly spirit, & only wish that mankind were well asleep. Do not exclaim so bitterly upon Robespierre! I, like you, will weep over his errors; but I must still continue to regard him as an eminent benefactor of mankind. The French, you say, must again remain the prey of despotism. I answer in the words of Agamemnon “Prophet of plagues, forever boding ill!” You say, you cannot long serve God & Mammon. Alas! your equivocal language is precisely calculated to hold the balance between them. - So much for liberty; now for myself.

Are you my friend or my enemy? I cannot tell. In the first place, if I would take your advice you would have me go to France, & put myself into the mouth of “that dangerous beast of prey, Robespierre”

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89)

for the purpose of making myself the master, not of truth as you imagine, but of falsehood; for, disguise it as you will, there are few people whose general notions of politics differ more than yours & mine. Next, you treat me personally like the bear in the fable, who struck off his master’s nose in attempting to kill a fly that had settled upon it. You have written it seems, to C. F. that I will call upon him. No, sir, if I want to be of any use I must not make myself cheap & intrusive. Do not you see, that you are not now attempting to do by letter, what you had not confidence enough to do, when you might have done it with much more propriety, in person? Do not you see, that by the profusion of your recommendations of men to the notice of each other you necessarily render them of no account? I have heard nothing of your Morichells, or even of your Durango. Do not you know, that with C. F.’s^{lxxiii} habits of life he necessarily considers every stranger that intrudes himself, as a suitor? I want nothing of such men, & it would be extremely injudicious in me to subject myself to these misconstructions.”

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To the R. H. Charles Fox

“Sir

“Major Jardine has thought proper to send the enclosed to my house for the purpose of being transmitted to you. It is a mark of your extreme good nature if you pay the smallest attention to such incoherent, ^but probably well intended^ effusions.

“The major having thought proper to mention my name in his letter, I fel feel myself strongly impelled to embrace the occasion of inclosing a few lines from myself. I can do this at present with the less risque of being

mistaken, as I have ^after having ^ given my sentiments so fully to the public, as to prevent the possibility ^danger^ of a mind of true penetration imputes ^ing to me party & interested views. My habits of thinking are too much at war with the present system of things for me ^to make it possible I should^ ever to consent to take an active part in it.

“I have therefore only to communicate my esteem for your character & my anxiety for your future rectitude & usefulness. I have long studied you, though without the advantage of personal intercourse, & there are in my opinion few men indeed to whose exertions their species may look with ^more^ rational hope. I am anxious you should know how much unprejudiced & contemplative spectators sympathise in your feelings & success. I am especially anxious that you should make no fatal mistake at a period so critical to human nature. This is no time for temporising views & partial undertakings. It would be of the worst consequence if by a too laborious attention to the affair of the day you should lose sight of the true situation of mankind & the duty it is incumbent on you to discharge. It would be inexpressibly to be lamented, if a man fitted to lead the efforts of nations should by any mistake be left behind in the career [sic] the advocate of errors that have been generated [illeg.].

[written in left margin]

The best rule perhaps that can be prescribed to your conduct is that of trusting to your ^own^ understanding. There is no danger to which you are exposed so great as that which arises from the easiness of your temper, subjecting you to the being guided by men eminently inferior both in penetration & virtue.

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“The period in which I am now writing is a period from which the liberty & melioration of the world will take their date. Nothing can stop the dissemination of principle. No power on earth can shut the scene which has been opened. The laws of nature & of man conspire to forward it, & it has the ardent wishes of every enlightened friend of man. Would to heaven that no man ^person^ of ability & virtue might lend his hand to prop the fall of oppression! How mal-a-propos & contemptible do party arrangements & interests appear at such a time! Moderate the fervour of mankind; calm their precipitation; teach them a sober & magnanimous proceeding; for this is the part of philanthropy. But be the unalterable & unlimited friend of all their just demands. Lift your voice in the cause of eternal justice; familiarise to our ears those truths that to convince need only to be spoken; satisfy your fellow beings that you are unequivocally the friend of their cause: & you may then full fill the important office of mediator between the political monopolistslies that must gradually withdraw their pretensions, & the political justice that either by tranquil or violent means must succeed.

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Letter

to the Hon. Thomas Erskine

Sir

At a moment when you are intoxicated with the voice of flattery, a person who approaches you with the mere intention of communicating sober truth, will no doubt be regarded as an intruder. I was present when you made your celebrated speech in the trial of Paine.^{lxxvii} You are not without some share in my esteem; & my esteem, when given, is liberally given, though it must be severely purchased. But that day did not on the whole made make any addition to my esteem. It is the intention of this letter to discuss with you as a friend some of the principles which you then delivered, & which upon that occasion modified your conduct. I address you through the medium of the press,^{lxxviii} for I have nothing to say but what all the world may hear, & if it be such admonition as you ought to receive, it will probably not be useless to others.

You mentioned upon that occasion the incredible infamy of the present administration, which ought no doubt to be published to every corner of the earth, in having left no means unemployed to induce you to desert the cause of your client. You stated it as one of the great privileges of the English constitution, that every man arraigned of any crime was enabled to secure himself an advocate to plead his cause. You claimed considerable credit upon that occasion for having persevered through every ob-

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37) stacle in the assertion of this privilege. It is my particular intention to controvert the reasonings of this part of your speech. You will perhaps be surprised to hear it affirmed, that you had a considerable share in procuring the verdict of guilty against your client. I was from circumstances particularly alive to that impression from the transactions of this day. It had never been my fortune in any preceding instance to hear the law pleadings of so famous an advocate. I came full of the expectations which your reputation excited, & I was not unstored with ideas of the sort of speech that a friend of the constitution ought to have made upon that celebrated occasion. Sir, it was my opinion that M^r Paine ought to have been acquitted, not upon the question of the truth or falshood of the allegations of his writings, but because such writings ought to be permitted in a free country.

There are two circumstances that powerfully detract from the lustre which your admirers ascribe to your exertions on that day: first, that it was your opinion that your client should ^ought to^ be convicted; & secondly, that you were anxious it should be understood by your hearers that such was your opinion.

What sort of impression must be made upon the court when the advocate of the accused party broadly hints that the verdict ought to be such as the indictment requires it to be? What sort of privilege is this, which you so emphatically applauded, that I shall be able to secure myself an advocate, who, whether from timidity, from party views or from conscience, thinks himself obliged to betray his client? What jury can resist the prejudice that is excited, when

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38) they are led to suppose that the accused could not find one man to tell them he should depart unpunished? Let me condemned in silence if such be the alternative, but let me not be insulted with such a mockery of defense.

Some persons have told me, that it is true such a defense could be of no use to the client, but it might nevertheless afford a happy occasion to display the ability of the advocate. You were probably under the influence

of some such argument as this. Your own good sense must have prevented ^you^ from supposing you should do any service to Mr Paine. But you supposed that you should make some addition to the public estimation, of which you are much too avaricious for a man of rigid virtue. You were mistaken.

What sort of exhibition of himself does an orator make who employs himself for four hours as you did, in a pretended attempt to persuade an audience into the truth of a proposition, which in his personal opinion is confessedly false? What must mankind think of this purchased fatigue of the lungs, & eloquence that is dealt out to every purchaser at so much an hour?

First, as I have observed, it was your private opinion that your client ought to have been ^be^ convicted. Sir, you have much too high an opinions of your talents, if you imagine that you can make a deep impression upon an audience while you are pleading against the judgment of your own understanding. Ability is the offspring of judgment. There is no eloquence that will stand the test of examination, but the eloquence which is preceded by zeal. He that talks

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39) to make a vulgar distinction, from the inspiration of the head only, will in all cases be entitled to our pity rather than our admiration.

I should be loth to judge of your abilities from the exhibition of that day. I had heard of your defence of Lord Keppel, Lord George Gordon & others,^{lxxxix} & the accounts that were given carried with them strong internal evidence that the applause they acquired had been justly earned. In those pleadings your mind was ardent, your generous anxiety was visible, the sentiments you uttered carried with them the stamp of your own approbation. You have now tried in a memorable cause the opposite experiment, & have dwindled into the declamation of a schoolboy. You strung together I confess a number of brilliant [?&] classical passages; but what are such passages, unless they derive vigour from the circumstances of their tending to promote a clear & interesting purpose? You flattered yourself that you were pleading for the liberty of the press. How must such a plea be unnerved by being thus associated with a cause in which you believed the liberty of the press had been overstepped? Take warning. Learn a great moral lesson from the miscarriage of that day. When you commenced your legal career [sic], the observation that was universally made was, others lawyers speak from artifice & system; this man speaks because he feels. Trace back your wanderings. If you lose this first ingredient in your reputation you will speedily have no reputation to lose.^{lxxx}

I will make the idea I wish to convey more palpable by an instance. One of the passages of Mr. Paine's pamphlet arraigned by the attorney general^{lxxxii} was as follows. “All hereditary government is in its nature

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40) tyranny. An heritable crown, or an heritable throne, or by what other fanciful name such things may be called, have no other significant explanation than that mankind are heritable property. To inherit a government, is to inherit the people, as if they were flocks & herds!”

In defending this passage you reminded the court of the revolution in 1688, from whence you inferred that the crown of England was not in an absolute sense hereditary. You added, that the passage in question was indeed a libel upon

the king of Prussia & the emperor of Germany; but the who succeeded by simple inheritance; but that nothing could be more clear than that Mr Paine intended it as a compliment to the house of Brunswick.^{lxxxii}

Can there be a more flagrant insult upon the common sense of mankind than is contained in this assertion? Do you think you can insult the common sense of mankind, in a grave court of judicature, upon a trial interesting to the liberties of your country, without at the same time insulting yourself & degrading your character? My feelings are prompt to express themselves in stronger terms but I suppress them. - This is but a specimen, perhaps indeed the most striking specimen, of the whole tenour of your speech.

Ministry could not - but they frighten you^{lxxxiii}

brilliant passages [?good & bad]

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Political Justice

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The journal of this year^{lxxxiv} is as concise as ever - but there is a supplement^{lxxxv} to it that adds to its interest. I insert extracts

Feb. 10 1793 Dine at Burney's with Jardine & Charles. Call at Wedgwood's^{lxxxvi} with Jardine. Tom Paradies with Jardine, Planter, Lord Sandys

Feb. 11 - Call on Barry - he had sought me to enquire after my book

Feb. 14 The^{lxxxvii} Publication

Feb. 19 Go to the Comedy of Anna^{lxxxviii} with Mrs Inchbald.

March 23. Dr Priestley^{lxxxix} says my book contains a vast extent of ability. Monarchy & aristocracy to be sure were never so painted before - he agrees with me respecting gratitude & contracts absolutely considered - but thinks the principles too refined for practise - he felt uncommon approbation of my investigation of the first principles of government, which were never so well explained before - he admits fully my first principle of the omnipotence of instruction & that all vice is an error - he admits all my principles but cannot follow them into all

my conclusions - he agrees with me respecting self love, and is particularly delighted with the last paragraph, B IV, Ph. VIII & the last sentence of a paragraph p.359.

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1793 The j

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Feb. 10 Dine at Burney's with Jardine & Charles. Call at Wedgwoods with Jardine. Tom Paradise's - Jardine[,] Planter, Lord Sandys,

Feb. 11 - Call on Barry - he had sought me to enquire after my book

14 Th Publication

29 Go to the Comedy of Anna with Mrs Inchbald

May 25 - Prosecution of Political Justice debated this week

Sep. 21 Sa. Tea at Reveley's with Jardine, Sinclair & Mrs Jennings.

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The principles of no book were ever canvassed with so much eagerness & pertinacity as those of Political Justice. And this cannot excite our surprize, as the very tone of it arrests the attention & its singular doctrines demanded consideration The ability also displayed excited admiration to a great extent. The book became popular & unpopular, ^praised & censured^ to an unprecedented extent, & the very enemies it raised provoked discussion & notice. Reviews in those days were not conducted as they are now - but The Monthly ^{xc} devoted three successive articles to analyzing the work giving copious extracts & speaking favourably of its doctrines. Mr. Godwins correspondents could talk of nothing else - an introduction to him was solicited by those to whom he was heretofore unknown - & his mild benevolent earnest & singularly gentlemanly manners & demeanour excited ^universal^ esteem & liking.

The following letters to & from his old schoolmaster

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[64v]

Newton - & from Mr. Frederic Norman of Stowmarket^{xci} are full of interest. The first is from Mr. Godwin to Mr. Newton^{xcii}

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To Mr Newton The Rev^d Sam^l Newton^{xciii}

Sir

I have been informed that you have delivered as your judgment of the work I have published on Political Justice, that when attempting the perusal you found in it much so peculiarly censurable that you could not bear to read it farther.

I confess I am strongly inclined to believe that there has been some mistake on the part of my informant, & that the story I have heard is untrue. If so, you will thank me for giving you an opportunity to contradict it.

Having written this much, I will trouble you with the reasons that persuade me you never delivered the opinion ascribed to you.

When I knew you, you were an ardent champion for political liberty.^{xciv} I cannot easily suppose that you have changed your sentiments on that head.

It is impossible that you should ^not^ have perceived that the book in question is intended to promote that glorious cause. Granting that I have the misfortune to differ from you in your theological creed, I am well assured that at the period to which I allude you had the candour & discernment to do justice to the political writings of people of all persuasions in religion & philosophy. The indulgence in this respect that you would grant to all other men, I cannot suppose you would deny to me. The subject of this book is not religion, but politics: if it be calculated to produce any effect, it is infinitely more probable that that effect will relate to its express object, than its incidental allusion; by to the politics which I imagine you will allow to be generally right, than by to the theology which you perhaps suspect to be wrong.

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There is a view which I am strongly inclined to entertain upon this subject, that I will take the liberty to mention. We have all of us our duties. Every action of our lives & every word that we utter will either conduce to or detract from the discharge of our duty. We cannot any of us do all the things of which mankind stand in need, we must have fellow labourers. Hence it seems to follow that one of our most important duties [is] to do justice to the good qualities of every man & every book that falls under our observation, that thus we may enlarge the opportunity of others for discharging those parts of public service which we cannot perform ourselves. It is unworthy of any real friend of mankind to depreciate any well meant conceived endeavour, from ^{^a^} too painful feeling of the incidental effects that may accompany it.

I make no apology for want of ceremony. We are both of us I conceive enemies to that servility under which the species have so long laboured.

The Rev Sam^l Newton

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To Mr Godwin from the Revd Saml Newton

Dear Sir

I naturally contract a friendship, feel an attachment, and interest myself in the welfare of those who have for any time lived with me, though their sentiments and habits may be different from mine.^{xcvi} Sincerely can I say that I have been very solicitous for your reputation and welfare, and when I saw your publication advertised, I told several gentlemen of my acquaintance of different persuasions, that from what I knew of your abilities and application, I presumed it was a production that merited attention. When I was lately at my son's at [illeg.], I was determined, as he had procured it for a book-club there, I believe, on my recommendation, to read it attentively through, though it was in a library at Norwich sometime before to which I belonged but I had not time then to investigate its contents. In the perusal, I was charmed with your language, with many of your sentiments, and with your general ideas of political Justice and liberty. I said, that there were some descriptions, reasonings and ideas, that, for simplicity, elegancy, force and utility, seemed to me to surpass all I had ever read in Tacitus, Polybius, Montesquieu, Barbeyrac, Grotius, Robertson, Price or Priestley.

But I will ingeniously confess to you (and I have you know a right to think for myself) that there

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were several things you advanced concerning moral obligation, gratitude - any public test of marriage, christianity and one or two more subjects, that very much disgusted me. My imagination was raised, not so much that you differed from me, but because I conceived it would damn the book, which contained ^in it^ so many useful and most interesting sentiments. Towards the close (or about the middle) of the second volume, I found something of that kind and I did throw by the book, with some such sentence ^as^ you have heard, but it was from an impulse, I can assure you, arising from the preceding views. Truth I revere though it condemns my own conduct.

I believe christianity, you may not; but as I am convinced that it is the most friendly system to the equality and liberty of mankind that ever was published, I think justice required me to resent any one's a person's suggesting, that I am not as strongly attached to the rights of man, as any one who does not believe it.

In short, Sir, permit me to intimate, that when you publish another edition, I think you can better the arrangement and make the general method more perspicuous; and if you should think proper to change your expressions and leave out certain sentences on some subjects, your performance will be more extensively perused, and it will wonderfully add, I doubt not, to that torrent of political light which is pouring in upon an oppressed world.

Thus much I thought it my duty to suggest to you, but whether you think it worthy your

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attention or not, I shall think I am bound by immutable Justice to wish you well and really to esteem you, without giving way to the least degree of base servility

S. Newton

Thorpe next to Norwich

Dec^r. 4th 1793.^{xcvii}

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He^{xcviii} thinks there is somewhere in the book a passage which agrees with him respecting my refinements & prognostics, & if admitted, would overthrow them - he thinks mind will never so far get the better of matter as I suppose - he is of opinion that the book contains a great quantity of original material & will be uncommonly useful. Reporter *John Hollis*

March 24 - Conversation with Dyson on the road to Wimbledon. Rousseau on les spectacles. Do theatrical productions, such as we find them, do most good or harm? Which is most

powerful, the moral inference fairly deducible from an interesting story, or its tendency to rouse? - instance in Othello - A question similar to that of Rousseau may be put relative to Petronius, Horace, Voltaire, Hume, Sterne. How far is mind generated, not only in persons suitably prepared, but even in the vulgar, by energy of intellectual exhibitions? Was Geneva better than Paris? Was even Sparta better than Athens? You have two things to learn, 1st That these gay & sublime sensations were, personally considered, eminently virtuous. 2. That the tendency & effect of these writings are upon the whole eminently beneficial. Epicurus, Petronius[,]

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Horace teach 1. That temperance, which maintains us constantly in a state adapted to the sublimest exertions. 2. That temperance, which exempts us from being at the mercy of another, of his tyranny or of his temptations.

Wimbledon. Horne Tooke tells me that my book is a bad book, & will do a great deal of harm - Holcroft & Jardine had previously informed me, the first, that my book was written with very good intentions, but to be sure nothing could be so foolish; the second, that Holcroft & I had our heads full of plays & novels, & then thought ourselves philosophers.

Singular character of Captain Gawler, as a blackleg & a sensualist - won \$500 of an evening of Count Zenobio - Curious scene of baiting Zenobio for having broken off his match with Miss Hawke, by Tooke & Gawler.^{xcix}

Pitt kept a Faro table at a gaming house immediately previous to his moving into office.

May 25 Prosecution of Political Justice debated this week

Sep. 21 Tea at Reveley's with Jardine, Sheridan & Mrs Jennings.

Sep. 29. Write to Fox; Smith calls - talk of religion. Dine at Shields^c with Holcroft, Perry, Gray & Gordon.

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The publication of Political Justice was an important era in my father's Mr. Godwin's life

- and one also, it may be said, in the history of the world. We are children of a calmer day - this is the age of facts & practicalities - that was the period of theory & enthusiasm - probably if the mind all freespirted men enquired what was best, ^while the more eager^ endeavoured ^also^ to attain that best - Metaphysics became the basis of schemes of government - & armies were despised when put in the balance with the spirit of Liberty Man had been reigned over long by fear & law^{cii} - he was now to be governed by truth & justice - the only question was how to bring these into operation, & how to secure their entire ascendancy.

Man's The mind of man is of various texture & ages as well as individuals differ in the height to which intellect & virtue are carried. That by a proper ^system of^ government, every man might be raised to the height of the individual excellence of the greatest hero on record, became the conviction of those who looked upon all evil as error & therefore to be capable of being discarded when we should be wise. More than this - if each m human being could be trained to such per excellence as has been known to exist, & therefore may exist again - was there any

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obstacle inherent in humanity to prevent every a still further progress - and was not perfectibility one of the indefeasible attributes of mankind? From the moment that this was granted - & ^that^ it became an axiom that truth adequately illustrated must prevail - it became the theories of Political Justice became as self evident as the laws of fluxions - one conclusion flowed from another the preceding one & all was flawless & compact.

The lovelier virtues of our nature, gratitude & personal attachment were like morning stars to be veiled at once by the mightier radiance of the sun of truth which shewed mutual kindness to be but immutable justice, and love for the individual, a nothing compared on that demanded by the whole family of our fellow creatures.

The state of political excitement, of energetic endeavour to reject evil from the whole world, & bring into it truth & justice only equality happ an equal distribution of happiness, which sprung from the French Revolution, can only account for the enthusiasm in which these tenets were held by those who adopted them. They did not spurn - but they raised far above the mere common charities of life, into general utility & universal benevolence. Reason was at once their polar star & their compass - the

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needle & the north in one - they were never weary of hunting after truth & truth once discovered & announced must secure universal obedience. To ^desire to^ act well is a primal law of our nature; & when once propositions were developed, which shewed the possibility of acting well to

an extent that no religious enthusiast had ever dreamed & of grasping all mankind in the endeavour to confer benefit, it is no wonder that many proselytes hailed the philosophy with rapture. Godwin as an author was peculiarly fitted to announce a doctrine. He was enthusiastic ardent - full of an intellectual fire which gave a promethean spark to the dead letter of mere philosophy. No one could read Political Justice without being carried away by the noble views it develops - the height to which it elevates human nature & the facility with which all impediments are cast away, & the broad path to perfection thrown open & smoothed.

Most men "are a little lower than angels" & therefore incapable of divesting themselves of passion - or of receiving truth impartially in their own case. Experience I believe fully demonstrates - but Godwin disdained the humble humiliating & poltroon idea that if we exerted our

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46)

selves sufficiently we could not get rid of those errors & weaknesses - What was that mind who seeing the truth did not follow it? other reasoning might call it perverted - but it It was an axiom of the new philosophy that no mind could refuse truth, if adequately demonstrated. This infused peculiar ardour into their endeavours to announce their doctrines - it made them ready on all occasions to meet objections - reasonings it made rendered them eager to make proselytes ready to become martyrs - it filled them with hope energy & confidence.

No one person inclined to adopt free principles but read Political Justice with enthusiasm. The language pure & lofty; - giving no rest at all adopting no flowing ornaments; yet vigo yet ^harmonious in its concision^ & dignified in its vigour - a style at once to deli noble & simple; it gave grace to the most crabbed arguments. But the great charm of this work undoubtedly arose from the sincerity of the writer - Every one felt that his heart beat in the Author's heart burned along each line - & that not a word proposition was written brought forward that had not only received the conviction of his understanding as to their its truth, but the desire of his soul to

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act up to them it . (Turn over)

In after times ^Mr^ Godwin shrunk from some of his conclusions & there are several papers written not long after the publication which shewed that when the mere ardour of composition had evaporated, he could perceive some flaws in his system. As to disseminate truth was his object, he did not hesitate at once to acknowledge his errors. The second edition of his work contained emendations - & there are several pape notes among his papers concerning relative to the change of his views on particular points. I select some of these which will at once

shew his readiness to admit his errors, & the fervour with which he regarded that portion of his doctrines which he considered ^to be^ founded on immutable truth. (note 1 Turn over)

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I find written

He had the loftiest conception of the powers of mind, & the most ardent admiration and the most ardent desire to shew that it classed a precedence among the many. Among his papers are these words - they paint the spirit that animated every line he ever wrote

“In aeternitatem pingo - I read that phrase of Guido in one of my vacations at Guestwick ^between 1774 & 1776^, & drank in the whole force of it into my own soul. [“]

(note 1)

In addition to the fragmentary notes here inserted I find a essay of some length on the alterations he desired to make in Political Justice. From its length it is [^sic] adapted^{ciii} for this place - & together with several other essays & dissertations worthy of their Author must be reserved for another publication.^{civ}

(note 2) The doctrines of Political Justice are developed with much perspicacity in Hazlitt’s life of Holcroft Vol. II Page 122^{cv} - I make a few extracts -

“The whole of *modern* philosophy as far as relates to moral conduct is nothing more than a literal, rigid, unaccommodating & systematic interpretation of the text “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”; without making allowances for the weaknesses of Mankind or

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48)

(Note continued)

the degree to which this rule is practicable; & the answer to the question “who is our neighbour” is the same both in the sacred records & in the modern prescription “he who most wants our assistance”. I have mentioned this coincidence (I hope without offence) to shew that the shock occasioned by the extreme & naked manner of representing the doctrine of universal benevolence, did not, & could not, arise from the principle itself, but from the supposition, that this comprehensive & sublime principle was of itself sufficient to regulate the actions of men, without the aid of those common affections & mixed motives, which our habits, passions & vices has taught us to regard as the highest practicable point of virtue. If, however, it be granted, not

only that it is in itself *right* and *best*, but that a point might come, in which it would be *possible* for men to be actuated by the sole principles of truth & justice, then it would seem to follow that the subordinate rules of action might be dispensed with, being superseded by the sense of higher & more important duties.

“In such a state of things, ^modern philosophy teaches that^ wars, bloodshed & national animosities would cease; peace & good will would reign among men; and that the feeling of patriotism, necessary as it now is to preserve the independence of states, & to repel the ravages of of unprincipled & ambitious invaders, would die away of itself with national jealousies & antipathies, with ambition, war, & foreign conquest. Family attachments would also be

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(Note continued)

weakened & lost in the general principle of benevolence in which when every man would be a brother. Exclusive friendships could no longer be formed, because they would interfere with the claims of justice & humanity, & because it would no longer be necessary to keep alive the stream of the affections, by confining them to a particular channel, when they would be continuously refreshed, invigorated, & would overflow with the diffusive soul of mutual philanthropy, & generous undivided sympathy with all men. Another feeling no less necessary at present would then be forgotten - namely, gratitude to benefactors; but not from a selfish, hateful spirit, or hardened sensibility to kind offices; but because all men would in fact be equally ready to promote one another's welfare, that is, equally benefactors & friends to each other, without the motives either of gratitude & self interest - Promises, in like manner, would no longer be binding or necessary; not in order that men might take advantage of this liberty to consult their own whims or convenience, & trick one another, but that by being free from every inferior obligation they might be enabled more steadily & directly to pursue the simple dictates of reason & conscience. False honor, false shame, vanity, emulation &c would upon the same principle give way to other & better motives. It is evident that laws & punishment would cease with the cause that produces them, the commission of crimes. Neither would the distinc

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tions of property subsist in a society, where the interests & feelings of all would be more intimately blended than they are at present among members of the same family, or among the dearest friends. Neither the allurements of ease, or wealth, nor the dread of punishment, would be required to excite to industry, or to prevent fraud & violence, in a state in which all would cheerfully labour for the good of all; & where the most refined reason, & inflexible justice acting on a whole community, would scarcely fail to ensure the same effects, which at present result

from the motives of honesty & honor. The labour, therefore, requisite to produce the necessaries of life, would be equally divided among the members of such a community, & the remainder of their time would be spent in the pursuit of science, in the cultivation of the noblest arts - & in “the most refined social & intellectual enjoyments”.^{cvi}

To finish the picture pourtrayed in Political Justice must be added the belief entertained of the mastery of mind over matter, which in a state of society approaching perfection would be so entire as to vanquish pain - conquer Death, & bring a millennium on earth when our species would be equally free from moral & physical evil.

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Caleb Williams was published in May - it raised the reputation of the author to the highest pitch - those who had no taste for ^political disquisition^, or who did not agree in the tenets of Political Justice, were carried away by the engrossing interest, the elevated feeling and dignified yet purely English style of the novel. Its reputation became European. In this country its influence extended into every grade of society. Those in the lower grades classes saw their cause espoused, & their oppressions forcibly & eloquently delineated - while the higher rank acknowledged & felt the nobleness, sensibility & errors of Falkland with the deepest sympathy. I well remember my father being told from good authority that George the IV, during one of the latter years of his life asked a gentleman in attendance on him None No one who ever read it can forget the first impression they received & this must have been far greater when it first appeared, and was at once a new era in the art of novel writing and an appeal to the noblest sentiments of his heart. Many years after [?Northerly] told my father that Sir William Knighton related that during on one occasion in the latter years of his life, George the IV asked him to recommend a book to amuse him. Caleb Williams was mentioned suggested. “Yes”, said the King, “I well remember how much I was interested in it when I first read it - many years ago”.

In the tour which Godwin took in June^{cvi} to his native county he was every

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121)

where received as a celebrated man. It is true that one of his correspondants^{cvi} told him that his mother & Mrs. Southren considered Caleb Williams inferior to the “Italian Letters” - but a perso an Author accustomed to metropolitan fame was not likely to be disconcerted by such an opinion.

On leaving London, he first stopt at Stowmarket to see his friend Norman with whom he “talked of God, industry[,] drinking & meaning^{cix}” - Thence he proceeded to Norwich One of his warmest welcomers there was Doctor Alderson, who with his young & lively & pretty ^charming^ daughter, afterwards Mrs Opie, shewed him every mark of kindness & hospitality. Mr John Taylor of Norwich was among his chief & most valued friends. The name of Mr. & Mrs. Taylor of Norwich is recorded in the Memoirs of Sir James Macintosh^{cx} with that respect that was deeply felt by all who knew them. Of Mrs. Taylor Macintosh says: “

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Duke reel 13

^{cx}

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122)

but his chief delight was in the society of Mrs John Taylor, a most intelligent, excellent woman. She was the wife of a shopkeeper in that city. Mild & unassuming, quiet & meek, sitting amidst her large family, useful with her needle & domestic occupations, but always assisting, by her great knowledge, the advancement of kind & dignified sentiment & conduct. Manly virtue & feminine gentleness were in her united with such attractive manners, that she was universally loved & respected. ‘In high thoughts & gentle deeds’ she greatly resembled the admirable Lucy Hutchinson, and in troubled times would have been equally distinguished for firmness in what she thought right.

Her husband deserved praise as high & enthusiastic. An Unitarian in religious creed he was liberal in his opinions & generous to a very remarkable extent. This admirable pair shed lustre over their sect in their native town & were ^warmly^ loved & deeply respected by all who knew them.

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political reaction

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124)

Her husband deserved praise as high & enthusiastic - an Unitarian in creed he was liberal in his opinions, & generous to a very singular extent.

[blank]

Merry was perhaps the favourite friend of Godwin in this excursion.^{cxii} Like all naturally reserved people, he was delighted to meet with unreserve, & that genial flow of spirits, which raises every one around to its own level - After about a fortnight spent among these kind & valued friends Godwin returned to London -

Not long after his return he received the following letter from Dr Parr entreating a visit soliciting him.^{cxiii} It is probable that his acquaintance with Parr began on the score of Gerrald^{cxiv}, whom they both loved - but it was the doctor, who solicited for an introduction, & was eager to cultivate an intimacy with the Author of Political Justice.^{cxv}

.....

c.606/5

”””

119)

their talents. His pen would have been ready for them - nay his voice. Sheridan had once said to him “You ought to be in Parliament” - the observation made a deep impression - probably it seized for a time his ambition. But Godwin wanted the arts of [?pursuit] and some years afterwards, he seemed still to reflect upon them, as I find the following note among his papers.

“I ought to be in Parliament.^{cxvi}

“My principles of gradual improvement are particularly congenial to such a situation.

“It is probable that in the next six years, circumstances may occur, in which my talents, such as they are, might be of use.

“I am now^{cxvii} forty years of age: the next six years will be six of the most vigorous years of my life.

“I would be an^{cxviii} infrequent speaker.

“I would adhere to no party.

“I would vote for no proposition that I did not wish to see carried.

“I would be the Author^{cxix} of motions; thus endeavouring to call public attention to salutary ideas.

“I ought to be brought in without expence.

”””

120)

“The present moment is a crisis, greatly tending to determine whether my destination shall be for active or contemplative life.

“This is a situation that would excite [sic]^{cxx} envy and satire; it would be incumbent by splendour & activity of talent to disperse the cloud.

“If I were elected into parliament, this would be ^at first^ the source of humiliation. I should be the last of gentlemen, who am now one of the first of plebeians; it must be the task of great energies to enable me to look erect in this situation.

“It is better, in a personal view, that the man should appear always greater than his situation rather than the situation should appear greater than the man.”

There is something in this paper that looks rather like consoling himself for not being in parliament than in exciting himself to undertake the responsibility. In these days certainly Godwin’s birth would not place him last on the benches of the Commons - & even when we recollect that Sheridan was the son of a Teacher of Elocution, this mark of modesty appears somewhat overcharged. The doubt as to his fitness existing in his own mind perhaps is a proof of unfitness - a person fitter for active life cannot subside into the contemplative.

.....

c.606/4

”””

[41v]

(Johnstone)

Dr Parr’s Life & Correspondance^{cxxi} - Hicks Holcroft’s Life^{cxxii}

....

”””

[unnumbered]^{cxxiii}

Dr Parr

Godwin wrote a letter of exaltation to Dr Parr on the acquittal of Hardy, dated “this ever-memorable & ever-honoured fifth day of Nov. 1794 [“^{cxxiv}

The Spital sermon^{cxxv} brought forth a reply from Mr Godwin. He had visited Hatton in Oct 1794 & professed that he recollected with singular satisfaction the happiness he enjoyed in Dr Parr’s conversation & company, & that he never spent a week with higher personal pleasure. He afterwards spent several days at Hatton in 1795 with as much satisfaction. They corresponded & it does not appear that the correspondence was broken off till Dec. 1799. In that month a letter supposed by Mr Godwin to be important remained unanswered - & there is no other letter till April 24.1800.

John Johnstone M.D.

Life of Parr Vol I Chap XII

.....

c.607/6

cxxvi

”””

It is much to be regretted that, instead of a moral & religious disquisition, on the subject of which it professes to teach treat, the preacher should have allowed his discourse to assume the form of a personal attack, as already noticed, on a very distinguished writer & friend; & still more to be regretted is the want of fairness & candour, so evident, in claiming vehemently & acrimoniously, against the errors of a system, even after those words had been publicly acknowledged & abjured. It is true, that ingenuous confession, which did so much honour to the author of “Political Justice”, is inserted, by Dr Parr, among “the notes”, accompanied with its due commendation, in the following words: - “I will not insult the foregoing observations with the name concessions. I am more disposed to consider them as modifications, suggested by maturer reflection, & expressed with some degree of contrition, that they had neither occurred to the writer, nor had been conveyed to the reader, before.”

But even these commendatory expressions, almost concealed & lost as they are amidst a vast body of notes, could hardly be considered as a sufficient reparation for the injury done by the bitter invectives scattered through a discourse, which was delivered to a crowded audience from the pulpit, & afterwards to the world from the press. Such a procedure, it must be owned, wears too much the air of a private apology for a public affront. If acknowledged error must be proclaimed aloud, & censured with unsparing severity, justice surely demands that the rare merit of the frank & explicit acknowledgement should be, at least, as openly announced & applauded.

.....

Duke reel 5^{cxxvii}

”””

Dear Sir

I was very desirous to see you. I have called twice for that purpose. Saturday, unfortunately, you were on the point of going out, today you slept in the country.

If I had seen you, I designed to ask you whether you had received a letter from me, written in December last? I meant to have listened to know, whether intention or simple forgetfulness had caused it to remain unanswered. It did not appear to me an ordinary letter, but one the author of which was entitled to a reply.

This subject dismissed, I should then have mentioned your sermon of Easter Tuesday.^{cxxviii} I spoke in the letter above referred to of Mackintosh’s lectures, in which that gentleman, without the manliness of mentioning me, takes occasion three times a week to represent me to an audience of an hundred persons, as a wretch unworthy to live. Your sermon, I learn from all hands, was on the same subject, handled, I take it for granted from what I know of your character, in a very different spirit. I am sorry for this. Since Mackintosh’s lectures it has become a sort of fashion with a large party, to join in the cry against me. It is the part, I conceive, of original genius, to give the tone to others rather than to join a pack after it has already become loud & numerous.

These subjects were better adapted for a conversation than a letter; & I much wish they had been so treated. Every difference of judgment is not the proper subject topic for a grand complaint.

If however both my letter & my visits have passed unnoticed, I am entitled to conclude that you have altered your mind respecting me. In that case, I should be glad if you would answer to your own satisfaction, what crime I am chargeable with, now in 1800, of which I had not been guilty in 1794, when with so much kindness & zeal you sought my acquaintance.

I am, Dear Sir,

yours with the warmest regard,

W. Godwin

29,

Polygon, Somers Town

near London, April 24 1800

(not near Islington)

.....

end chapter 2: *politics*

document *Political Herald

c.607/2^{cxxix}

”””

My Lord,

The editor of the P HER and R,^{cxxx} who has the honour to address you, is desirous of adorning his publication with a narrative of your Lordship's administration in the East Indies. You, my Lord, are perfectly sensible how difficult it must be to procure perfect & complete materials for the history of so distant & so recent transactions.

[...] I am far from being willing to expose myself to the reputation of a sycophant or a flatterer; but when from the leading features of the conduct of a public character I have been led to form an honourable opinion of him, I am not afraid of being induced to alter that opinion in consequence of an examination of the minuter parts of his story.

If it suited your Lordship's convenience to furnish me with any kind of materials which have not yet come before the public eye it would confer upon me a lasting obligation

.....

***document Robinson**

b.227/2(b) [Godwin to George Robinson]

^{cxxx}
”””

Sir

[...] your not advancing the money [...] at the time of Christmas [...] just the most unpleasant period in the world to make me feel my disappointment -

Mr John Robinson^{cxxxii} did me the favour of mentioning to me that the Annual Register^{cxxxiii} was somewhat behindhand. This, sir, is more in appearance than in reality. The preparations I have made are great. A pupil, whom I constantly attend for the greater part of the year left town last week; so that the ensuing two months will be almost solely employed in your service. [...]The Political Herald avaraging [sic] it upon the six months ... This together with the Annual Register [...] the Peerage which I believed would have been in great forwardness by this time [...]

.....

***document Paine a**

b.227/6(b)^{cxxxiv} [Godwin to Tom Paine]

....

Sir,

I was yesterday at my own request introduced to you by Mr B. Hollis; though but, in the hurry & confusion of a numerous meeting, I had not the opportunity of unburthening my mind of saying something ^which^ I have long wished to say to you in person. I have long wished for an occasion of expressing to you my feeling of the high obligation you have conferred upon Britain and mankind by your late publication ^of the Rights of Man.^ I believe few persons men have a more ardent sense of that obligation than myself; & I conceive that it is a duty incumbent upon persons so feeling especially to contribute their part, in applauding such ^come forward with the most direct applause of your^ efforts.

I regard you, sir, as having been the apostle unalterable champion of liberty in America, in England & in France, from the purest views of promoting the to the happiness and the virtue & happiness of mankind. I have devoted my life to these glorious purposes, & am in at this moment employed upon a composition embracing the whole doctrine of politics, in which I shall endeavour to convince my countrymen of the mischiefs of monarchical government, & to detect ^of certain^ other abuses of equal magnitude not less injurious to society. I believe that a cordial & unreserved intercourse between men employed in the same great purposes, is of the utmost

....

service to their own minds, & to their cause. I have therefore thought proper to break through all ceremonies in thus soliciting the advantage of a personal acquaintance; & if you entertain the same opinion, you will, I am confident, favour me with an interview either at my apartments or at any other place you will please to appoint.

I am, sir, already the ardent friend of your views, your principles & your mind

W.G.

.....

document Paine b

b.227/2(b)^{cxxxv}

....

[r]

P.S. I should be happy in the favour of your company to dinner with two or three friends on ___ if agreeable. I need not desire a man of Paine's ^your^ energy of/mind to accept or slight this invitation/as he pleases. ^you shall feel inclined^. I am fully certain that, while you are engaged in the great cause which I so ardently love, it will be impossible for any mistake ^no mistake that you may fall into respecting me^ to effect an alteration in my ^will be able to alter the^ esteem & veneration ^I entertain^ for you. I disdained the petty ceremonies of society in soliciting your acquaintance ^{cxxxvi} because I knew your merit. It was impossible you should know me so well, & I am contented to wait with patience, ^confident^ certain that the time will come when you will acknowlege [sic] the kindred I claim.

I am, D. S., your affec. friend

(Paine,) Holcroft, Nicholson, (Canning, Webb,)
Fawcet, Barry__ Crosdil, Lister (Ja-
cob,) Fawcet, Romilly Lister

....

”””

[v]

Holcroft

Nicholson

Godwin

Mackintosh

J. Hunter

H. Tooke

Williams

Paine

Priestley

Cooper

Sharpe

Crawford

Barlow

Sharpe ^Jacob^

Canning

.....

***document Dr Priestley**

Duke reel 8^{cxxxvii}

”””

Supplement to Journal

1793

Mar. 23

Dr Priestley says my book contains a vast extent of ability - monarchy & aristocracy to be sure were never so painted before - he agrees with me respecting gratitude & contracts absolutely considered, but thinks the principles too refined for practice - he felt uncommon approbation of my investigation of the first principles of government, which were never so well explained before - he admits fully my first principle of the omnipotence of instruction, & that all vice is error - he admits all my principles, but cannot follow them into all my conclusions - he agrees with me respecting self-love, & is particularly delighted with the last paragraph, B IV. Ch. VIII; & the last sentence of a paragraph, p. 359 - he thinks there is somewhere in the book a passage which agrees with him respecting my refinements & prognostics, &, if admitted, would overthrow them - he thinks mind will never so far get the better of matter as I suppose - he is

”””

of opinion that the book contains a great quantity of original thinking, & will be uncommonly useful
reporter, John Hollis

[...]

.....

***document Newton 1793^{cxxxviii}**

Duke reel 5

[Rev. Samuel Newton to Godwin]

''''

That Goliath of critical and moral censure, Johnson, would perhaps have thought me a most seditious and dangerous sectary for rejecting all establishments of religion and for seriously ridiculing every order of priests constituted by the reigning powers. Hume would have deemed me a servile, implicit, narrow soul for believing a religion which was embraced by ^my^ parents, though, I think, I have as fairly examined it as any man in the Island. but I laugh at his conceit and pity his prejudices, guessing from what I know of his life how his associations of ideas were formed; for as a philosopher pretending to the most accurate and deep investigation , he should have accounted for this Phaenomenon, how the books containing the Hebrew and Christian systems came to be published? If they were forgeries, who were their authors and what their motives and ends in publishing such singular schemes, so different from all the fine conceptions and sublime notions of all politicians and philosophers that ever existed? I can resolve questions of this sort with respect to the Koran and every other pretended revelation from God, but I never saw this done with respect to the Bible.

Our associations of thought and habits of mind are so totally different, that it is no wonder we should determine very oppositely one to the other on many subjects; and therefore you will not be surprised, if I should affirm, as I do with the greatest sincerity. The evidence for the being of a God from analogy or arguing from the effect to the cause, and of a future state from our desires and the supposed justice of the divine government, does not strike my mind so forcibly, nor afford it so much satisfaction as that which it is impressed with for the undoubted truth of the hebrew and christian religions.

.....

***document Dr Parr**

b.227/2(a)^{cxxxix}

”””

It is my will that , in any future editions of the Enquiry concerning Political Justice, my pamphlet in answer to Dr Parr,^{cxl} &c, be annexed to the work, in place immediately following the prefaces to the different editions; not so much to perpetuate the fugitive & obscure controversies that ^which^ have been excited on the subject, as because it contains certain essential explanations & elucidations with respect to the work itself. Let the title then stand “Defence of the Enquiry concerning Political Justice.” - The index, in consequence of this arrangement, should be removed from the place it at present occupies, & thrown to the end of the work.

June 8, 1801

.....

***document Sir James Mackintosh**

c.607/6^{cxli}

”””

“If I committed any fault which approaches to immorality, I think it was towards Mr Godwin. I condemn myself for contributing to any clamour against philosophical speculations; & I allow that, both from his talents & character, he was entitled to be treated with respect. Better men than I am, have still more wronged their antagonists in controversy, on subjects, & at times in which they might easily have been dispassionate, & without the temptation & excuse of popular harangues. But I do not seek shelter from their example. I acknowledge my fault; & if I had not been withheld by blind usage, from listening to the voice of my own reason, I should long ago have made the acknowledgment to Mr Godwin from whom I have no wish that it should now be concealed.

Bombay. December 9th 1804

.....

For full citations see Bibliography.

ⁱc.606/1: [112v] is MWS transcription of a set of chapter headings for a sixth chapter based on Godwin's 'Autobiographical fragments' (MP 41-51), for the years 1785 to 1788. Another such set in Duke reel 2: 13), contains headings of a 'Chapter II'. See *1: literature. Summary of 1789* is cancelled, and this reflects the fact that the 'brief annals' or 'summaries' in Godwin's hand in b.226/2 do not include a fragment for 1789. MWS transcription 'Summary of 1788' (MP 47-8) is c.606/2: 122). It may be an accident that 'Autobiographical fragments' for the years of high political tension 1789, 1793, and 1794, are those missing from the Bodleian folders.

ⁱⁱIn b.229/8, Godwin's memorandum on his plans to stand for Parliament, is dated 1796 by St Clair (C139-40). See below, MWS script c.606/5: 119): 'I ought to be in Parliament'.

ⁱⁱⁱThe end of the year 1784, when Godwin commenced as author of the British and Foreign History section of *New Annual Register for 1783*. Philp (MP 45), dates this paragraph 1783/4 in Godwin's 'Autobiographical fragments', because the following entry in b.226/2 is for 1785, and notes: '*The New Annual Register* (1781-1824), Whig periodical founded by Andrew Kippis, published by G. G. and J. Robinson' (MP 45-6).

^{iv}In 'Autobiographical fragments' for 1785, Godwin writes: '--in this year also the party of Mr Fox ... conceived the plan of a periodical work, which appeared first in the middle of this year, entitled the Political Herald, of which Dr Gilbert Stuart was the editor, and Dr William Thomson, myself, and Mr John Logan, the poet, were the regular contributors' (MP 46). In 'Autobiographical fragments' for 1786, Godwin writes: '--it was about this time that Dr Gilbert Stuart died; and on that occasion I addressed a letter to Mr Sheridan, who had hitherto been the mediator between the party of Mr Fox and the publishers of the Political Herald, requesting that I might be chosen to succeed Dr Stuart in the capacity of editor'. The entry for 1786 ends, 'The Political Herald expired at the end of this year' (MP 46).

^vHazlitt's *Memoirs of Holcroft* (Howe, 142), records that in 1793-4, The Crown & Anchor in the Strand was the venue at which both the Society for Constitutional Information, of which Holcroft was a leading member, met downstairs, and the John Reeves Association for Preserving Liberty and Property against Levellers and Republicans, met upstairs. Godwin's letter directed to John Reeves signed 'Mucius', published in *Morning Chronicle*, 8 February

1793, in Mark Philp ed. (Mph 1993, 16-19).

^{vi}c.606/1: 98), second paragraph is omitted here. See this page in full, in *I: literature*.

^{vii}‘The anecdote ... mentioned’ in ‘Autobiographical fragments’ for 1787, where Godwin writes: ‘In the beginning of this year I had repeated interviews with Mr Sheridan on the subject of reviving the Political Herald--he proposed that I should receive a regular stipend from the funds set apart by the noblemen and others, adherents to the party of Mr Fox, for political purposes; but this I declined, resolving to limit my pecuniary advantages to the fair profits of the pamphlet. Mr Sheridan also proposed introducing me to the Duke of Portland, but this never took place’ (MP 46-7). Godwin continues, that in 1787 Sheridan introduced him to ‘Mr Grey (now earl Grey)’, and ‘Mr Canning’, ‘--I had always been a most ardent admirer of the talents and system of life of Mr Burke, and I certainly considered the connection I had formed as opening to me something of a similar prospect--but all came to nothing, and after the summer of this year I heard no more of Mr Sheridan’ (MP 47). Godwin’s references to ‘the party of Mr Fox’ distance him from any personal acquaintance with Charles James Fox. In her commentary MWS elaborates on Godwin’s personal reaction to Sheridan’s neglect of him, in spite of cancelling the word ‘personal’ in her chapter summary of this section. Elsewhere in MWS script, Godwin’s autobiographical declaration ‘I had always been a most ardent admirer of the talents and system of life of Mr Burke’, is cited with emphasis.

^{viii}Cf. MWS c.606/2: 122), transcription of Godwin’s ‘Autobiographical fragment’ for 1788 (MP 48).

^{ix}In his ‘Autobiographical fragment’ for 1783, Godwin writes, ‘a further advantage I possessed at this time, but which I did not abuse, was the acquaintance of Mr Timothy Hollis of Great Ormond Street, who gave a public dinner twice a week, and at whose house I met several respectable people, but above all Mr Barry, the painter, whose conversation afforded me extreme delight, and with whom I became exceedingly intimate: for the acquaintance of Mr Timothy Hollis I was indebted to Mr John Hollis, who was one of my hearers in my congregation at Beaconsfield’ (MP 45). MWS comments on Godwin’s friendship with James Barry, in c.606/1. See *I: literature*. MWS comments on Godwin’s acquaintance with Timothy, John, and Thomas Brand Hollis, in c.532/8. See 5: *women*.

^xPhilp gives ‘Mr [Martin] Wodhull’ (MP 47, and note g). MWS transcription is hard to read, may be ‘Wodfall’ or ‘Woodfall’. Godwin lists a William Woodfall among his acquaintances in 1786 (MP 46, and note e). St Clair (C 38) notes ‘Woodfal’, on a list of ‘*desiderati*’, i.e. people that Godwin desired to meet, in 1786. William Woodfall ‘was on the staff of *The Morning Chronicle* [in 1784]’, cited in *The Letters of Richard Cumberland*, ed. R. Dircks (New York, 1988), 243, n22.

^{xi} Cf.(above) c.606/: [112v], where ‘Literary parties - Thomas Holcroft’ is one of MWS headings for ‘Chapter VI’. These headings are selected from Godwin’s ‘Autobiographical fragment’ for 1786, where Godwin writes, ‘--in this year I also became a regular member of the literary parties of Mr Robinson of Paternoster Row, and by this means made the acquaintance of Mr Archibald Hamilton, Murphy, Dr Joseph White of Oxford, Thomas Warton, Holcroft, Shield the musical composer, Nicholson the natural philosopher, Perry and William Woodfall, newspaper editors, Heath the engraver, etc, etc. ‘ (MP 46, and note e).

^{xii}MWS turns for material to the journal of 1789, in the absence of a ‘summary’ for 1789 among the ‘brief annals’. See above, my note to c.606/1: [112v].

^{xiii}George Robinson, senior partner in the firm G. G. and J. Robinson, publishers of *Political Herald, New Annual Register*, and later of Godwin’s *Enquiry concerning Political Justice* (1793). *document Robinson.

^{xiv}The sentence in parenthesis is MWS comment on what she is transcribing from Godwin’s journal.

^{xv}Godwin’s fellow Revolution Society members dining on Guy Fawkes Day 1789.

^{xvi}Samuel Rogers, poet and prominent liberal, was a regular correspondent of Mary Shelley after her return from Italy in 1823.

^{xvii}John Horne Tooke, author, philologist and political activist, founder of the Society for Constitutional Information. See 3: *law*.

^{xviii}Godwin’s journal entries for 8 to 16 November 1789 refer to the quarrel between Holcroft and his son William, ending with the young man’s suicide at Deal, on board the *Fame*, bound for the West-Indies. See *Tragical consequences; or, a disaster at Deal: being an unpublished letter of William Godwin ... Wed. 18 Nov. 1789*, ed. Edmund Blunden (London, 1931).

^{xix}Among the company at Helen Maria Williams’s on 11 Dec. 1789, Godwin records Williams’s friend and fellow author, Dr John Moore, author of *Journal of a Residence in France ... 1792* (Dublin: J. Moore, 1793). Cf. ‘Autobiographical fragment’ for 1787 (MP 47, note e), where Godwin writes, ‘--towards the end of the year I was introduced by the desire of Helen Maria Williams to the coterie of that lady, where I met occasionally Dr Moore ... ‘.

^{xx}Hazlitt writes that William, Holcroft’s ‘only son, and favourite child’, shot himself rather than face his father, from whom he had stolen £40 (Howe 124-126).

^{xxi}The estrangement between Holcroft and Godwin in autumn 1804 and spring 1805, lasting until Holcroft’s final illness in 1809, is linked by MWS to Holcroft’s ‘unmitigated severity’ with his son. Holcroft’s belief that he was taken as a model for the character of a harsh father, Mr Scarborough, in Godwin’s novel of 1805, *Fleetwood; or the*

New Man of Feeling, has been canvassed as a cause of their estrangement. The coincidence of the surname Scarborough, with the English channel ports Gravesend and Deal, might have been an added irritant to Holcroft's sensitivities.

^{xxii}In c.606/1 [unnumbered], MWS is working from Godwin's journal, and his 'Autobiographical fragment' of 1790 (MP 48), transcribed by MWS in c.606/1: 150). See *1: literature*.

^{xxiii}Charles, Third Earl Stanhope, founder of the Revolution Society in 1788, delivered this testimonial to Godwin at the Bastille Day anniversary dinner 14 July 1790 (C44-5). MWS converts the Paris 'Festival of Federation', on 14 July 1790, celebrated in Helen Maria Williams's December 1790 first edition of *Letters from France*, to 'the day when the King of France submitted to the National Assembly', and thus elides notice of the celebrations of the first anniversary of the fall of the Bastille.

^{xxiv}'H(olcroft)' is MWS parenthesis added to Godwin's journal entry 'H'. I have not identified the speaker of this testimonial to Godwin.

^{xxv}St Clair traces nine London lodgings for Godwin between 1783 and 1788, when Tom Cooper came to live with him, and his move after Tom Cooper's departure to Chalton Street 'to devote himself unremittingly to his philosophical work' (C59). I have not located 'Titchfield Street' in St Clair, but Joseph Gerrald's letter to Godwin from Newgate Prison (b.214/8) makes a joke about the 'Lalage of Titchfield'. See *3: law*.

^{xxvi}Godwin's journal for 22 Feb 1791 noting the "appear[ance]" of 'a few printed copies' of Tom Paine's *The Rights of Man, being an Answer to Mr Burke's Attack on the French Revolution*, Pt. i, from Joseph Johnson's press (C48). Johnson halted distribution, and *The Rights of Man*, Pt. i, was published by Jordan, unexpurgated, and 'went on sale on 13 March [1791]' (C49). The journal for Sunday 27 Feb. notes that Godwin called at Paine's house. But Paine was from home on this occasion (C48).

^{xxvii}Open letter from Godwin to Richard Brinsley Sheridan, MP, on Friday 29 Apr. 1791. (MWS partial transcription in c.606/1, below).

^{xxviii}See below, my note to Fox's and Burke's debates on the Quebec Bill.

^{xxix}This journal reference to 'a believer in spiritual intercourses' may have prompted the apocryphal anecdote that William Blake once lent Godwin £40.

^{xxx}In round brackets, Godwin jots down the names of his informants.

^{xxxi}George Dyson, whom Godwin named as one of his 'four principal oral instructors'. See *1: literature*.

^{xxxii}In transcribing, Mary Shelley has regularised the spelling of her mother's family name. Godwin's journal entry

gives it as ‘Wolstencraft’.

^{xxxiii}In Chapter 6, *Memoirs of the Author of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1798), Godwin gives a detailed account of this 13 November 1791 first meeting with Mary Wollstonecraft. See 5: *women*.

^{xxxiv}Tom Cooper, who had left Godwin’s house earlier this year to commence his career on the stage. See 4: *pedagogy*.

^{xxxv}Journal entry of Saturday 17 December 1791 notes that Godwin is reading volume 5 of Holcroft’s *Anna St Ives* (7 vols.; London, Shepperson and Reynolds, 1792), in MS or prepublication copy. See 1: *literature*

^{xxxvi}Godwin revised *An Enquiry concerning Political Justice* (London, Robinson, 1793), in 1795, again in 1797, and further revised it in manuscript as late as 1832. He also wrote prefaces and authorial notes to other publications, announcing his revised and retracted opinions since 1793.

^{xxxvii}‘Political Principles’ (elsewhere ‘P. P.’), the working title of *An Enquiry concerning Political Justice*.

^{xxxviii}MWS transcriptions in c.606/1 on 1835 watermark paper from Godwin’s ‘Autobiographical fragments’, 1790, 1791, 1792, is the sole extant script (MP 48-49).

^{xxxix}William Nicholson, scientist, who was conducting electrical experiments with Holcroft in the 1790s. See 5: *women*.

^{xl}John Horne Tooke was charged with high treason with Thomas Hardy, Thomas Holcroft and others, and acquitted on 22 Nov. 1794. He published selections of *Winged Words [Epea-Pteroen]; or, The Diversions of Purley*, between 1786 and 1805. Godwin’s assertion that Tooke’s ‘etymological conversations ... came too late’ to influence him confines that influence to their first face-to-face meeting at the end of 1792 when *Political Justice* was about to go to press.

^{xli}MWS began writing her biography of Godwin on 1835 watermark paper with this transcription from his ‘Autobiographical fragments’ for 1791 (MP 48-9). See 1: *literature*.

^{xlii}c.606/1: 1), second paragraph is omitted here. See in full in 1: *literature*.

^{xliii}Philp (Mph 1993, 3) notes a ‘partial version’ of a letter ‘to a leader of the opposition’ and publishes the ‘full version’ from c.526. MWS partial transcription in c.606/2 corresponds to separate sections of the full version in Philp (MPh 1993, 7, 8, 9-10).

^{xliv}Edmund Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France and on the proceedings in certain societies in London relative to that event*, published in Nov. 1790. Mary Wollstonecraft’s *A Vindication of the Rights of Men* (Dec. 1790), and Tom Paine’s *The Rights of Man*, Pts. i and ii (1791-92), were among published replies.

^{xlv}MWS makes ‘Toryism’ synonymous with reaction, and the Tory party synonymous with party as such. A loose coalition among ‘partizans of Liberty’ is a fairly accurate label for 1790s opposition politics.

^{xlvi}In 1791 Joseph Priestley’s house and laboratory in Birmingham were attacked and destroyed by a church-and-king mob. In b.227/2(b), draft letter from Godwin [to Priestley], laid paper, n.d., lacks signature. Godwin begins, ‘Revd. Sir/the person who now does himself the honour to address you is the author of the article in the English Review relative to your vindication of H. C.’ He concludes, ‘I have only to add, that though I have been contented to appear openly to Dr Priestley, it is my earnest desire to remain concealed from the rest of mankind. I have the honour to be, Revd. Sir, your sincere admirer, & (as a Socinian) your obliged humble servt.’. St Clair (C35, and note 3) dates this letter February 1785, after Godwin’s anonymous review of Priestley’s *History of the Corruptions of Christianity* had appeared in the liberal journal, *English Review*, and before Priestley had been forced to leave Birmingham and move to London, where he and Godwin moved in the same circles until Priestley emigrated to Pennsylvania in 1794.

^{xlvii}In 1791, Dodsley, the publisher of Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, and *The Annual Register*, brought out five editions of Burke’s *Letter from Mr Burke, to a Member of the National Assembly, in answer to some objections to his book on French affairs*. This too provoked ‘Strictures’ (Charles Piggott, 1791), ‘Remarks’ (Capel Lofft, 1791), and a ‘Letter’ (Lally Tollendal, 1792).

^{xlviii}Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France* was attacked by Wollstonecraft in *Vindication of the Rights of Men*, for its ‘prejudices’, and praised by Coleridge in 1832 for its ‘softer feelings’. MWS conflates these adverse opinions, to make Godwin both an admirer of Paine and a defender of Burke.

^{xlix}MWS presumably refers to *Rights of Man*, Part i. When Part ii came out, Paine was arraigned *in absentia* for libel upon the Crown, Government, and Bill of Rights, on 18 Dec. 1792 (*Chadwyck-Healey British Trials*, i, Trial 112).

^lBurke retorted against the allegation that he corruptly took a pension, in *A Letter from the Rt. Hon. Edmund Burke to a Noble Lord, on the attacks made upon him and his pension, in the House of Lords, by the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale* (1796). The Earl of Lauderdale was inviting Godwin and Wollstonecraft to his ‘most select parties’ in 1796, as Godwin records in his autobiographical fragments (MP 51).

^{li}b.227/6(b): 8) and 9), drafts in Godwin hand, single torn quarto sheet, laid paper, written r and v, undated, show MWS numbering in sequence with MWS script c.606/2, that has joined parts of two letters, probably those designated ‘first ‘ and ‘second’ by St Clair, who sources both to Dep. b.227/6. MWS page 8) is the first letter, described by St Clair as ‘probably’ written on the occasion when Godwin noted in his journal “borrowed Paine”,

that is, on 2 March 1791, and addressed ‘probably to Paine but possibly to Holcroft or Fenwick’ (C48 and n8). But MWS c.606/2: 7) (above) rules out Paine as addressee, ‘he wrote hastily to some friend in eager encomium on his [Paine’s] work’. MWS numbered page 9) begins ‘The pamphlet has exceeded my expectations’, and is from a second letter from Godwin to Paine, according to St Clair, who writes (C49 and n10): ‘Godwin’s own view is given in a second letter to Paine, probably soon after the Jordan version [of *Rights of Man* Pt. i, following Johnson’s decision not to sell the 1st ed.] first went on sale on 13 March [1791]’.

^{lii}Page 10), presumably a third page of Godwin’s letter, is lacking in the MWS numbered sequence 1) to 12). Parts of c.606/2: 5) and b.227/2(b): 9) are repeated in MWS hand on c.606/2: 11) and [11v]. Another version of MWS comments in c.532/8, pages 43) through 50) (below).

^{liii}MWS filters Godwin’s political ideas through Hazlitt’s *Memoirs of Holcroft*. Hazlitt had written of Holcroft in 1792 that ‘he believed that truth had a natural superiority over error, if it could only be heard; that if once discovered, it must, being left to itself, soon spread and triumph; ... [I]t seemed as if the present was the era of moral and political improvement, and that as bold discoveries and as large advances towards perfection would shortly be made in these, as had already been made in other subjects’ (Howe 132-3). Cf. MWS script c.532/8 (below): ‘The doctrines of Political Justice are developed with much perspicacity in Hazlitt’s life of Holcroft’.

^{liv}This is confirmed by Paul (CKP i 69): ‘Thomas Paine, whose acquaintance Godwin had made at the house of Mr Brand Hollis’. Full draft of Godwin’s letter to Paine in b.227/6(b). *document Paine a. In b.227/2(b), draft headed ‘P. S.’, Godwin hand, unnumbered, may be a postscript to this letter in b.227/6(b), now separated from it. *document Paine b.

^{lv}Duke reel 13, transcription in MWS hand of unsigned undated note [from Thomas Holcroft to Godwin]. Double quotation marks placed at beginning only. St Clair (C48-9 and n9) quotes the original MS note and locates it in b.215/6.

^{lvi}Word after ‘and’ illegible in microfilm. St Clair (C48) gives ‘and J. S. Jordan’, the name of the ‘bolder’ publisher who brought out Paine’s pamphlet without excisions.

^{lvii}b.227/2 (a), draft of unsigned letter from Godwin [to Richard Brinsley Sheridan, MP], no page numbers, three quarto folds, laid paper, decorative undated watermark. Full version (in c.526) published for the first time in Mark Philp ed., William Godwin, *Political and Philosophical Writings*, ii (Mph 1993, 7-11).

^{lviii}In March 1791 Charles James Fox’s speeches in Opposition in the House of Commons opposed the Pitt administration’s policy against Catherine the Great in the Russo-Turkish war. And in April 1791 Fox again led the

opposition when the government introduced the Quebec Bill, which proposed a hereditary nobility and episcopal representation in an upper house legislature for Canada. Fox's support for the American and French revolutions led to an estrangement between himself and Edmund Burke, beginning in April 1791 and culminating on 6 May 1792. (My dates from *DNB* (1922) iii, 359, 'Burke, Edmund'; viii, 545-7, 'Fox, Charles James'; both signed W[illiam] H[unt]). At the time when Godwin (and Holcroft) wrote to Sheridan (and Fox), rifts between leading members of the loose Whig coalition of oppositionists were being canvassed by the writers of Burke's *Annual Register for 1791*. Cf. Godwin's journal entry for F[riday] 29 April 1791 (above, c.606/1: 13). Godwin's letter tests the limits of Sheridan and Fox's support of the French Revolution and where they differ in their willingness to oppose Burke as well as Pitt. It is not clear how this letter to Sheridan could also have been sent to Fox, as Philp maintains (Mph 1993, 3), unless in amended form.

^{lix}Round brackets in pencil on script.

^{lx}St Clair writes that in 1779, when Godwin first read a clandestine copy of the *philosophe* Baron d'Holbach's *Le Système de la Nature*, the author was supposed to be a certain 'M. Mirabaud' (C14). In this b.227/2(a) copy of the April 1791 letter, the name 'Mirabaud' is cancelled and 'the writer' substituted, possibly at a later date, with the heading 'from a well known literary character'. The cancelled word 'Mirabaud' does not appear in Philp's edition of the 1791 letter from c.526 (Mph 1993, 8).

^{lxi}'Tulli' was standard anglicised form of the name Marcus Tullius Cicero, one of four 'just' statesmen and lawgivers in this typical Godwin list.

^{lxii}Godwin alters 'twelve' years to 'six', calculating the period from the Treaty of Paris 1783 to the Fall of the Bastille 1789.

^{lxiii}Godwin pays a backhanded compliment to Montesquieu's treatise *Esprit des Lois* (1748), which English readers associated with French absolutist principles of governance. Cf. Godwin's statement (c.606/1: 2) of dissatisfaction with Montesquieu, and 'desire of supplying a less faulty work' by writing *Political Justice*. See *I: literature*.

^{lxiv}Sentence: 'Happy would it be ... whole of the mischief', enclosed in square brackets in pencil on MS.

^{lxv}Sentence: 'Where there is no king ... people at large', enclosed in square brackets in pencil on MS.

^{lxvi}Philp (MPh 1993, 11) gives: '- of tithes Mr Fox has given his opinion -'.

^{lxvii}Philp writes that Article 17 of the Thirty-Nine Articles in the Church of England's *Book of Common Prayer* 'contained an ambiguous discussion of predestination, the Calvinist belief that certain persons are infallibly guided to eternal salvation' (MPh 1993, 11, note a). Godwin's early Calvinist training in the dogmas of election and

justification underwent several metamorphoses in his novels, notably in *Mandeville: A Tale of the Seventeenth Century in England* (1817).

^{lxxviii} Brackets in pencil on script.

^{lxxix} Alexander Jardine, author of *Letters from Barbary, France, Spain, Portugal etc. By an English Officer*, published 1788. Godwin met Jardine at meetings of the Philomathian Society in 1793. St Clair comments on the ‘thorough and combative style of discourse’ of Godwin at these meetings (C93).

^{lxxx} Cf. c.607/4, rectangular card of laid paper, no watermark, an extract from the newspaper *World*: “Sunday Apr. 28/ Sitting of [blank]/ M. Chauvelin, formerly ambassador in England, has sent to the Convention Political Remarks on the Constitution of a Free People, that were given him at London by William Godwin,/ *World*, Tuesday, May 14. 1793”. Prime Minister Pitt had ordered Chauvelin to leave Britain after news of the guillotining of Louis XVI in January 1793 reached Westminster.

^{lxxxi} b.227/2(b), fragments of letter from Godwin [to Major Jardine], Godwin hand, MWS numbers 88) 89), single trimmed quarto sheet, decorative undated watermark. The number 88) has been inked over the number 87). Trimmed paper matches b.227/2(b) letter from Godwin [to *Morning Chronicle*] signed ‘Valerius’, numbered by MWS 97) through 100). See 3: *law*. St Clair writes that Godwin’s letter to Jardine was prompted by Jardine’s letter in Sept. 1793 ‘to Charles James Fox ... propos[ing] that William Godwin should be sent personally to France’ (C104-5, n5).

^{lxxxii} Latin tag underlined in script. “In order rather to have a peaceful slavery than a tumultuous freedom”.

^{lxxxiii} ‘C F’ for Charles James Fox. The sentiment of Godwin’s remark, ‘I want nothing of such men’, is reiterated in b.227/8(a), letterpress copy of letter from Godwin to an unidentified correspondent, dated Jan. 24 1796, signed ‘WGodwin’, where Godwin writes, ‘It is my determined purpose to be no man’s partisan. I will not adhere to Charles James Fox, or any political connection of men. I will retain my little portion of usefulness undiminished. Would I not be both fool & knave if I did otherwise’. This reply to an impertinent enquirer, should be read in the light of Godwin’s memorandum a few weeks later, ‘I ought to be in Parliament’ (b.229/8).

^{lxxxiv} The period full stop, set of closing quotation marks, and row of asterisks are in heavy black over-inking.

^{lxxxv} b.227/2(b), Godwin hand, draft of letter [from Godwin to R[ight] H[onourable] Charles [James] Fox, MP. MWS numbering in sequence with Godwin to Jardine (above).

^{lxxxvi} b.227/2(b), draft of letter from Godwin to Thomas Erskine, MWS numbers 36) 37) 38) 39) 40), three quarto sheets, written r and v, lacks signature. Reference in the letter to Erskine’s unsuccessful defense of Paine in the 18

December 1792 trial dates it. The numbered sequence of pages 36) to 40) would fit into a gap in numbered pages in c.606/4, MWS script on Joynson 1839 watermark paper, to which MWS evidently pinned letters of 1793 to and from Godwin. See 3: *law*. With the exception of this numbered letter, Thomas Erskine's name does not appear in MSWS script.

^{lxxvii}Paine was convicted *in absentia* of treasonous libel for *The Rights of Man*, Pt. ii, in December 1792. Urged by his friends, Paine had fled the country before the trial. During 1793 several prosecutions for publishing and circulating *The Rights of Man* succeeded. Richard Phillips, who later became Godwin's publisher when George Robinson died in 1801, was gaoled for publishing *Rights of Man* (C266).

^{lxxviii}No evidence that this letter was ever published.

^{lxxix}Thomas Erskine was a junior in the defense team when Admiral Augustus Viscount Keppel was court-martialled in 1779, and acquitted; Keppel later served as First Lord of the Admiralty, in the Rockingham Whig ministry. Lord George Gordon, President of the Protestant Association, was imprisoned in the Tower and tried for high treason after the anti-Catholic 'Gordon riots' of May-June 1780; Erskine was the defense counsel, and secured an acquittal. Godwin attributes Erskine's success in these earlier trials to his patent sincerity and belief in the cause he defended. In June 1797 Erskine was briefed by the Society for the Suppression of Vice to prosecute Paine's *The Age of Reason*, Pt. ii, and secured a conviction, again *in absentia*.

^{lxxx}Cf. 3: *law*, Godwin's letter to Joseph Gerrald in Newgate urging Gerrald not to engage a professional advocate, but to speak in his own defense, guided by Godwin as mentor and speechwriter.

^{lxxxii}Archibald Macdonald was the prosecuting attorney general at Paine's December 1792 trial. In the section 'Letters on Political Subjects', Philp (Mph 1993, 20-23), prints a letter published in the *Morning Chronicle* on 26 March 1793, addressed to Sir Archibald Macdonald, and signed 'Mucius'. There is also an MS draft in c.526 (Mph 1993, 5). Philp prints the published version which makes no specific reference to the trial of Paine, but 'in the style of amicable expostulation' protests against censorship and surveillance.

^{lxxxii}Richard Price's Old Jewry sermon 'A Discourse on the Love of Our Country' (November 1790), and Edmund Burke's attack on it in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (November 1790), debate the question whether the dynastic crisis of 1688 marked a radical constitutional shift by invoking an abstract 'consent of the people' to the Hanoverian succession.

^{lxxxiii}'Ministry could not - but they frighten you', 'brilliant passages [good & bad]' inserted in pencil, probably in Godwin hand. An anecdote of Sheridan saying to Thomas Erskine, 'You are afraid of Pitt: it is the flabby part of

your nature', is recorded in *DNB* (1922), vi, 856, 'Erskine, Thomas', signed [J]ohn [A]ndrew [H]amilton.

^{lxxxiv}The year 1793.

^{lxxxv}See below, Duke reel 8, 'Supplement to Journal 1793, Mar. 23, Mar. 24'.

^{lxxxvi}Tom Wedgwood may not have been in London on 10 Feb. 1793 when Godwin called on his elder brother Josiah Wedgwood, the second of that name, and head of the family business founded by the first Josiah Wedgwood. According to St Clair, Godwin first met Tom Wedgwood in May, 1793 (C99).

^{lxxxvii}The' is MWS misreading of 'Th' [Thursday 14 Feb. 1793]', publication day of *An Enquiry concerning Political Justice, and its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness* (London: G. G. and J. Robinson, 1793). In b.227/2(c), draft of contract dated 5 Feb. 1793, between William Godwin and George Robinson, bookseller, to publish *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*.

^{lxxxviii}Godwin accompanied Elizabeth Inchbald to the stage adaptation of Holcroft's novel *Anna St Ives*, on 19 Feb. 1793, five days after his *Political Justice* was published. See *1: literature*, publication of *Anna St Ives* (1792).

^{lxxxix}See *document Dr Priestley.

^{xc}The journal *Monthly Review* was founded by a Welsh Whig supporter, Ralph Griffiths. In *Memoirs of Thomas Holcroft*, Hazlitt writes, 'It was Mr Holcroft who reviewed Mr Godwin's celebrated work on Political Justice, in the Monthly Review, 1793. It may be supposed that the Review was a favourable one. ... But it seems that [Griffiths, the proprietor,] was considerably alarmed at the boldness of some of Mr Godwin's principles Griffiths ... found ... that the *common place* character of the Review had been endangered; and the first opportunity was seized to retrieve the mistake, by retracting their opinion *hautement* in the Review of Mr Malthus's publication' (Howe, 163-4). Throughout the *Holcroft Memoirs*, and in *The Spirit of the Age* (1825), Hazlitt defends Godwin's *Political Justice* from Thomas Malthus's attack on it in his *Essay on Population* (1798), but this linkage is never cited in MWS script. Favourable reviews of the 1st edition *Enquiry concerning Political Justice* are cited by Mary Shelley in three numbers of *The Critical Review*: vii (Jan.-Apr. 1793) 361-72; viii (May-Aug. 1793) 290-96; ix (Sept.-Dec. 1793) 149-54 (London: R Hamilton, 1793); and in two numbers of *The Analytical Review, or History of Literature, Domestic and Foreign*: xvi (May-Aug. 1793), 121-30, 388-404 (London: J. Johnson [n. d.]). An edited compilation of contemporary reviews of Godwin's work is Kenneth W. Graham's *William Godwin Reviewed: A Reception History, 1783-1834* (New York, 2001).

^{xci}Godwin moved to Stowmarket after he left Hoxton College, and Frederick Norman introduced him to Enlightenment philosophy (C15). The letter from Norman to Godwin referred to in MWS script is probably that

listed as from 'Frederic Norman' in the Bodleian folder b.214/3, but I have not as yet sighted it. The Godwinian spelling 'Frederic' (for Frederick) is picked up by MWS script c.606/3: [64v], and duly appears in the Bodleian folder list. Presumably, Godwin had headed the letter with the name of the writer, spelled as he liked it.

^{xcii}Duke reel 5, letter from Godwin to Revd. Samuel Newton, Godwin hand, lacks signature, MWS numbers 65), 66), 67), 68), 69), in sequence with MWS script c.606/4.

^{xciii}Newton was a dissenting clergyman at Norwich, and Godwin became a 'solitary' pupil in his household 'in September 1767'. Godwin's Autobiography recalls that 'Newton was the most wretched of pedants', and 'His wife ... may be compared to an animated statue of ice' (MP 29-32). Godwin's childhood resentment of Newton's sadism inspired his own humane pedagogy.

^{xciv}'Wilkes and Liberty had been the doctrine of Newton my instructor at Norwich' (c.606/1: 92). See *1: literature*.

^{xcv}The two men met again in Norwich in summer 1794 (C126). Cf. Godwin's Autobiography '[Newton] was rather like a butcher, that has left off trade, but would travel ... fifty miles for the pleasure of felling an ox' (MP 32). In the same passage of his Autobiography, Godwin compares Newton to Caligula and Nero.

^{xcvi}Newton's claim to leave his students free to hold independent opinions is implicitly contradicted by the rest of his letter. The teacher's denial of his own desire for power made a lasting unfavourable impression on Godwin.

^{xcvii}Cf. in Duke reel 5, another letter on the same topic from Samuel Newton to Godwin, 3pp., dated 14 Dec. 1793, ten days after this letter of 4 Dec. but with no annotations or numbering by MWS. *document Newton 1793.

^{xcviii}'He' is Dr Joseph Priestley. See Duke reel 8, 'Supplement to Journal 1793, Mar. 23, Mar. 24'. * document Dr Priestley

^{xcix}Cf. Duke reel 8, where this passage reads in full, 'Supplement to Journal, 1793, Mar. 24: Singular character of Captain Gawler, as a blackleg & a sensualist - won £500 of an evening of Count Zenobio -says there is more pleasure in f-g one's self, considered merely in a sensual view; & that the superior pleasure in the other case consists in outwitting a woman, taking from her what she does not like to part with'. Cf Duke reel 13, letter from Mary ('Perdita') Robinson to Godwin, 2 Sept. 1800, 'The same sentiment prevails in my mind respecting Mr Gawler. Indeed there are also *other reasons* why I do not think that it would be the sort of acquaintance for my *dear girl*'. For Godwin's friendship with Mary Robinson and her daughter Maria Elizabeth, see *5: women*.

^cApostrophe omitted from 'Shield's'; Godwin's dinner host was William Shield.

^{ci}Dep. c.532/8, sequence of script 43) through 50), MWS holograph, pages numbered in MWS style, no watermarks, wove paper of bluish tint similar to paper in c.606/3.

^{cii}MWS had probably read the 7 January 1793 Preface to the First Edition, *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*, where Godwin writes: ‘... it is the fortune of the present work to appear before a public that is panic struck, and impressed with the most dreadful apprehensions respecting such doctrines as are here delivered. ... But it is the property of truth to be fearless, and to prove victorious over every adversary. It requires no great degree of fortitude to look with indifference upon the false fire of the moment, and to foresee the calm period of reason which will succeed’. The image of ‘false fire’ may relate to the hypothetical case of rescuing Archbishop Fénelon.

^{ciii}MWS omits ‘not’, ‘it is not adapted’.

^{civ}After *Political Justice*’s 3rd edition, 1798, Godwin went on drafting manuscript revisions of *Political Justice* as late as 1832. See *Enquiry concerning Political Justice: Variants*, ed. Mark Philp [Mph 1993: v]. The ‘other essays’ are not specified, and no evidence that ‘another publication’ of Godwin’s manuscripts was planned by MWS.

^{cv}MWS note 2 excerpts from vol. ii Hazlitt’s *Memoirs of Holcroft* (1816). (Cf. Howe, 132-5). MWS appropriates remarks that Hazlitt specifies are made ‘with respect to Mr Holcroft’s principles as they are delivered in Anna St Ives,’ to the defense of ‘the doctrines of [Godwin’s] *Political Justice*’ despite her transcription (in c.606/2: 24), of Godwin’s hostile critique of the ‘principles’ of *Anna St Ives*. See 1: *literature*.

^{cvi}The double quote marks close the extract from Hazlitt’s redaction of Holcroft’s principles. In the next sentence MWS finishes *her* ‘picture of Political Justice’.

^{cvi}Godwin’s tour of Norfolk in May-June 1794. See 3: *law*.

^{cvi}The correspondent was Amelia Alderson, who visited Godwin’s father’s cousin Mrs Sothren, née Godwin, in Dalling, Norfolk in August 1795, and on 28 August wrote a letter to Godwin from Norwich recounting her visit to ‘Mrs Southerne’. Amelia Alderson’s letters in b.210/6 were annotated and numbered for the *Life of William Godwin* by Mary Jane Godwin. Alderson’s 28 August 1795 letter is No. 1. Alderson writes: ‘[“] now pray let not thy noble courage be cast down” when I inform you, that both Mrs S: & her daughter think you talk much too favourably of wicked men, & that “Italian Letters” (yr first novel) are vastly prettier than Caleb Williams.’ Alderson’s reference to ‘Mrs S: & her daughter’ is amended by MWS to ‘his mother & Mrs Southren’. Alderson may have thought that Ann Godwin’s daughter-in-law Mrs Hull Godwin, who lived nearby, was the childless Mrs Sothren’s daughter or daughter-in-law, as the ‘in-law’ distinction was often not observed. See 4: *pedagogy*.

^{cix}Godwin visited Stowmarket and called on Frederick Norman in June 1794. Godwin’s journal records that they discussed ‘God, industry, drinking and swearing’ (cited C126). The topic of ‘swearing’ ie, the taking of oaths, was a

staple topic of dissenter politics.

^{cx}James (later Sir James) Mackintosh had published *Vindiciae Gallicae* (1791) in defense of the French Revolution, but later attacked Godwin and Jacobin sympathisers in his London lectures of Jan. 1799 (C205-6). Also in Duke reel 5, undated letter from Thomas Wedgwood, offering Godwin tickets to Mackintosh's lectures.

^{cx}ⁱDuke reel 13, single page, numbered 122) in MWS style in sequence with c.532/8. Probably in MJG hand, copied from Robert J. Mackintosh, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir James Mackintosh* (London, Edward Moxon, 1835). The 'his' of the opening sentence is James Mackintosh.

^{cxii}'This excursion' to Norfolk took place in June 1794 after the publication of *Caleb Williams*. In July 1796 Godwin again visited Norfolk to drum up assistance for the poet and playwright Robert 'Revolution' Merry, who was then in debtor's prison. Godwin notes in his journal entry of 10 July [1796], 'Propose to Alderson' (C164, and n11). In response, Dr James Alderson advanced money to enable Merry to travel to the U.S.A. In b.227/2(b), draft of an undated letter from Godwin to Merry in the United States confirms MWS comment that Merry was a 'favourite friend', but emphasises Godwin's aversion from America itself. Amelia Alderson reported Merry's departure for New York with his wife, the celebrated actor Anne Brunton (Mrs Merry), in a letter to Godwin from Norwich dated Thursday 13 Oct. 1796, in b.210/6. See 4: *pedagogy*,

^{cxiii}Paul (CKP i 118), quotes Godwin: 'In October [1794] I went into Warwickshire on a visit to Dr Parr, who had earnestly sought the acquaintance and intimacy of the author of "Political Justice". My position on these occasions was a singular one: there was not a person almost in town or village ... who had not heard of the "Enquiry concerning Political Justice". ... I was happy to feel that this circumstance did not in the slightest degree interrupt the sobriety of my mind.' St Clair dates this visit to Parr 5 Oct. 1794 (C128).

^{cxiv}Parr's former student Joseph Gerrald, transported to Botany Bay for sedition in 1795. See 3: *law*.

^{cxv}St Clair identifies in c.512 a letter from Parr to Godwin, received 25 Nov. 1795, and Godwin's reply, 4 Dec. 1795, concerning the 1795 revised edition of *Political Justice* (C138, 534).

^{cxvi}c.606/5: 119) is MWS transcription of a Godwin memorandum. Original in b.229/8, Godwin hand, a small fold of laid paper, n.d., lacks signature. St Clair (C140, n19), dates the note at about the time of Godwin's 40th birthday on 3 March 1796, and comments that Godwin's plans depended on 'rich and powerful friends', including Thomas Wedgwood, to be willing to 'finance him into parliament if he so wished'.

^{cxvii}Cf. b.229/8 'I am not forty years of age'. Godwin is writing on the eve of his fortieth birthday.

^{cxviii}Cf. b.229/8 'I would be no infrequent speaker'. MWS mistranscription of Godwin's double negative 'no

infrequent' may have been prompted by her opinion that Godwin's talents were literary, and not apt for public speaking or extempore debate.

^{cxix}Cf. b.229/8 'I would be an author of motions'.

^{cxx}Cf. b.229/8 'excite'.

^{cxxi}MWS refers to John Johnstone, *Works of Samuel Parr, with Memoirs of his life, writings, ... and correspondence* (8 vols.; London, 1828).

^{cxxii}Not, as it might seem at first reading, a 'Holcroft's Life', authored by 'Hicks'. MWS had read Hazlitt's account in *Memoirs of Holcroft* (Howe 144-151), citing the hostile report of the Burke-Dodsley *Annual Register of 1794*, that, being accused of high treason, Holcroft voluntarily surrendered himself to the sheriffs at Hicks Hall, and was committed from there to Newgate Prison. 'The effrontery of surrendering himself was by [Holcroft's] prosecutors and their partisans thought intolerable' (Ed. note, Howe 148).

^{cxxiii}c.607/6, MWS hand, quarto fold, wove paper, watermark Joynson 1839.

^{cxxiv}Guy Fawkes' Day and the anniversary of William of Orange's landing in Torbay were both celebrated on 5 November (C44).

^{cxxv}Samuel Parr, *Spital Sermon preached Easter Tuesday, April 15, 1800* (London, 1801). The text was Paul's *Epistle to the Galatians*, vi, 10, '... he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whoever he be'.

^{cxxvi}c.607/6, passages copied from John Johnstone, *Life and Works of Samuel Parr*, (1828), hand unidentified, unnumbered, wove paper, no watermark.

^{cxxvii}Duke reel 5, letter from Godwin to Samuel Parr, Godwin hand, dated from Somers Town, April 24, 1800. A letterpress copy in b.227/8(a), is fragile.

^{cxxviii}See above, 'Spital sermon'.

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***documents endnotes**

^{cxxix}c.607/2, draft of letter [from Godwin], probably Marshall hand, laid paper, lacks signature, undated watermark. The addressee of this letter is unidentified but was probably one of the Whig magnates who financed Opposition journals until 1791, when Sheridan's cavalier management style cost him their support. Cf. Jon Mee, *Romantic Sociability: Social networks and literary culture in Britain, 1770-1840*, ed. Gillian Russell and Clara Tuite (Cambridge, 2002), 104-122 [111].

^{xxx}P[olitical] Her[ald] and R[evue]. In 1785, Richard Brinsley Sheridan and Charles James Fox were co-founders

of the Whig oppositionist paper, *Political Herald and Review*. Philp ‘Bibliography of works by William Godwin’ (MP 52), lists Godwin’s anonymous and pseudonymous contributions to the *Political Herald* in 1785 and 1786, but none in 1787.

^{cxxxii}b.227/2(b), draft of letter from Godwin [to George Robinson], laid paper, undated watermark ‘Pro Patria’, numerous cancellations and interpolations. References to *The Political Herald* and *(New) Annual Register* date it later than Christmas 1784, and to Godwin’s *The English Peerage* (published by Robinson, 1790), date it circa Christmas 1789. My dates of Godwin’s publications from Philp, ‘Bibliography of works by William Godwin’ (MP 51-57). The pupil of Godwin may be Willis Webb (1785-1787) or more probably Tom Cooper (1788-1791). See 4: *pedagogy*.

^{cxxxiii}George Robinson’s brother, a partner in the firm of G. G. and J. Robinson.

^{cxxxiii}i.e. *New Annual Register*, published by Robinson, in opposition to Edmund Burke’s *Annual Register*, published by Dodsley. See 1: *literature*.

^{cxxxiv}b.227/6(b), draft of letter from Godwin [to Tom Paine], signed ‘W.G.’, single trimmed quarto sheet, written r and v, undated decorative watermark. MWS partial transcription of this letter in c.606/2: 11) (above). Another draft of this letter in b.227/2(b).

^{cxxxv}b.227/2(b) Godwin hand, draft with cancellations and carets, small single sheet, laid paper, decorative watermark GR. In the folder the recto sheet has been folded back to show the vertical list of names on the verso. The recto is probably a postscript (headed P.S.) to Godwin’s letter to Paine after being introduced to him by Brand Hollis (*document Paine a). The lists of names on recto and verso are presumably those of guests, with Godwin as their host, at a proposed dinner party.

^{cxxxvi}By ‘soliciting your acquaintance’ Godwin possibly refers to his calling on Paine on 27 February [1791] without the ‘petty ceremonies’ of an invitation (C48). But it is more likely that the ‘P.S.’ was annexed to Godwin’s letter of 7 November 1791, after Godwin was introduced to Paine by Brand Hollis on 4 November, and a week before he was to meet Paine again at Johnson’s dinner table. St Clair (C63-4) quotes the draft in b.227/6 and refers to this note as ‘may be a postscript’, so the b.227/6(b) draft probably lacks the heading ‘P.S.’ MWS transcriptions (c.606/1) of Godwin’s journal 1791, omit Godwin’s entry for 7 November 1791 which is covered by her partial transcription (c.606/2: 11) of Godwin’s letter to Paine of that date (Cf. C63, n18).

^{cxxxvii}Duke reel 8, Godwin hand, supplemental journal entry. Followed on reel by supplemental entries dated Mar. 24, Apr. 5 [1793]; Jan. 10 [1795].

^{cxxxviii}Duke reel 5, one page of a 3pp. letter from Revd. Samuel Newton to Godwin, dated 14 Dec. 1793, ten days after Newton's letter on 4 Dec. (above), also in Duke reel 5. No annotations or numbering by MWS on this page.

^{cxxxix}b.227/2(a), a memorandum or codicil, Godwin hand, lacks signature, laid paper, watermark 1799.

^{cxl}Godwin refers to his pamphlet, *Thoughts occasioned by the Perusal of Dr Parr's Spital Sermon* (London, G. G. and J. Robinson, 1801). Cf. Biographical Sketch of Godwin *Monthly Mirror* (Feb. 1805), 92: 'In 1801, our author published a Reply to the attacks of Dr Parr, Mr Mackintosh, and others. He had before shown how well he could wield the weapon of argument against an antagonist, whom however he despised. He had now to defend himself against men whom he had affectionately loved and profoundly esteemed.'

^{cxli}Copy of extract of letter or memorandum, hand unidentified, dated from Bombay, the original author almost certainly Sir James Mackintosh, who emigrated to India and died there. His *Plan of a Comparative Vocabulary of Indian Languages* was published at Bombay, 1806. Duke reel 2, Godwin's journals and notebooks, contains a note in Godwin hand to 'Mackintosh, Bombay, 1804'.

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Chapter note 2: *politics*

Chapter 1: *literature* was composed largely from Dep. c.606/1, MWS holograph script on 1835 laid paper. Godwin's authorship of literature was in focus throughout MWS script, and a chronology of early works was painstakingly annotated by her. By contrast, the miscellany of documents and interrupted chronologies in this chapter 2: *politics*, many on undated 'flimsy wove paper' in Dep. c.606/2, and 'wove paper of bluish tint' in c.606/3, largely reflect Mary Shelley's aversion from radical politics, and pass negative judgment upon the conflicts that beset Godwin's own excursions into a realm that she insists was not part of his 'literary character'. The political luminaries introduced in MWS script, such as Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Charles James Fox, Edmund Burke, and Tom Paine, besides lesser lights like Thomas Holcroft, Samuel Parr, Alexander Jardine and James Mackintosh, are contained within a schema of intellectual predilections beyond 'party interest' and 'partial politics'. These are terms of a critique received from Godwin's text and returned to it with interest added.

A major portion of chapter 2: *politics* consists of MWS holograph script in all five folders of Dep. c.606, consisting of her third-person narrative commentary and her transcriptions of Godwin's letters, journals, and autobiographical notes and fragments. Several sequences of numbered pages of relevant MWS script taken from c.532/8 are on paper similar to c.606/3, and the endnotes (E101, E111) point this out. MWS transcriptions of other writers than Godwin come from Duke microfilm reel 13 (MWS transcription of Holcroft's note to Godwin in 1791 expressing enthusiasm about Paine's *Rights of Man*); and from c.607/6 (MWS transcription from Johnstone's *Life of Parr*). There is one transcription from Robert Mackintosh's biography of his father, Sir James, probably in Mary Jane Godwin's hand, presented here from Duke reel 13. A transcription from John Johnstone's biography of Samuel Parr, in an unidentified hand, is presented in this chapter from c.607/6.

A small group of drafts of letters and memoranda, in Godwin's hand, are presented from Bodleian folders labelled 'Godwin's correspondence': circa February-March 1791 to 'some friend' in praise of Tom Paine in b.227/6(b); April 1791 to Richard Brinsley Sheridan MP in b.227/2(a); circa September 1793 to Major Jardine and to Charles James Fox, and circa early 1793 to Thomas Erskine, the last three in b.227/2(b). These are holograph drafts and/or fair copies, not letterpress copies, as Godwin did not own a copier until 1795. MWS script introduces these MS letters, and numbers them in sequence with her commentary, as she does also with Godwin's letter to Revd. Samuel Newton, presented here from Duke reel 5. Godwin's holograph memorandum of 1796 'I ought to be in Parliament' is cross-referenced in the endnotes to MWS transcription in c.606/5: 119).

The *documents appended to this chapter are taken from a number of Bodleian folders and Duke microfilm reels. Source texts represented among these attached *documents, but not in the body of chapter 2: *politics*, are: c.607/2; Duke reel 8. These *documents may be added to in future.

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Godwin's politics are thematically and generically contaminated with his literature from the outset of Mary Shelley's work on *the Life of William Godwin*. In chapter 1: *literature*, the chronicle of literary production dates from 1773, whereas the earliest date on Godwin's political activity noted in MWS script (c.606/2: 48), is 1784. And that delayed debut is duly overtaken by the 'main crisis' the 'revolution of opinion' of 1791 that returned him to his literary métier, from political journalist on a Whig paper to author of a major work of philosophy. As we have seen, MWS script had opened (c.606/1: 1) with Godwin's announcement of this reversion to magnetic north. Pamela Clemit (Clemit 1999, xix) remarks on these outcrops of 'conversion-experience' in Godwin's autobiographies. The pattern of Miltonic 'revolution' which converts a primary choice of worldly career to an antithetical and higher

'choice of life' is implicit in MWS reading of Godwin's text, and of Godwin's life-as-text. This is a High Romantic paradigm, the pattern of the crisis lyric. It establishes a point of biographical and critical entry into the ill-assorted and unrefreshed documents of the Godwin archive and underpins Mary Shelley's daughterly service to Godwin's literary stature. The epoch of Godwin's political activism emerges from MWS script into the light of a unique distraction, excursus, or false move; rather than as that antitype of error on which numerous reversions to true type are dramatically predicated.

The alignment of rhetorical authority with public political agency in Godwin's self-writing, is reflected in a recent article by Chris Jones, 'Radical sensibility in the 1790s':

The French abolition of aristocracy (or at least titles of nobility) was noted enthusiastically in red ink in [Godwin's] Diary for 19 June 1790. He went on to write several drafts of a Letter to Sheridan which focused his dissatisfaction with the constitutional wranglings of the 1780s and welcomed the progress of public opinion towards accepting the abolition of hereditary greatness. (Jones, 77)

The splash of red ink in the private journal not intended for publication recalls us to the anonymous and pseudonymous publication of Godwin's political writings. Criminal penalties for libel and sedition at this period made such discretion a matter of form; after war was declared in February 1793 it became a matter of 'public safety', the chilling phrase covering issues of life and death.

The mask of 'A Lover of Order' signing the anonymous *Considerations on Lord Grenville's and Mr Pitt's Bills* (published by Joseph Johnson 1795) was pulled aside by John Thelwall in his newsletter *The Tribune*, and by Amelia Alderson reporting the gossip in Norwich in 1796 (b.210/6, in 4: *pedagogy*). Godwin answered Thelwall with a public letter of remonstrance, published at his own request in *Tribune* 1796

(C521). His reaction to Alderson's teasing was to charge her with sexual provocativeness. In 1801, Godwin's resoundingly titled pamphlet, *Thoughts occasioned by the Perusal of Dr Parr's Spital Sermon, preached at Christ Church, April 15, 1800: being a Reply to the Attacks of Dr Parr, Mr Mackintosh, the Author of an Essay on Population, and Others*, is veiled only by a wisp of anonymity, either for its author or his attackers, since in this pamphlet thoughts occasioned by perusal of a sermon issue in a reply, a four-handed editing process that reduces the risk of popular inflammation.

Godwin frequently adopted 'open' publication: openly broadcast as a contribution to the public debate, not openly advertising the writer's home address. This mode of address and publication compounds with his practice of recasting and redrafting his texts to hollow out a space of rumination neither fully public nor private, a rehearsal room or *coulisse* adjacent to the public rostrum. These negotiations with State and Church power are intrinsic to the educational process, with its fixed stages of instruction, initiation, and graduation. As a dissenter, a provincial, a man of portable, not of 'real' or even 'fixed' property, Godwin was effectively disenfranchised, other than as he could benefit from the hourglass shape of progressive cultural institutions binding and advancing a double-generation of men.

He was to acquire cultural capital through a bookish education and training to lead a congregation from the pulpit. And he was to cultivate literary authority and disseminate it through published writings and mentorial influence. Throughout the *Life of William Godwin*, MWS script traces the progressive pattern of a *Bildungsroman*, imbricating private memoir, confessional tract, commissioned biography (of an eminent man), and the English realist novel.

In chapter 1: *literature*, MWS script points Godwin's earliest literary works towards the peak achievement of the novel *Things as They Are: or, Caleb Williams* (published in May 1794). In this chapter 2 : *politics*, *Caleb Williams* is again positioned in a moment of transcendence, compensating Godwin's readers for the rugosities of *Political Justice* in 1793, perhaps even rewarding them for resisting that work's 'taste for political disquisition' and rejecting its 'tenets' (c.532/8: 120).

Although it became in his lifetime a catch phrase for Godwin's political philosophy, MWS script never adverts to the novel's title phrase 'things as they are' by which Godwin marks the limen of privilege and powerlessness in the his contemporary England. Mary Shelley's reading bypasses the novel's ambivalent attraction to aristocratic manners and revulsion from metropolitan morals, to concentrate in the eponymous protagonist the protestant provincial moral character, the drama of conscience, reformation and redemption. The novel was published with 'two endings', the plot and the protagonists culminating, now in heroic psychosis, now in paternalistic accommodation. This split conclusion divides the novel's agonistic irresolution pretty much as Hercules divided the Hydra's head. MWS script projects irresolution outwards to the unaccommodating theory of politics articulated in *Political Justice*.

Chapter 1: *literature* began with MWS transcription (c.606/1: 1-2), of Godwin's move in 1791 from political journalism to literary authorship. In the second section of this chapter 2: *politics*, MWS script (c.606/2: 3) takes up the topic in her own words:

I have before me a copy in my father's Mr Godwin's handwriting of the ^abovementioned^ letter he sent in April 1791 to Mr Sheridan, as from "a well known literary character". It begins by saying: "There are few men capable of the glorious task of eradicating the vices of political government, & rendering liberty & justice as extensive & complete as they ought to be.

The afterthought ‘[^]abovementioned[^]’ harks back to page c.606/1: 1: ‘“(1791) On the 29th of April of this year Mr Holcroft and I wrote two anonymous letters, he to Mr Fox and I to Mr Sheridan.’ The sequence then continues in folder c.606/2 up to page 12, albeit pages 8) and 9), a draft in Godwin’s hand February-March 1791 to an unidentified correspondent, are taken from folder b.227/6(b), and page 10), missing from the folders, is given here from Duke reel 13. The sequence then reverts from c.606/2 to c.606/1, where it continues to pages 13), 14), and 15). We present the sequence 1) to 15) by interleaving pages from the three folders and the microfilm reel.

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The first section of 2: *politics*, ‘London journal 1784-1792’ consists mainly of MWS transcriptions of Godwin’s journal entries for those years, and, where Mary Shelley could find them, the autobiographical fragments, or summaries, written in 1796-1797. As Godwin had not drawn up a “Summary of 1789” (c.606/1: [112v]), the momentous year of the Fall of the Bastille is covered from the journal entries alone (c.606/1: 133) [133v]), though Shelley pronounces these less than informative: ‘brief ... memoranda’ ‘a few notes’ ‘a few public events are mentioned’. Godwin’s ‘laconic’ journal entries (c.606/1: 123) yield little to Mary Shelley’s efforts to schematise historical events as a matrix for Godwin’s personal development. The very word ‘public’ becomes a blank or neutral covering term for a lack of auto/biographical resonance.

With this unpromising preamble, MWS script condenses eight months of Godwin’s entries, May to December 1789, into a list of items recording ‘public events’ that ‘mark the course of time’. The script gives this selection for the period 5th to 27th June 1789 (c.606/1: 133):

5th Fr. Grenville secretary of State. Duke of Clarence's Establishment.

17W. National Assembly.

24 W. Necker is restored.

27 Sa. Revolution in France

This noncommittal list graphically reduces Godwin's contemporary witness, to increase distance and disengagement from events that had once turned Godwin's world upside down.

Only one incident catches and holds Mary Shelley attention, that recorded for November 8th to 16th: 'One of the records of this year is the unfortunate death of Holcroft's son' (c.606/2: 134). Holcroft's name prompts (or licenses) Mary Shelley to amplify the bare record of a tragedy-- '16 M. Mort de son fils' Godwin had written in French against Monday 16 November 1789. Shelley sketches in Godwin's and Holcroft's personalities, to contrast the former's supportiveness with the latter's harshness, claiming that this was later the cause of a lasting estrangement between the two men. The anecdote is set to justify Godwin's moderation, a quality that protects him from the barrenness of 'public' values.

The second section of 2: *politics*, 'public letters', presents Godwin's unsolicited letters to public men on matters of urgent public import. Godwin's stance of 'open' address constructs a virtual *agora*, standing in for the pulpit that he had trained for and the elected parliament that he aspired at this period to enter. Precisely because as a propertyless dissenter he had no voice in constitutional governance, Godwin invested the bystander and overlooker function of the writing 'I'. The decorum of polite address differs in respect to whether the writer has-- or has not-- been formally introduced to the recipient. In Godwin's case a lack of formal introduction becomes an active element of self-introduction. Withholding his legal signature under an unsigned or pseudonymous cover protects the writer, but weakens

somewhat the professions of his own commitment, and the solemn exhortations to his reader, which characterise Godwin's epistolary style.

MWS script c.606/2 devotes three pages to Godwin's April 1791 letter to Sheridan, and attaches a copy in Godwin's hand (b.227/2(a)) to her script. Sheridan the politician is addressed by "a well known literary character" urging him on for a 'glorious task' that of 'eradicating the vices of political government' and 'rendering liberty & justice ... complete'. This is a version of the political process as apolitical, a dialogue of equals conducted in utopian space. MWS script presents Godwin's letter in April 1791 to Sheridan (b.227/2(b)) without any adverse comment or precautionary framing, whereas Godwin's letter to an unidentified correspondent, probably Holcroft, on his first looking into Tom Paine's *The Rights of Man*, and his letter to Paine after they had been introduced by Brand Hollis (c.606/2: 11-12), are fenced with caveats.

Another of the letters introduced by MWS script (c.606/3: 86-87) is addressed to a man well known to Godwin, and under no doubt at all of the writer's identity. This is Godwin's letter (b.227/2(b): 88-89) to Major Alexander Jardine, described by MWS as a 'specimen' of polemics, and moreover a 'mitigated' specimen. There were evidently worse examples, like Holcroft's 'unmitigated severity' (c.606/2: 134). With its colloquial opening gambit: 'You are one of the men, my dear major ...', the letter propels an ongoing controversy between acquaintances and fellow-members of a debating society. The second paragraph, 'Are you the friend of liberty or the enemy?' rises to a general disquisition on political patronage and factional politics.

Godwin's letter of February-March 1791 (b.227/2(b): 8-9), to an unidentified correspondent, probably Holcroft, on his first looking into Tom Paine's *The Rights of Man*, and his letter to Paine after they had been introduced by Brand Hollis

(c.606/2: 11-12), evidently challenge the ingenuity of the MWS script to present them uncensored while covering Godwin's tracks on the dangerous path of political radicalism. Introducing the letter to the unidentified friend, Mary Shelley writes:

In the enthusiasm of the moment he [Godwin] praised him [Paine] more than he would subsequently have done & wrote hastily to some friend in eager encomium on his work. (c.606/2: 7)

Haste precipitates, and enthusiasm warms, Godwin's praise of Paine in a letter which in hindsight not only perhaps should not, but, according to MWS script, would not, have been written. She attaches this letter, not transcribes it. MWS script c.606/2 continues with a transcription of Godwin's letter to Paine after the two had been introduced at Brand Hollis's in November 1791, and adds:

Notwithstanding this letter no familiar intercourse ensued between Mr Godwin & Paine. They met at dinner at various houses but the intimacy proceeded no further.

This is followed by MWS transcription of a note (Duke reel 13) to Godwin from Thomas Holcroft, displaying, so Mary Shelley writes: 'As was natural much greater enthusiasm'. Holcroft's note exults in the uncensored publication of Paine's *Rights of Man* Part i. Its exuberant confidentiality may be 'natural' to him, but it exceeds even Godwin's 'enthusiasm of the moment', let alone his maturer judgment.

Letters to Major Jardine and to Charles James Fox are introduced by MWS script c.606/3. Shelley professes concern that sensitivity to others' feelings, and 'the charities of social intercourse', were too often overlooked in the correspondence among Godwin and his circle, and sets this down to 'their peculiar system' and a 'strict principle adherence to truth'. This extenuates a disturbing feature of

Godwin's writing by steeping it in the temper of times past. This cover extends to Godwin's private and better self, beginning soon, 'how soon', to reevaluate his 'theories of the philosopher' in the light of 'the violences of the French Revolution and above all of mob commotions'. A willingness to strike and wound in private, incited by a public climate of violent radicalism, is the very antithesis of a paternal pedagogue, 'contributing to the amendment & virtue of another excellence of the person they loved' (c.606/3: 87).

The section 'public letters' concludes with Godwin's anonymous letter to barrister Thomas Erskine after the latter's unsuccessful defense of Tom Paine, tried *in absentia* for criminal libel in December 1792. The draft numbered by MWS (b.227/2(b): 36-40) seems to have been intended for newspaper publication: 'I address you through the medium of the press', but there is no sign that it was published. If any draft were sent to Erskine it may not have been in these exact words. This highlights the point that until Tom Wedgwood's gift of a wetpress copier in 1795, Godwin had no means of keeping copies of his own letters, other than to compose several drafts, and then choose which to send, if any. In a recent study of the 1794 London Treason Trials, Judith Pascoe quotes this letter in part, adding a footnote:

William Godwin to Thomas Erskine, [Abinger deposit] Dep. b. 227/2 (b), Bodleian Library, Oxford. This letter exists as an undated file copy in Godwin's hand and does not carry any subsidiary evidence of postmarking. (Pascoe 1997, 47-8, n24)

The footnote is factually accurate but somewhat misleading, since we could only expect to find such material evidence of postage and delivery if Mary Shelley had successfully solicited return of the original letter from its recipient, as she did in the case of Godwin's letters to Tom and Josiah Wedgwood. We shall again meet the problem of whether Godwin followed through and posted his letters, whether to

personal correspondents or to men in the public eye, in chapter 6: *writing*, where Godwin's correspondence with Harriet Lee in 1798 offers only scattered clues as to which of Godwin's numerous manuscript drafts (in b.228/4) were eventually delivered to Lee.

The third section, subheaded '*Political Justice*' includes (from Duke reel 5) Godwin's letter to his former schoolmaster Rev. Samuel Newton who was reportedly critical of *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*, and Newton's reply dated 4 December 1793. This critical exchange is introduced by Mary Shelley in c.606/3: 64- [64v], following her annotations on Godwin's journal entries at the date of *Political Justice*'s publication, 14 February 1793. Godwin's correspondence with Newton is numbered (65) to (69), tallying with MWS script.

The section *Political Justice* presents c.532/8: pages 43) to 50), and 120) to 122), written on undated paper similar to the sheets of MWS script in c.606/3, where they are labelled 'Fragments of draft on wove paper of bluish tint'. Accidental displacement from the folder c.606/3 of these sequences would account for the fact that both are bundled together haphazardly in the folder c.532/8, where the majority of sheets are written on Joynson 1839 watermark paper. This is confirmed by noting that the *Bodleian rubric for c.606/3 shows gaps corresponding to all these page numbers.

In c.606/1: [unnumbered], MWS script had announced that in 1790, while Godwin was 'on the eve of his great work, but the idea yet unborn', he 'revolved a multitude of plans of literary labor'. After February 1793, he revolved again, this time in a revisionary purging of his freshly published text:

... As he proceeded also in *Political Justice* he was anxious to consider all the topics introduced into that book in every possible light, & eagerly advanced arguments &

heard those on the other side - being desirous of attaining the truth with a sincerity & directness of purpose seldom met with. Yet this did not prevent mistakes which he afterwards detected & acknowledged (c.606/1: 14)

The warrant for this labour of Sisyphus is the text itself, circling in defense of its borders. This onerous self-inspection emerges in Godwin's preface to the revised 3rd edition of *Political Justice*, worked over during his brief marriage in 1797, but not published till 1798:

The French Revolution ... that inexhaustible source of meditation to the reflecting and inquisitive. While the principles of Gallic republicanism were yet in their infancy, the friends of innovation were somewhat imperious in their tone. Their minds were in a state of exaltation and ferment. They were too impatient and impetuous. There was something in their sternness that savoured of barbarism. ... The author confesses that he did not escape the contagion. With as ardent a passion as ever, he finds himself more patient and tranquil. He is desirous of assisting others, if possible, in perfecting the melioration of their temper. London: February 4, 1797
(Preface, ix-x)]

MWS script in c.606/3 attempts to distance Godwin from the radical pronouncements of the first edition of his *Political Justice* and reinforces this theme in c.532/8 pages 43) to 50).

The principles of no book were ever canvassed with so much pertinacity and eagerness as those of *Political Justice*. ... The book became popular & unpopular ^praised & censured^ (c.606/3: 64)

In after times ^Mr^ Godwin shrunk from some of his conclusions & there are several papers written not long after the publication which shewed that when the mere ardour of composition had evaporated, he could perceive some flaws in his system. As to disseminate truth was his object, he did not hesitate at once to acknowledge his errors. (c.532/8: 47)

In the folder c.532/8 the sequence of pages 43) to 50) on *Political Justice* is followed by two pages 120)-121), where Mary Shelley invokes *Caleb Williams* (published May 1794), to counterbalance the abstract 'theory' of Godwin's philosophy in *Political Justice*, describing the novel as 'a new era in the art of novel writing and an appeal to the noblest sentiments of [the reader's] heart'.

Caleb Williams was published in May - it raised the reputation of the author to the highest pitch - those who had no taste for ^political disquisition^, or who did not agree in the tenets of *Political Justice*, were carried away by the engrossing interest, the elevated feeling and dignified yet purely English style of the novel. Its reputation became European. (c.532/8: 120)

The c.532/8 script ends on page 121) with an encomium on Godwin's friendship with Mr and Mrs John Taylor of Norwich, and follows it (page 122, from Duke reel 13; page 124) from c.532/8) with an extract from Sir James Mackintosh's biography by his son, which lauds Mrs Taylor as a paragon of feminine domesticity in the privacy of the middle-class home.

The MWS script and accompanying documents in the last section of 2: *politics*, subheaded 'political reaction', illustrate both the AntiJacobin reaction that damaged Godwin's reputation and imperilled his livelihood, and Godwin's own disappointment and disillusion with such political opportunities as he had at one time hoped to profit by.

The penultimate document of this chapter 2: *politics* is a two-page MWS transcript of Godwin's memorandum in 1796 "I ought to be in Parliament". The original memorandum is in b.229/8, on a small folded sheet, undated, unsigned. And the date of writing, 1796, is signalled by Godwin's remark 'I am now forty years of age', and confirmed by St Clair's examination of the papers (C140, n19). As such, it is a

comparatively rare example of an autobiographical writing by Godwin that records immediately contemporaneous thinking. Even so, its affective germ lies in the past.

An earlier anecdote in MWS script (c.606/2: 48) had voiced indignation over Sheridan's casual treatment of Godwin, but insisted that Godwin was not in any way a suitor to Sheridan for favours or patronage. Godwin's autobiographical fragment for 1787 (MP: 46-47), claims that Sheridan 'proposed that I should receive a regular stipend ... but this I declined'. This theme is resumed in MWS script c.606/5: 119)-120):

Sheridan had once said to him "You ought to be in Parliament"---the observation made a deep impression---probably it roused for a time his ambition and some years afterwards, he still seemed to reflect upon them, as I find the following note among his papers.

Sheridan's casual remark had made a deep impression on Godwin, never the casual politician himself, and he was still brooding about it at age forty, though no powerful sponsors came forward at that time. March 1796, when Godwin's 40th birthday initiates his autobiographical writings and reassesses his ambitions public and private (MP 58) coincides with Godwin's relationship with Mary Wollstonecraft, and heralds the publication in 1797 of his miscellaneous essays of various date collected as *The Enquirer*, an eponymous individual pursuing enquiry for its own sake.

The publication of the *Enquirer* essays ended a drought in Godwin's creative output since 1795, when *Considerations ... By A Lover of Order* had provoked a quarrel with John Thelwall and the radical wing of politics. The reactionary repression of the wartime Pittite government against all reform movements converges with Godwin's increasing mistrust of the governing class which held the keys to political influence. MWS script realigns Godwin's increasing alienation from the political

process with an interior swerve (another 'conversion experience') away from politics in 1796, preparatory to his moral and personal transformation as husband and father. Mary Shelley's preamble about the untrustworthiness of politicians in general and Sheridan in particular, is closed off by her negative judgment of the political sphere itself:

The doubt as to his fitness existing in [Godwin's] own mind perhaps is a proof of unfitness - a person fitted for active life cannot subside into the contemplative. (c.606/5: 120))

As on other occasions, MWS script reflects Godwin's penchant for the rhetorical double negative (*litotes*). 'Unfitness' can 'subside' where 'fitness' can only, as it were, fit; and the contemplative is the higher, the Miltonic sphere of literature.

The document of latest date and closing this chapter 2: *politics* is Godwin's letter to Revd. Samuel Parr after the latter's Spital Sermon, preached at Christ's Hospital in the city of London at Easter 1800, and published as a pamphlet for those like Godwin who did not attend Anglican church services. Godwin's letter, dated 24 April 1800, is an expostulation protesting against Parr's attack on him from the pulpit. MWS script on 1839 paper (c.606/4: [unnumbered]) introduces this letter into her paraphrase of Johnstone's biography of Parr, which relays information about Parr's role in the Anti-Jacobin reaction: 'the correspondence was broken off [in] Dec. 1799. In that month a letter supposed by Mr Godwin to be important remained unanswered' (c.607/6: [unnumbered]). Godwin's letter to Parr is given in this chapter from Duke reel 5.

In 1801 in the aftermath of this contretemps, Godwin published his *Thoughts occasioned by the Perusal of Dr Parr's Spital Sermon, preached at Christ Church, April 15, 1800: being a Reply to the Attacks of Dr Parr, Mr Mackintosh, the Author of an Essay*

on *Population, and Others*. This is rated by William St Clair (C220), as one of Godwin's most spirited performances on a matter of public moment, but it falls just outside the end date of MWS script and its political significance is muted by her nostalgic comment: '[Godwin] recollected with singular satisfaction the happiness he enjoyed in Dr Parr's conversation & company'.

Mary Shelley's script in this chapter cites Robert Mackintosh's 1835 biography of his father and two biographies of Dr Samuel Parr, by John Field and John Johnstone, both published in 1828. These texts exemplify the standard life and letters format that she had been commissioned to write for Henry Colburn and to which she occasionally gestured. At the turn of the century Samuel Parr and James Mackintosh reneged on their political allegiances and denounced their former allies. Mackintosh was rewarded with a knighthood and a lucrative sinecure in Bombay, India, in 1803. A typical passage in Field's biography demonstrates the technique of 'trimming', using the advantage of hindsight to alter history in favour of the winners. Mackintosh's only significant book, *Vindiciae Gallicae* (1791), had defended the French Revolution in its early days from the unreflective antipathy of English opinion. Field quotes a statement by Parr testifying to his [Parr's] admiration of its author:

"In Mackintosh, then, I see the sternness of a republican, without his acrimony, and the ardour of a reformer, without his impetuosity. His taste in morals, like that of Mr Burke, is equally pure and delicate with his taste in literature. ... His philosophy is far more just, and far more amiable than the philosophy of Paine ...". (Field i, 312-13)

While Mary Shelley does not directly contest this stultified canon, nevertheless she opens the manuscript page to the contemporary record of Godwin's opposition. MWS script on Johnstone's *Life of Parr* (c.606/4 and c.607/6,) together with Godwin's letter to Parr, are the witnesses with which this chapter 2: *politics*

concludes. In their incompatibility they constitute a palinode or haunted memory of the far from pure, delicate, just, and amiable politics of the 1790s.

.....

3: law

Scottish trials 1793

c.606/3ⁱ

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95)

In those years the collision between government & the advocates of Reform or something more, was at its height. While one set of men saw an opening for their endeavours for political freedom, another became panic struck, believing ^that ^ the horrors of the French Revolution were about to overflow into this island. Many were those whose zeal transported them with a wish to excite the multitude to use their numerical strength to force government to adopt liberal measures; it cannot be wondered that Ministers considered it right to put down such appeals, rendered trebly dangerous from the state of excitement into which the country was thrown. Popular commotion ^when attended by the taking up of arms^ is a circumstance ever to be deprecated, & at that period such had been marked with frightful & sanguinary results in France. We might believe that our countrymen were incapable of such similar atrocities, but the

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96)

most patriotic Minister would have been most eager to put them down zealous not to incur the risk & to take care that any encrease of liberty should flow from its the legitimate source of change, Parliament.

As the Ministers of those days were ^were in no view favourable to the extension of the liberty of the subject, they became^ exasperated by the attempts of the reformers & yet were not sorry to see them come to such a head, as would admit of their taking vindictive measures, they resolved not to be sparing in their punishments & to use the whole force of the law against such as should become their victims. Their first operations were made entered upon in Scotland where the laws against sedition were severer than here, & juries more entirely under the direction of the court. Messrs Palmer, Skirving & Muir were apprehended for various seditious practices,ⁱⁱ more or less calculated to raise the multitude against government. Their trials came on early in 1794 late in 1793ⁱⁱⁱ - They were found guilty & sentenced to be transported for seven or fourteen years. The sentence was put into execution soon after & by its atrocity & the horror excited^{iv} (turn over)

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[96v]

at the idea that men of good birth & education were to be subjected to treatment of common felons^v excited universal compassion. Their case was brought forward in Parliament, without effect^{vi} - The following is a letter addressed by Mr Godwin to the Editor of the Morning Chronicle

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b.227/2(b)

vii

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97) Muir & Palmer

Sir

The situation in which messieurs Muir and Palmer are at the moment placed is sufficiently known within a certain circle, but it is by no means sufficiently attested to by the public at large. Give me leave through the channel of your paper to call their attention to it.

All the consolations of civilised society are pertinaciously refused to them. Property, whether originally their own, or the gift of their friends, is to be rendered useless. Supplies of clothing, it seems, have been graciously received on board the vessels. But stores of every kind & *books* have constantly been denied admission. the principle which has been laid down again & again by the officers of government is, - *they are felons like the rest.*

This, sir is a species of punishment scarcely preceded in the annals of mankind. Tiberius and his modern antitype Joseph the second^{viii} are mere novices of history in the arts of cruelty compared with our blessed administration. Joseph took judges from the bench, men accustomed to reflexion, to deference & to elegant gratification, & made them scavengers in the streets of Vienna. Mr Pitt probably took the hint from this example. But he has refined upon his model, inasmuch as he has sent the victims of his atrocious despotism out of the country. If I must suffer under the barbarian hand

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98)

of power, let me at least suffer in the face of day. Let me have this satisfaction, that my countrymen may look on, & observe my disgrace. Let them learn a great lesson from my suffering. It is for them to decide whether it shall be a lesson of abhorren aversion to my guilt, or abhorrence against the tyrant my punisher. On that condition I will stand on their pillories, & sweep their streets with satisfaction & content. But to shut me up in dungeons & darkness, or to transport me to the other side of the globe, that they may wreak their vengeance on me unobserved, is base, cowardlike & infamous.

Perhaps Mr editor, I may be told that in holding ^up^ these proceedings to the indignation of my countrymen, I am guilty of sedition. You know, sir, that there is not in the island of great Britain a more strenuous advocate for peaceableness & forbearance than I am. But I will not be the partaker of their secrets of state. What they dare to perpetrate, I dare to tell. Do they not every day assure us that the great use of punishment is example, to deter others from increasing incensing incurring the like offences[.] And yet they

delight to inflict severities upon these men in a corner, which they tremble to have exposed in the eyes of the world. I join issue with administration on this point; I too would have the punishment of messieurs^{ix} serve for an example. Sir, there are examples to imitate, & examples to avoid.

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99)

Mr Dundas^x told Mr Sheridan,^{xi} when that gentleman applied to him officially upon this subject a few months ago, that *he saw no great hardship in a man's being sent to Botany Bay*. Observe that in this sentence, as now appears, is intended to meant to be included an exclusion from all the means of intellectual pleasure & improvement, a reduction of men of taste, education & letters to the condition of galley slaves. I can readily believe that to a man so obdurate in feeling & uncultivated ^inhumanised^ in manner as Mr Dundas a privation of the sources of intellectual pleasure may appear no hardship. Let me appeal then to Mr Burke.^{xii} Who knows so well as he what is due to elegance of education, delicacy of manners, & refinement in literature? Who has proclaimed so powerfully against those systems, by which all classes of society are confounded together, & all that is venerable for antiquity, lovely in cultivation, & elevated by imagination & genius is overwhelmed with the iron hand of a barbarous usurpation? Never was the principle of taking lessons from an enemy so extensively adopted as at present. We declaim against the French, & we imitate them in their most horrible atrocities. Administration is desirous of conducting themselves with respect to messieurs Muir & Palmer as the Germans have acted towards M. la Fayette, who, we are told in consequence of the rigours he has endured is reduced to the state of an idiot.

And who are the men that are destined to this treatment, that are to be considered *felons like the rest*? I hear the moderate & respectable friends of

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100)

government perpetually confessing that they are *men of excellent character & irreproachable manners*. What is it by which they have incurred this punishment? I learn from the same quarter, that it is *by an ill-directed zeal for what they thought a good cause*. I agree to that statement; I think they did wrong. Let us suppose that for that wrong, that well-meant but improper zeal, they ought to be punished. In what manner punished? Not, sir, *as if they were felons*. A mild & temperate punishment might for all ought I know have operated upon others to induce them to act with more becoming deliberation. But a punishment that exceeds all measure & mocks at all justice, that listens to no sentiments but revenge, & plays the volunteer in insolence & cruelty, ^a punishment the purpose of which is to inflict on such men slavery, degradation of soul, a lingering decay & final imbecility, -^ can do nothing but exasperate men's minds, & wind up their nerves to decisive action.

You will perceive, sir, that in this letter I have entered into no comment upon the justice of the sentence of the court of session, & that the baseness of which I complain belongs exclusively to the secretary of state for the home department & the rest of the cabinet junto

Valerius^{xiii}

.....

Joseph Gerrald

c.606/3

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108)

Before the memorable trials of twelve men for constructive treason^{xiv} began there occurred another Early in this following year 1794, the trials before mentioned were followed by another, in which Mr Godwin was ^far more^ deeply interested, that of Joseph Gerrald for sedition, in Edinburgh. Gerrald was a West Indian^{xv} & a man of property. He had been a pupil of Doctor Parr^{xvi} who regarded him with warm & affectionate interest.^{xvii} Everyone who knew Gerrald loved him. In some portions of his character it seemed as if Cumberland had founded his character of the “West Indian”^{xviii} on him, for he was unguarded, rash & ardent & even dissipated. His property became involved, ^& his health injured^ through his irregularities & extravagance; and yet in spite of conduct adverse to the moral principles of many of the better portion of his friends, they were enthusiastically attached to him, through his brilliant talents - nice sense of honor joined to dauntless courage, unshakable firmness & unconquerable ardour in the pursuit of objects which seemed to him the noblest in the world.

¹ Vide Field’s Life of Doctor Parr from which much of this account is taken.

Early in life he had migrated to America & practised as an advocate in the courts of Pennsylvania.

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109)

He returned to England a confirmed Republican & these principles were rendered the more active & fervent through the hopes for Political freedom held out by the example of the Revolution in France. He entered into societies ^raised^ for the dispensation of these favourite doctrines, which were at that time looked on with great suspicion by the government & marked not only for overthrow but persecution. He was arrested with several others who had met in what they called a Convention of Delegates at Edinburgh on a charge of sedition^{xix}, & brought for trial before the High Court of Justiciary.^{xx}

It is a singular circumstance & shews the high spirit & generous sense of honor of this unfortunate man that his friends offered him every means of an easy escape, of which he refused to avail himself.^{xxi} He was at large, & on bail in London, when intelligence came of the trial & conviction of several of his associates. Doctor Parr & others of his friends implored him to fly - promising to indemnify his bail. He indignantly refused - he resolved that his lot should be the same as his partners in misfortune ^a cause which he looked upon as sacred^; & considered it a base desertion to refuse to share their fate - “In any ordinary case,” said this extraordinary

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110)

man, to his revered preceptor Doctor Parr who warmly & affectionately urged his flight, “I should without the smallest hesitation & with the warmest gratitude, avail myself of your offer. I readily admit that my associates will not suffer more because I suffer less. I am inclined to believe with you that the sense of their own sufferings will be alleviated by their knowledge of my escape. But my honor is pledged; & no opportunity of flight, however favorable, no expectation of danger however alarming, no excuse for consulting my own safety however plausible, will induce me to violate that pledge. I gave it to men whom I esteem & respect & pity; to men, who, by avowing similar principles, have been brought into similar peril; to men, who were confirmed in those principles, & led into that peril, by the influence of my own arguments, my own persuasions, my own example. Under these circumstances, they became partakers of my responsibility to the law; & therefore, under no circumstances will I shrink from the participation with them in the rigours of any punishment, which that law, as likely to be administered in Scotland may ordain for us.”^{xxii}

On the very night of this conversation, he left for Scotland. He was calm & resolved, & left all those who saw him impressed with admiration of his courage & honor & with compassion for a fate, which in Scotland, where

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111)

there was far less independance in the courts of law than in this country,^{xxiii} was sure to overtake him.

Such noble feelings, which mirrored the devotion & honor of his favourite heros of Greece & Rome, excited the deepest interest in Godwin; he always spoke of Gerrald with affectionate admiration, & his feelings were strongly excited by the peril he incurred. During the January of 1794 while the trial was in expectation, there is frequent mention in his journal of seeing Gerrald, & conversing with him on his trial, the conduct he ought to hold with regard to it - & the defence he ought to make. To render his advice more impressive he wrote to him.^{xxiv} The tone of his letter is [illeg.] to encourage & animate. Godwin, who knew so well the human heart, was well aware that nothing inspires so much courage & magnanimity as a belief in the sufferer that he is regarded with respect by his fellow men - in his letter therefore, he casts into the shade the sad & fearful evils attendant on conviction, & endeavours to bring forward only such ideas as would animate Gerrald to self complacency & fortitude.

.....

c.532/2 Godwin to Gerrald

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112)^{xxv}

I cannot recollect the situation in which you are in a few days without emotions of respect and I had almost said of envy. For myself I will never adopt any conduct for the express purpose of being put upon my trial; but if I be ever so put, I will regard that day as a day of Triumph.

Your trial, if you so please, may be a day such as England & I believe the world never saw. It may be the means of converting thousands & progressively of millions to the cause of reason and public Justice. You have a great stake - you place your fortune, your youth, your liberty & your talents on a single throw. If you must suffer, do not, I conjure you, suffer, without first making use of this opportunity of telling a tale upon which the Happiness of Nations depends. Spare none of the resources of your powerful Mind. Is this a day of reserve, a day to be slurred over in negligence & neglect, the day that constitutes the very crisis of your fate?

Never forget that juries are men & that men are made of penetrable stuff. Probe all the resources of their souls. Do not spend your strength in vain defiance & empty vaunting. Let every syllable you utter be fraught with persuasion. What an event would it be for England & mankind if you could gain an acquittal? Is not such an event worth striving for? It is in man, I am sure it is, to effect that event. Gerald, you are that man. Fertile in genius strong in moral feeling prepared with every accomplishment that literature ^& reflection^ can give. Stand up to the situation

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113)

be whole yourself[.] “I know” I would say to this jury “that you are packed, you are picked & culled from all the land by the persons who have at present the direction of public affairs, as men upon whom they can depend. But I do not fear the event. I do not believe you will be slaves, I do not believe that you will be inaccessible to considerations irresistible in argument & which speak to all the genuine feelings of the human Heart. I have been told that there are men upon ^whom^ truth, truth fully & adequately stated will make no impression - it is a vile & groundless calumn[y] upon the character of the human mind.^{xxvi} This is my theory & I now come before *you* for the practise”

If you should fail of a verdict (but why should I suppose it?) this manner of stating your defence is best calculated to persuade the whole audience & the whole world for the same reason that it is best calculated to persuade a jury.

It is the nature of the human mind to be great in proportion as it is acted upon by great excitements. Remember this, now is your day - never, perhaps never in the revolution of human affairs, will your mind be the same illustrious & irresistible mind as it will be on this day.

You stand on as dear clear ground as man can stand on, you are brought there for meeting in convention to deliberate on grievances. Do not pilfer fritter away your defence by anxiety about little things, do not perplex the Jury by dividing their attention. Depend upon it that if you can establish to their full conviction the one great point the

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114)

lawfulness of your meeting you will obtain a verdict.

That point if is fully contained in the Bill of Rights is the fundamental article of that constitution which Englishmen have been taught to admire Appeal (for so upon your principles you can) to an authority, paramount to the English constitution, to all written Law & parchment constitutions; the Law of universal Reason authorising Men to consult. Ireland was always the least emancipated part of the British Empire. In Ireland they thought proper to pass a tyrannical Law taking away this inalienable privilege. But in Britain they do worse. Ministers are said to have it in contemplation to propose such a law in parliament & in the mean time “you, the jury are called upon to act as if the law were already in existence. Was ever so atrocious a breach of Equity & Reason? They pride themselves in having drawn up a great part of the Scottish Nation into the snare & overwhelmed us with a destruction which no prudence could foresee & no innocence avert”.

The next point I would earnestly recommend to your attention is to show that you and the reformers are the true friends of the country, that you are actuated by pure philanthropy & benevolence & have no selfish views, that your projects lead to general happiness & are the only means of averting the scene of confusion which is impending over us. “Our whole effort is directed ^to^ the preventing mischief & the sparing every drop of blood. The longer the confederates of foreign despots among us go on in their present impious career the more you will want us - we place ourselves in the breach - to snatch your wives & children from destruction. Will the present

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115)

overbearing & exasperating conduct of government lead to tranquility & harmony? will new wars and new laws & the incessant persecution, ruin & punishment of every man that dares to oppose them, heat heal the dissensions of mankind? No nothing can save us but moderation prudence & a timely reform - the permitting men to confer together upon their common interests in a benevolent mind, unprovoked by insult counteracting ing treachery & arbitrary decrees. It is for this antidote to the madness of men in power that we have made every sacrifice & are ready to sacrifice our lives. If you punish us you punish us because we have watched for your good”[.]

Above all let me intreat you to abstain from all harsh epithets & bitter invective - show that you are not terrible but kind & anxious for the good of all. Truth will lose nothing by this. Truth can never gain by passion violence & resentment. It is never so strong as in the principled mind^{xxvii} that yields to the emotions neither of rage nor fear. It is by calm & recollected boldness that we can shake the pillars of the vault of heaven. How great will you appear if you show that all the injustice with which you are treated cannot move you, that you are too great to be wounded by their arrows, that you still hold the stedfast course that becomes the friend of man & that while you oppose their rottenness you harbour no revenge. Men of this unaltered spirit, whom no persecution can embitter, the public want. The jury, the world will feel your value if you show yourself such a man - let no human ferment mix in the sacred work.

We will be sacrificing but not butchers, Cassius,^{xxviii} will carve them as a dish fit for the gods; not hew them as a carcase fit for hounds
(You will not mistake my meaning in this quotation - adopt the spirit not the letter)

Imitate the courage & self possession but not the barbarity of Horne Tooke in his last trial.^{xxix} You will find some ^in^ valuable hints in Hawley's pamphlet. Farewell. My whole soul goes with you
You represent us all

W Godwin Jan^y 23 1794

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c.606/3

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116)

Gerrald's defense is a masterpiece of eloquence & reason. In this country it would probably have triumphed, but in Scotland, juries are or at least were much more under the influence of the judges. Those who presided over this trial did not hesitate to prejudge his case. The chief among them^{xxx} interrupted his defence to tell him that it was seditious - and added the singular assertion that "taking his Gerrald's own account of the matter to be just - supposing that he acted from principle, & that his motives are pure, he ^the judge^ did say that he became a more dangerous member of society than if his conduct had been really criminal & acting from criminal motives". Thus urged the jury found him guilty & the court shewed no mercy - he was sentenced to be transported for fourteen years, which in his ^precarious^ state of health was considered, as it proved, equivalent to a sentence of death. In his defence Gerrald professed himself ready to sacrifice his life in the cause he espoused.
(Turn over)

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[116v]

And he was well aware that he made no empty boast, but that his life would be laid down as penalty of the severities to which he exposed himself.

Could he now witness the days of peace which ha[ve] succeeded to the odious persecution of his own time, & the state of reform, which is carried as far as the state of the public mind in England admits at which we are arrived - he would with

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117)^{xxxi}

triumph repeat his assertion "Whatever may become of me, my principles will last for ever. Individuals may perish but truth is eternal. The rude blasts of tyranny may blow from every quarter; but freedom is that hardy plant which will survive the tempest, & strike an everlasting root into the most unfavorable soil".

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117)

In April Gerrald was removed to London & committed to Newgate, where Godwin & his other friends frequently visited him. Various offers of money were made him ^which it is said that he refused:

note 1 nay such was his spirit of independance that it is also recorded that he refused the offer of a pardon, made him by the Secretary of State^{xxxii} on conditions which were incompatible with his sense of honor, & which he indignantly rejected^.

It was not till May 1795 that he was suddenly taken from his prisonment & placed on board the hulks.^{xxxiii} Soon after he sailed. He never returned to England. Arriving at New South Wales in November, in a declining state of health, he survived but five months - a few hours before he died he addressed the friends around him saying "I die in the best of causes & as you witness without repining".^{xxxiv} He was but thirty five years of age at the time of his death.

The following is his last letter to Godwin before leaving England

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b.214/8^{xxxv} Gerrald to Godwin

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118)

Friend and Citizen,

From some circumstances I am induced to think, (however erroneously perhaps) that my residence in this Temple of British Freedom will not be of much longer duration. I must, therefore, request that you will remember your engagement to dinner dine with me to morrow, and though Tooke accuses you with laying it down as a position that to *make* a promise is criminal, and to *keep* it still more, I beg that on this occasion you will suspend the rigour of your morality, and be *guilty* of a performance of it.

The Mails are not yet arrived - But I understand the plan of the French is to lay siege to Venlo^{xxxvi} only; to masq mark all the other frontier towns, and to proceed instantly to Amsterdam. The

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[118v]

fall of this place is now, I think, is certain and inevitable; as the gallant Duke who was sent to its protection is conducting a retreat not very like that of Scipio, and in very elegiac strains candidly tells us, that his force is only competent to the great military purpose of running away. - I have just been told fby a person of good information who has a place in a public

office, that Clairfayt has crossed the River after his last bloody defeat,^{.xxxvii} which looks as if the wreck of his army was intended as a garrison for Vienna.

The consequences of the fall of Amsterdam are too stupendous for calculation. - The possession of the Dutch navy will enable the Republicans to make a descent (should they be so inclined), on the Eastern Coast of this kingdom, a measure which our own navy will be unable to prevent as the winds which blow them over will keep our

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119)

fleet up the Channel; in which case Mr Guelph^{.xxxviii} may be regaled with a Review not quite so entertaining as that which he has been accustomed to see on in Hyde park or on Wimbledon Common.

The place of my destination I have some *private* reason to think is Sierra Leona - Even in the torrid Zone, on the burning sands of Africa, I shall ^not^ cease to cherish a tender remembrance of my male and female friends; ^the great^ pleasure^{.xxxix} which will beguile the hours of my exile -

-- me vigris ubi mileacampis

Arbor oestivá recreatur aurá

Dula ridentem Lalagen animato

Dula loquentem.^{.xl}

I am almost in despair of ever seeing again ^either^ the Lalage of Titchfield or Hart Street^{.xli}; - before I am doomed "a banish'd man to roam ["

Your's ever

J Gerrald,

Newgate Waterside

.....

Trial of Oliver

c.532/8^{.xlii}

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note

The story of Mr Oliver is told at length in Field's life of Doctor Parr.^{.xliii} He was a surgeon of great respectability in Burslem in Staffordshire - he was distinguished for strict moral conduct, mild & benevolent disposition & pleasing engaging manners. He was on the

point of marrying a young lady with the consent of her family when her father suddenly broke off the match. Oliver was driven to desperation - he resolved to commit suicide - armed for the fatal act he first sought Mr. Wood ^the father of the lady in question^ & for the purpose of expostulating with him. He was heard with indifference & insult & in the exasperation of the moment turned against Mr. Wood the pistol he had armed for his own destruction & shot him dead. Overwhelmed

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with horror the moment the deed was done he surrendered himself. While in Prison he asked to see Doctor Parr & besought him to undertake his defence This let The above letter^{xliv} shews how strongly the Doctor's feelings were interested for the unfortunate man; he devoted himself day & night to drawing up the defence. He beleived him to be more unfortunate than guilty. The poor man was condemned to die & Dr Parr accompanied him to the foot of the scaffold, ^deeply^ commiserating his fate while he regretted his crime

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Treason Trials 1794

c.606/3

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127)

In compliance with this invitation^{xlv} Godwin set off for Hatton on the 5th October. - I give an extract or two from his journal:

Breakfast at [...] Walk from Coventry Dine [...] Supt [...]

7 T [...] Talk of monarchy, self love, family affection

11 S Call at [? Hawley's] Dine at Williams's, talk of pulpits & passions; Parr admits that reasoning always precedes volition.

[...]

13th Monday Walk to Hockley 7 miles Coach to Oxford [illeg] of Stratford & Wise Student - Mail

In Godwin's own summary the cause of his speedy return is mentioned the Grand Jury having found a true bill against the 12 men to be tried for High Treason.^{xlvi}

That ministers should have thus accused men, whose crime could not by any perversion be interpreted beyond sedition might excite indignation but not surprize - but that the Grand Jury

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[127v]

He learnt this event for the first from the public papers, and instantly wrote the following letter to Miss Holcroft^{xlvii}

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[128v]

It was natural enough that Holcroft should have been pained by even an hour's delay - on his return to town Godwin employed himself instantly by writing publicly in favour of his friends.

If the different views these friends equally opposed to despotism in any form took of the conduct by which despotism should be opposed, doubtless conduced to the transient dissatisfaction of Holcroft, Godwin speedily redeemed himself in his eyes. - It may be as well however to glance at the discrepancy of their conduct on public affairs.^{xlviii}

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128)

In the state of political excitement ^occasioned by the clash of^ person men desirous of seeing their country free freer than it was - with a government fearful & suspicious in the extreme, & ready to use any measures to put down the spirit of innovation which had spread abroad, every man ^who announced liberal opinions publicly^ anticipated persecution. Political Justice had escaped prosecution, I have heard my father frequently assert, from the reason that it appeared in a form too expensive for general acquisition - a three guinea book, Pitt observed, ^when the question was debated in the privy council^ "could never do much harm among those who have not three shillings to spare["]. And it may be observed that ^in this^ Godwin acted in strict conformity to his principles. He was the advocate for innovation improvement brought in by the enlightened and sober minded, but he deprecated abrupt innovation & appeals to the ^passions of the^ multitude.

He carried this so far He was besides a direct enemy to all combined societies. Mankind were to be improved by the general diffusion of knowledge; but he considered it inimical to an impartial diffusion of liberty - & to a certain degree an improper

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129)

encroachment on the principles of government that men should as it were secede from the

aggregate of the nation, & unite in societies & brotherhoods, for the purpose of carrying on disseminating particular principles views & carrying these views into effect. These associations were politically legal, but to his mind, erred against his principle of the independant station each man ought to hold, of which more than any other he was the advocate. He never therefore joined made one in those societies to which so many of his friends belonged, & ^consequently^ was therefore not included in the prosecutions which Pitt set afoot - although had these trials been followed by a verdict of guilty, he understood that he would have foll subsequently have shared their fate as their friend & intimate associate. Neither the difference of his opinions from those of his friends - nor his own personal risk could prevent a man as enthusiastic & intrepid as my father from exerting all his powers in their cause.

That Ministers should have accused these men, whose crime could not by any perversion be interpreted beyond sedition might excite indignation but not surprise - yet that a Grand Jury

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should have given their sanction to the proceedings seemed extraordinary & overwhelming. These sentiments were encreased by the charge of Chief Justice Eyre - Godwin on returning to London lost no time in exerting his talents for his friends. As he says, he shut himself up to answer Judge Eyre's charge^{xlix} - On this occasion, speed being a main ingredient to success, he wrote, as he had seldom before done, by dictation. His old & tried friend, Marshall,¹ was his amanuensis - As he warmed in his subject, he walked about with quick steps paced the room with quick, eager steps, pouring out his reasons arguments, sarcasms & conclusions with an animation & eagerness fervour that ever sat well on features & manner usually too quiet & undemonstrative. It was his own cause as well as that of the men about to be put to their trial Had the minister succeeded in convicting them Godwin had been his next prey.

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[137v]

himself of the talents with which nature had endowed him, & stood by the sufferers, their just friend and successful advocate.^{li}

The cause of the accused traitors^{lii} hinged upon the simple question, whether a line of conduct, which might, if carried on to its utmost extent, by the worst of men, have ended in the subversion of the English Monarchy, was not to be construed with an overt act of treason. Chief Justice Eyre charged the grand Jury to whom the bills were sent up, to be found true or not concerning these twelve men accused of treason for having met in convention for the sake of furthering a plan to obtain Annual Parliaments. The Judge explained ^the law according to the statute of Edward III^{liii} which is still the law of the land; he entered upon the question of^

what an overt act was is & how much of bad intention was necessary to constitute a traitor.^{liv} He allowed that an association a convention for obtaining Annual Parliaments was not treasonable - ^but an evil & secret design might be hid under this avowed object, which it was the purpose of the Grand Jury to detect^ - but if the Convention had for its intention the enforcing Annual Parliaments without of its own authority that was an act of treason. He added that “whether the project of a convention, having for its object the collecting together a power, which should overawe the Legislative

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himself of the talents, with which Nature had endowed him, & stood by the sufferers, their stedfast friend & successful advocate.

It was a matter period He looked on this crisis as one of awful moment to all Englishmen. The law of high treason, accurately defined by the statute, & ably commented on by the best lawyers, was to be stretched & bent for the destruction of these men. Because they had entered upon a line of conduct, which if carried to its utmost extent, by the worst of men, might be supposed in the result, as tending to the overthrow of monarchy, they whose motives were pure, & who abhorred blood, were to be condemned for traitors. Nay more. Their ostensible object was confessedly legal; & it was behind this avowed & innocent intention that ^hidden &^ treasonable acts were to be discovered & punished.

They had met in convention for the sake of furthering a plan to obtain Annual Parliaments. This was their apparent crime; it remained to discover the most hideous guilt of high treason behind so innocuous an outside. Chief Justice Eyre charged the Grand Jury^{lv} assembled to find these or to throw out the bills presented against the accused. He explained the law of treason

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according to the statute 25 Edward III, which is the law of England. He set forth what an overt act was - & that it was necessary to prove by two witnesses the committing of the an act which was had in its intent & effect the “encompassing & imagining the death of the King”[.] He allowed that a ^meeting in^ convention for the sake of obtaining Annual Parliaments was not treasonable - but he averred that a secret & evil design was in the present instance most probably hidden behind concealed by this pretext. He said that if the Convention had for its intention the enforcing Annual Parliaments of its own authority, that was an act of treason. He further observed that [“]whether the project of Convention, having for its object the collecting together a power which should overawe the legislative

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Body, & extort a Parliamentary Reform, if acted upon, will would amount to High Treason,

& to the specific treason of compassing & imagining the death of the King is was a more doubtful question” - and he added “If charges of High Treason are offered to be maintained on this ground only; perhaps it may be fitting that in respect of the extraordinary nature & dangerous extent & very criminal complexion of such a conspiracy, that case, which I stated to you as a new & doubtful case, should be put into a judicial course of enquiry, that it may receive a solemn adjudication, whether it will or will not amount to high treason, in order to which the bills must be found to be true bills.”

In short after stretching & rendering as vague as possible the narrow & defined limits of what is considered an excellent law of treason, the judge set up a new case; not as yet acknowledged as treason by the law of the land - but of which, when the criminals were found guilty, the judges - men against whom it is a principle of our constitution to grant the accused appeal against were to decide

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upon & to determine whether they were or were not to be hanged - thus erecting the mere executive at once into legislative & jury. An awful stretch of power which would have placed every disaffected Englishman into the hands of Government, to be dealt with as it chose - & the mercy to which it was inclined was manifested by the present trials.

Godwin’s keen & logical & eloquent talents mind easily detected the flaws in Judge Sir James Eyre’s reasoning, & his eloquence set them forth clearly & forcibly. He repeated & praised the first setting forth of the law of treason by the judge. “In all this preamble of the Chief Justice,” he says, [“] there is certainly something extremely humane & considerate. I trace in it the language of a constitutional lawyer, a sound logician, & a temperate, discreet & honest man. I see rising to my view by just degrees a Judge, resting upon the law as it is, & determinedly setting his face against new, unprecedented & temporizing constructions. I see a Judge that scorns to bend his neck to the yoke of any party, or any administration; who expounds the unalterable principles of justice, & is prepared to try by them & by them only

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the prisoners that are brought before him. I see him taking to himself, & holding out to the Jury the manly consolation, that they are to make no new law, & force no new interpretations; that they are to consult only the statutes of the realm & the decisions of those writers who have been the luminaries of England. Meanwhile what shall be said by our contemporaries & by our posterity, if this picture be reversed; if these promises were made, only to render our disappointment more bitter; if these high professions merely served as our introduction to an unparalleled mass of arbitrary constructions, of new fangled treasons, & doctrines equally inconsistent with History & themselves?”

He then proceeds to comment severely on the Judge's new species of treason, that the design to subvert the monarchy was to be considered a design against the life of the king. He allowed that no lawgiver had ever ventured to contemplate such an act in its whole extent & that it is not declared by the statute of Edward III, but that it is in reality the greatest of all treasons. Godwin irresistibly proved reasoned that the thing to be proved was not whether the accused were guilty of a moral crime

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but of a crime against Law - “Let it be granted,” he says, “that the crime in the eye of reason & discretion, is the most enormous that it can enter into the heart of man to conceive, still I have a right to ask is it a crime against Law? Shew me the statute that describes it; refer me to the precedent by which it is defined; quote me the adjudged case in which a matter of such unparalleled magnitude is settled.”

Mr. Godwin then proceeds to analyze the various modes in which the Chief Justice supposes it possible that these men, associated for the purposes of obtaining Parliamentary Reform, were guilty of High Treason. “One mode”, he says, “is by such an association, not in its own nature, as he says, simply unlawful, too easily degenerating, & becoming unlawful in the highest degree”. It is difficult to comment on this article with the gravity that may seem due to a magistrate, delivering his opinions from a bench of Justice. An association for Parliamentary Reform may “degenerate & become unlawful to the highest degree, even to the enormous extent of the crime of High Treason”. Who knows not

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that? Was it necessary that Chief Justice Eyre should come in 1794, solemnly to announce to us so irresistible a proposition?^{lvi} An association for Political Parliamentary Reform may desert its object & be guilty of high treason. True: so may a card club, a bench of justices, or even a Cabinet Council.^{lvii} Does Chief Justice Eyre mean to insinuate, that there is something in the purpose of a Parliamentary Reform, so unhallowed, ambiguous, & unjust, as to render its well wishers objects of suspicion rather than their Brethren & fellow subjects? What can be more wanton, cruel, & inhuman, than thus to single out the purpose of Parliamentary reform, as if it were of all others, most especially connected with degeneracy & treason.

“But what is principally worthy of attention, is the easy & artful manner in which the idea of treason is introduced. First there is a ‘concealed purpose,’ or an ‘insensible degeneracy’ *supposed* to take place in the associations. Next that ‘concealed purpose’ or insensible ‘degeneracy’ is *supposed* to tend directly to the end ‘the subversion of the monarchy’. Lastly a ‘conspiracy to subvert the monarchy,’ is a treason first discovered by Chief Justice Eyre in 1794, never contemplated by any Lawgiver - or included in any statute. Deny the Chief Justice any one of his three assumptions, & his whole deduction falls to the

ground. Challenge him, or any man living, to prove any of them; & you require an impossibility. And it is by this sort of logic, which would be scouted by the rawest graduate in either of our universities, that Englishmen are to be brought under the penalties of treason.

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Of these assumptions, the most flagrant perhaps, if in reality there ^{^can^} be any gradation in such groundless assertions, is that which imputes to the association a ‘conspiracy to subvert the Monarchy’. The Chief Justice knows, for no man is ignorant, that there is not a shadow of evidence of such a conspiracy. If any man in England wishes the subversion of the monarchy, is there a man in England who does not feel, that such a subversion, if effected at all, can only be effected by an insensible revolution of opinion? Did these associations plan the murder of the king, & the assassination of the royal family? Where are the proofs of it? But the authors of the present prosecution probably hope, that the mere name of Jacobin & Republican will answer their purposes; & that a Jury of Englishmen can be found who will send every man to the gallows without examination, to whom these appellations shall once have been attributed.

“If Chief Justice Eyre, or his Majesty’s servants, have any charge of high treason to advance, let them advance it. The purpose of Parliamentary Reform, as the Chief Justice confesses, so far from being treasonable, is not ‘simply unlawful’. If the persons now under confinement, have been guilty of high Treason, that is the point to which our attention is to be called. Their treason is neither greater nor less, for their being engaged in a lawful object, the associating for a parliamentary Reform. Tell us what they have done that is criminal, & do not seek to excite extrajudicial prejudices against them for what is innocent.

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Mr. Godwin then goes on to remark on the Chief Justice’s observations on a “Convention” - a word brought into disrepute by its adoption in France, but as he observes observed “conventions & meetings of delegates are by no means foreign to the English history; & twelve & fourteen years ago many of his Majesty’s ministers were deeply engaged in a project of this nature” - but because the name was used in France Chief Justice Eyre believed that “it deservedly became an object of jealousy to the Law.” “Can any thing be more atrocious,” Godwin exclaims, “than the undertaking to measure the guilt of an individual, & the interpretation of a plain & permanent law, by the transitory example that may happen to exist before our eyes in a neighbouring country?["

“After a laborious discussion on this point["], Mr. Godwin continues, “Chief Justice Eyre is not yet satisfied that he has formed a construction strong enough to ensnare the

persons now under confinement. He has heaped distinction upon distinction. He has promulgated at least five or six different classes of treason, not found in the direct provisions of 25 Edward III or in the remoter instances of Foster & Hale^{lviii} nor supported, as he explicitly confesses, by any law, precedent or adjudged case. But all this he does in the mere wantonness of his power. If any of the prisoners now under confinement had acted according to all the enumerations of his imaginary

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cases, it may safely be affirmed, that, upon any sober trial upon a charge of High Treason, they must infallibly be acquitted. But the Chief Justice implicitly confesses, that they have not acted on any one of his cases. All this profusion of fiction, hypothesis, & prejudication, is brought forward for the ^{sole} purpose, either of convincing us of the unparalleled ingenuity of the Lord Chief Justice of his Majesty’s court of Common Pleas, or to bewilder the imaginations, to throw dust in the eyes, to confound the understanding of the Grand Jury of the Nation. If this last be the purpose conceived, & if it could possibly be supposed that it should be successful for a moment, early would be the repentance, deep the remorse, & severe, it is to be feared, the retribution!”

Mr. Godwin then comes to the last point of the Chief Justice’s charge - that of bidding the Grand Jury find a true bill, if they should discover on the part of the accused a design to overawe King & Parliament, that afterwards it might be subjected to a “judicial course of enquiry, that it may receive a solemn adju[di]cation, whether it will or will not amount to High Treason”. On this Mr. Godwin continues:

“The Chief Justice, in this instance, quits the character of criminal judge & civil magistrate, & assumes that of a natural philosopher or experimental anatomist. He is willing to dissect the persons that shall be brought before him, the better to ascertain the

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truth or falsehood of his preconceived conjectures. The plain English of his recommendation is this: ‘Let these men be put on their trial for their lives; let them & their friends, through the remotest strainers of connection, be exposed to all the anxieties incident to so uncertain & fearful a condition; let them be exposed to ignominy, to obloquy, to the partialities, as it may happen, of a prejudiced Judge, & the perverseness of an ignorant jury: we shall then know how we ought to conceive of similar cases. By trampling on their peace, throwing away their lives, or sporting with their innocence, we shall obtain a basis on which to proceed, & a precedent to guide our judgement in future instances.’ This is a sort of language which it is impossible to recollect without horror, & which seems worthy of the judicial ministers of Tiberius & Nero. It argues, if the speaker understands his own meaning, or if the paper before has faithfully reported it, the most frigid indifference to human happiness & human life.

According to this method of estimate, laws, precedents, cases & reports are of high value, & the hanging a few individuals is a very cheap, economical & proper way of purchasing the decision of a doubtful speculation.

“Surely it would be worthy, if not of the Judges, at least of the intermediate Ministers of the sovereign, to consider whether, if they mean to put us under a new rule of criminal law, it is not better solemnly to originate that law in the two Houses of Parlia

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ment, than to suffer it to be made out of new constructions of the statutes, contrary to all law & precedent, & contrary to the security & liberty of the subject.

“In Ireland, some time ago, it was thought proper to bring forward a Convention bill, declaring such proceedings, as are the subject of the forced constructions of Chief Justice Eyre, to amount to high Treason. When the Habeas Corpus act was suspended in England, we were given to understand that this was thought sufficient for the present, & that a Convention Bill, similar to the Irish,^{lix} & other severe measures, were reserved to be adopted, as the case might require. This fallacious shew of lenity, now turns out to be the most unprincipled tyranny. Mr. Dundas & others talked in the last session of the Parliament, of bringing [?home] the Scottish principles of jurisprudence, if need were, to England, & rendering associations & Conventions a subject of transportation to Botany Bay. They have since refined upon their plan, & carried the law of England, or what they are pleased to call so into Scotland, rendering these offences, real or imaginary, a subject of the penalties of High Treason. Such have been the encroachments on the constitution, by men who have the audacity to call themselves its Champions, that a man who should have pretended to foretell, from six months to six months, the measures they would think proper to pursue, would have been laughed at for the improbability & utter absurdity of his tale. Britons will at length awake, & the

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effects of reason & conviction upon them, will not be the less formidable or less unacceptable to their oppressors, than the effects that might flow from a course of violence”.

“Thus it is fully admitted, respecting the persons now under accusation, that they could find no reason, either in the books of our law, or any commentators of received authority, to suppose that they were incurring the guilt of treason. ‘The mark set upon this crime, the token by which it could be discovered, lay entirely concealed, & no human prudence, no human innocence, could save them from the destruction with which they are at present threatened.’ It is pretty generally admitted that several of these persons, at least, were honest & well-intentioned, though mistaken men. Punishment is awarded in (human) courts of justice, either according to the intention, or the mischief committed. If the intention

be alone considered, then the men of whom I speak must on that ground be infallibly acquitted. If on the other hand the mischief incurred be the sole measure of the punishment, we are bound by every thing that is sacred to proceed with reluctance & regret. Let it be supposed, that there are cases, where it shall be necessary that a well designing man should be cut off for the sake of the whole. The least consideration that we can pay to so deplorable a necessity, is, to warn him of his danger, & not to suffer him to incur the penalty, without any previous caution, without so much as the knowledge of its existence [.]

“I anticipate the trials to which this charge is a prelude. I know that the judge will admit the good

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intention & honest design of several of the persons arraigned: it will be impossible to deny it; it is notorious to the whole universe. He has already admitted that there is no law or precedent for their condemnation. If therefore he address them in the frank language of sincerity, he must say: ‘The Ministers say you engaged in measures which you believed conducive to the public good. You examined them in the sincerity of your hearts, & you admitted them with the full conviction of the understanding. You adopted them from this ruling motive, the love of your country & mankind. You had no warning that the measures in which you were engaged were High Treason: no law told you so; no precedent recorded it: no man existing on the face of the earth could have predicted such an interpretation. You went to your beds with a perfect & full conviction, that you had acted upon the principles of immutable justice, & that you had offended no provision or statute that was ever devised. I, the Judge sitting upon the bench, you Gentlemen of the jury, every inhabitant of the island of Great Britain had just as much reason to conceive that they were incurring the penalties of the law. This is the nature of the crime, these are the circumstances of the case.’”

The effect of this appeal when it became wide spread through the medium of the public papers was memorable. Hitherto men

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heard that the King’s Ministers had discovered a treasonable conspiracy & had arrested the traitors. They believed this. No project was deemed too wild ^and wicked^ by for those who had imbibed the infection of the French Revolution, nor could any believe [sic] that the highest & most solemn council of the state, would have proceeded against these men ^twelve subjects of the king realm^ but on clear & undoubted grounds. The charge of the Chief Justice did not dissipate this illusion. It is true that all he said was wrapt in *may bes* - & the Grand Jury was told that they were to discover secret & treasonable designs - but still Mr Pitt was a man of high character & vast talents -& men leant on their confidence in him, & readily saw gigantic dangers in the shadowy images of treason that were brought forward.

They could not believe that for the sake of an experiment - for the sake purpose of overawing the country & extending his powers beyond the limits of the Constitution he so much vaunted, that he would put in slight account the lives & liberties of twelve men, his fellow subjects, whom he knew that there was no law to condemn, & whom he only hoped to destroy through the influence of the panic which the proceedings of another

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country had engendered in this. But these remarks at once dissipated the mist that clouded men's understandings. They who before believed that the accused were undoubtedly guilty of treasonable designs, began to perceive that a design to reform Parliament was not treasonable, & that however wrong headed & even reprehensible it might be to associate for such a purpose, it was no cause why men, otherwise innocent should, themselves & their families, be subjected to the frightful pains & penalties of treason.

Impartial men now looked forward to the event of these trials with very different expectations both as to the nature of the charges to be brought, & the result. The friends of the accused looked up, & while they dared hope for a just fair trial, confided in an acquittal. The event showed how reasonable & just were Godwin's reasonings - how strained, tyrannical & barbarous the proceedings of Ministers.

Hardy, a shoemaker by trade, was the man first selected by the Attorney General for trial to be put to the bar. The trial lasted eight days - The evidence brought was complicated & vast but vague & incon

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[clu]sive - he was acquitted. A man, noted & feared for his talents, was the next selected Horne Tooke. The trials of Thelwall & Horne Tooke followed. But the whole force of government had been directed against Hardy, it had failed, they had no more evidence to bring, & they had a more important adversary to deal with & they also were acquitted - the public accusers now felt their task ended - they allowed sentences of acquittal to be accorded in favor of the other prisoners & the whole fabric ^of accusation^ so full of injury to the sufferers, of anguish to their friends, & of terror to the country at large, faded away like a mist of morning before the language of truth innocence of the accused, the honesty of the juries, & the security of the law.

Godwin, as he says, was present every day during these trials. He knew himself to be a marked man - & had these men been found guilty, his turn was to come next. But he fearlessly anticipated the result. He was present when the Attorney General announced that he gave up his intention of proceeding against Holcroft - it was then that the latter, being liberated, left the dock & crossing the court, took

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his seat beside Godwin, & Sir Thomas Lawrence struck by the happy contrast exhibited in the attitude & expression of these men made a spirited sketch of them in profile ^now in possession of Francis Broderick Esq.^^{lx}

A feeling of triumph among the friends of freedom was universal - even now there lingered on the English shores the victims ^of the Scottish laws^ Gerrald Muir Palmer & Skirving who by the law of Scotland were sentenced to be transported to Botany Bay. Their fate filled their friends with grief & indignation. But worse had been now since attempted^{lxi} - & it was a matter of virtuous triumph to find that the attempt failed - that our country was restored to the protection of its laws, & a boundary placed to the wild & unconscientious infringements encroachments of arbitrary power. How deeply Godwin shared the triumph anyone who knew his deep love of justice, his passionate adherence to ^the cause of^ freedom - his enthusiastic friendship - his benevolence - his single heart which participated to the full the pains & pleasures of his friends, may easily conceive He never forgot the delightful sensations which

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he then experienced - & it was his dearest boast & most grateful recollection that he had contributed to the glorious result, through his letter to Chief Justice Eyre^{lxii}

It is singular that notwithstanding the honest pride he took in this production, I find the following letter among his papers- addressed to Chief Justice Eyre the same judge; which whether it was ever sent or published I cannot tell, but it shews how little of the vain & petty spirit of triumph beat in the writers bosom. It was for the cause that he contended - for the cause that he felt glad of victory. His own personal glory mingled little with these higher emotions.

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b.227/2(b)^{lxiii} **Godwin to Eyre**

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My lord

The writer of this letter is the person who took it upon him to answer through the medium of the press your Charge to the Grand Jury at the Sessions House at Clerkenwell

I should be ashamed not to be equally ready to give praise where praise is due, as to bestow censure where I thought it justly incurred. To this sentiment you are indebted for the trouble I now give you.

I listened with great pleasure to your summing up the of the evidence in the trial of Mr Horne Tooke. I thought it for the most part fair to manly, candid ^both^ to the prosecutor & the prisoner, & such as was worthy of an English Judge. There were parts undoubtedly upon which I differed widely in sentiment, but, supposing them blameable, what human composition is without its defects? I thought it upon the whole noble & admirable. I still however feel in their full extent your exposition of the law of treason.

As to the pamphlet I published, I cannot repent of it. I conceive that it was fair to publish one pamphlet ^bring forward one publication^ on the favourable side, after the infinite pains that had been taken in every forum to excite prejudice against the

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accused for six months together. I think I had as much right to publish my pamphlet pending the trials as you (had) to publish yours. It cannot be, that everything that can be effected to the disadvantage of a culprit shall be innocent, & that, the moment the vo one solitary voice of humanity is lifted in their ^his^ favour, it shall be an atrocious & scandalous libel.

But, though I do not repent of the publication, I did not altogether approve at the time, & still less approve now, the warmth of some of the expressions. I cannot believe that truth will ever be injured by a sober & benevolent style. Entertaining this opinion, I should certainly have made my style less offensive, if I had had more opportunity of for leisure & reflection. Add to this that my mind was inexpressibly affected with a sense of the deep iniquity & the tremendous consequences that would have attended the conviction of the prisoners & the tremendous consequences that would have grown out of it. After all, I am persuaded that the language by no means exceeds in severity that which ordinarily falls to the share of the most temperate controversial writings.

I have no wish upon the subject but that, as you have in the late instance justly deserved ^earned my^ approbation, you may go on to deserve the applause & esteem of an impartial honest man..^{lxiv}

.....

c.607/6^{lxv}

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Dr Parr

Godwin wrote a letter of exaltation to Dr Parr on the acquittal of Hardy, dated “this ever-memorable & ever-honoured fifth day^{lxvi} of Nov. 1794 [“]

[...]

John Johnstone M.D.Life of Parr Vol I Chap XII^{lxvii}

[...]

***document Godwin to Thelwall**

Duke reel 13^{lxviii}

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Letter VII. Sent to one of the prisoners confined in the Tower & afterwards indicted by the Grand Jury October 7, 1794. Sep. 18, 1794.

I saw for the first time (yesterday) your letter to Mr. ..., in which my name is mentioned.

I hope you will not feel much pain in the decision my judgment has led me to form respecting my proposed visit to you. I believe there is not an atom of pusillanimity or indifference in it. But the more critical the situation of public affairs appears to become, the more it strikes me as a duty to do nothing precipitately. The line of conduct I have chalked out to myself is as follows; it remains to be seen whether I shall have the virtue to live up to it. - Upon all occasions to carry my life in my hand; not to indulge a particle of selfish retrospect to life or its pleasures, or the fears of pain & death; but - to expend this treasure, which does not belong to me but to the public, with all the wisdom I am able; therefore to risk it freely in matters

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of solid & palpable benefit, but not in matters of mere gratification. Now I believe the visit I proposed is rather a matter of gratification to me & not less to you, than of indispensable utility. I cannot therefore reconcile myself for the sake of it to submit to the terms proposed. These persons* fixed on a day & hour when I was to attend them if I pleased. Now I cannot lie; I abhor duplicity & suppression of every sort; & have no inclination unnecessarily to expose myself to the caprice of persons who by act of parliament have abolished all law & seized a despotical power into their hands. What business then have I with the sittings of these conspirators?

Having taken up my pen, I have one or two other things to add. I am sorry to see in your letter a spirit of resentment & asperity against your persecutors. I was in hopes that the solitude of a prison might have taught you to reflect on this error & assessed it. How senseless & idiotlike is it, to be angry with what we know to be a mere passive instrument,# moved according to certain regular principles, &

*Lords of the privy council. #Man: the argument proceeds upon the idea of the necessary & irresistible influence of motives on the mind.^{lxix}

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& in no degree responsible for its operations? If you had ever fully conceived the beauty of universal benevolence, you could not thus neglect & offend against it. If you had understood the divine principle of loving our enemies, you would be one of its most zealous adherents. If you could feel the difference of sensation produced in every spectator, by a man who yields to his unbridled anger, & a man whose equanimity no injuries can disturb, who breathes nothing but benignity, who interests himself for the good of all, & who would willingly protect his adversaries from harm & study their advantage, you would be smitten with the generous ardour of earning this sort of sympathy & approbation. All men inevitably shrink in a greater or lesser degree from him who is ready disciplined & prepared to take pleasure in the sufferings of another.

One thing more. I understand that you are endeavouring to accumulate materials from Sydney & others. I am afraid you are in a wrong scent. Amass as much knowledge as you please, but no authorities. To quote authorities is a vulgar business; every soulless hypocrite can do that. To quote authorities is a cold business; it excites no responsive sentiments; & produces

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no hear[t]felt conviction. The friends of established usurpation ^as honest John Wickliffe said^ will always beat us at that. Appeal to that eternal law which the heart of every man of common sense immediately recognizes. Make your justification as palpable to the unlearned as to the studious. Strip it of all superfluous appendages; banish from it all useless perplexity. Be neither precipitate nor declamatory; but grave & impressive. Consult yourself severely upon the truth of all your allegations. In that case I have not a doubt of the event. It is good to be tried in England, where men are accustomed to some ideas of equity, & law is not entirely what the breath of judges & prosecutors shall make it. And better, at least in such a country, is a plan of unsophisticated argument, making its way irresistibly to the understanding,

Than a successive title long & dark,

Drawn from the musty rolls of Noah's ark.

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***document Gerrald
Duke reel 13**

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Glasgow, 20th Oct. 1835

Sir,

We are now engaged in publishing The Life and Trial of Mr Joseph Gerrald.^{lxx} An admirable little letter of yours addressed to him a short time before his trial has come into our hands; we are desirous of publishing it, but think it proper in the first place, to receive your permission to do so. An answer at your earliest convenience wd greatly oblige, Sir/Your very obedt. Servants/Muir, Gowans & Co./ 42, Argyll Street.

William Godwin, Esq.

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For full citations see Bibliography.

ⁱ Dep. c.606/3. *Bodleian rubric. For pages c.606/3: 64, [64v], 86, 87, 102, 103, consisting of MWS transcriptions of Godwin's letters and journal entries, unconnected with the political trials, see chapter 2: *politics*.

ⁱⁱJohn Alexander Ferguson, *Bibliography of Australia Vol. i 1784-1830* ([1941]; facs.; Canberra, 1975) [Ferguson 1975]. *Addenda 1784-1850 (Volumes I to IV)* (Canberra, 1986) [Ferguson 1986]. See esp. 1794/189a, 190a, 192, 201a, 201b; 1795/218b, 230a, 230b. See also Scottish trials 1793-1794 in Chadwyck-Healey Microfilm series *British Trials 1660-1900* (Cambridge, 1990), Unit 1: mfm reels 204-210. Cf. John Barrell, *Imagining the King's Death* (Oxford, 2000). [Barrell]

ⁱⁱⁱ Substituted date 'late in 1793' is correct for Thomas Muir, tried for sedition before Justice-Clerk Robert Macqueen, Lord Braxfield, in Edinburgh High Court of Justiciary on 30 August 1793, and sentenced to 14 years' transportation; and for Thomas Fyshe Palmer, of Dundee, tried at Perth on 12 September 1793 and sentenced to seven years. Cancelled 'early in 1794' was correct for Joseph Gerrald's trial in Edinburgh on 3, 10, 13, 14 March 1794, sentenced to 14 years. [Ferguson 1975: 1794/179]. William Skirving and Maurice Margarot were arrested with Gerrald, tried in the same sessions, and received the same sentence of 14 years' transportation. Only Margarot survived to return to England in 1810, and in 1814, according to St Clair (C304), attempted to renew acquaintance with Godwin. See 5: *women*, 'Mrs G's Letters'.

^{iv} Christina Bewley, *Muir of Huntershill* (Oxford, 1981) [Bewley], sums up the trials of Muir and Palmer: 'It was to the discredit of the Scottish Judiciary that they were not conducted fairly and of the Government that ... they used the Scottish Courts, where decisions were final, to make an example of prominent reformers. ... The contrast with later English trials is marked. ... English reformers were partly saved by revulsion at the horrible fate of their Scottish colleagues' (Bewley, 84).

^vMWS script's distinction between 'men of good birth & education' and 'common felons' echoes the indignant sentiments of Godwin's 'Valerius' letter to the Editor of the *Morning Chronicle* (below, b.227/2(b)). Another distinction, the presumption of innocence before the law, was endangered. In 1795 Holcroft's pamphlet, *A letter to the Right Hon. W. Windham, on the intemperance and dangerous tendency of his public conduct*, protested against Windham's speech under parliamentary privilege on 30 December 1794, wishing the twelve men acquitted in the London Treason Trials of October-November 1794 'the joy of innocence of an acquitted felon' (Barrell, 430). Despite widespread protest, the demeaning term 'acquitted felon' gained currency in the government press, and is repeated as a term of defiance by the radical journalist John Smith (below).

^{vi}On 10 Mar. 1794 William Adam MP moved an Address to the throne praying George III to interpose the royal justice and clemency on behalf of Thomas Muir, younger, of Huntershill, and Rev. Thomas Fyshe Palmer, sentenced respectively to fourteen and seven years' transportation for the feudal crime of 'leasing-making' (bearing false witness). But Muir's and Palmer's convictions under Scottish law allowed no appeal, and the prayer was overruled by the Speaker of the House of Commons. Royal clemency was finally exercised by William IV in 1820 by which time only George Mealmaker, who had written the pamphlet for the Dundee Friends of Liberty for which Palmer was convicted, was alive to receive it. A memorial plaque in the Adam family vault in Greyfriars Cemetery, Edinburgh, commemorates William Adam's successful campaign to strike 'leasing-making' from the Scotch criminal statutes.

^{vii}Dep. b.227/2(b), Godwin hand, draft letter, quarto sheets of bluish paper, written r and v, heading ‘Muir & Palmer’ in MWS hand, numbered in MWS style and sequence 97) 98) 99) 100), decorative undated watermark. This sequence of numbered pages corresponds to a gap in the page numbers of Bodleian folder c.606/3. The letter does not appear to have been published until 1876 in Charles Kegan Paul’s *Godwin and his Contemporaries* ((C109-110, n12, citing CKP i 121-24).

^{viii}Hapsburg Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II (1741-1790), late brother of the then Queen of France, Marie Antoinette. Godwin may have found the term ‘modern antitype’ in his study of Cromwell’s republican Commonwealth.

^{ix}‘The term ‘messieurs’, or ‘Messrs’, to refer to the accused men, appears in British official papers and published reports of group trials.

^xScotsman Henry Dundas, later Baron Melville, MP for Edinburgh, and Secretary of State for Scotland, Home Secretary until 1794, then Secretary of War in Pitt’s wartime cabinet (Barrell 186). Sheridan and other leading (Whig) oppositionists lobbied Dundas on behalf of Muir and Palmer. A nephew, Robert Dundas of Arniston, was Lord Advocate of Scotland 1789-1801, and chief prosecutor at Thomas Muir’s and other Scottish political trials in the 1790s (Bewley, 68-79). He is supposed to have favoured the idea that Muir and Palmer should petition for reprieve (Bewley, 87).

^{xi}Richard Brinsley Sheridan, MP. See 2: *politics*.

^{xii}Edmund Burke, MP, author of *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790). See 2: *politics*.

^{xiii}The Roman pseudonyms convey Godwin’s more moderate (Valerius), and more radical (Mucius), protests’ (C33, 108-9, 115). Cf. ‘Letters of Mucius’, *Political and Philosophical Writings of William Godwin*, i 255-297; and Letter 5, signed Mucius, ‘To such persons as may be appointed to serve upon juries for the trial of seditious and treasonable words’, published in *Morning Chronicle* on 30 March 1793, *Political and Philosophical Writings of William Godwin*, ii (Mph 1993, 5).

^{xiv}Page 108) anticipates the London Treason Trials of October-November 1794, and Godwin’s *Cursory Strictures*. See below MWS script c.606/3: 133). The cancelled opening sentences compound the obscure sequence of MWS script, in that she introduces Godwin’s letter on behalf of Muir and Palmer (March 1794) before his letter to Gerrald (January 1794).

^{xv}*Authentic Biographical Anecdotes of Joseph Gerrald* (2nd ed.; London: D. I. Eaton, 1795), 7: ‘Joseph Gerrald was born in the island of St Christopher, 9 Feb. 1763’. My copy in Mitchell Library, Sydney.

^{xvi}Rev. Dr Samuel Parr, Anglican clergyman and schoolteacher, of Hatton, Warwickshire. A Cambridge graduate, Parr had first taught at Harrow, where Richard Brinsley Sheridan was a star pupil, then in Colchester and Norwich. Gerrald was a private boarder and pupil. Parr’s relations with Godwin, see 2 : *politics*.

^{xvii}MWS draws her description of Gerrald after Field’s *Life of Parr* (1828): ‘In the course of the year 1794, the mind of Dr Parr was painfully agitated, by the cruel fate of one of his pupils, the richly-gifted, the greatly imprudent, but dreadfully injured, Joseph Gerrald’ (Field i , 338). MWS note 1: ‘Vide Field’s Life of Doctor Parr from which much of this account is taken’.

^{xviii}The protagonist of Richard Cumberland’s successful play, *The West Indian: a comedy* (1771). Field relates an incident in 1792 involving Parr and Cumberland when Parr was pamphleteering on behalf of Joseph Priestley and the Birmingham dissenters (Field, i 340-1). But Gerrald was only eight years old when Cumberland wrote *The West Indian*.

^{xix}In October 1793 the third Scottish Convention of Friends of the People, was organised by William Skirving after the imprisonment of Muir and Palmer. When the English delegates arrived late it was reconvened in November as the first British Convention (Bewley, 93). Joseph Gerrald, Secretary of the London Corresponding Society, was the London delegate and one of the principal organisers. It was legal in Scotland, but not in England, to call a popular convention without royal i.e. government assent. In *Popular Disturbances in Scotland 1780-1835* (Edinburgh, 1979), Kenneth Logue writes: ‘On 5 December 1793 the leading members of the British Convention, Maurice Margarot and Joseph Gerrald from the London Corresponding Society, Charles Sinclair from the London Constitutional Society, William Skirving, secretary of the Convention, and Alexander Scott, the editor of the Edinburgh *Gazetteer*, were all arrested and the British Convention dispersed. Scott fled the country but the others stood trial for sedition and Margarot, Gerrald and Skirving were all transported for fourteen years’ (Logue 15-16). St Clair corrects Logue on the ambiguous part played by Charles Sinclair (C148, 155).

^{xx}MWS script follows Field, i, 338-9. Cf. Barrell 157-69, trials of Gerrald, Margarot, and Skirving.

^{xxi}St Clair (C108) endorses MWS remarks and argues that Godwin disapproved the example of Paine, who had skipped bail and left others to suffer prosecution. Godwin’s letter to Erskine after he had unsuccessfully defended Paine *in absentia* in December 1792 insists that Paine would have done better to defend himself in court than to have hired a professional advocate. See 2: *politics*.

^{xxii}MWS cites Gerrald’s speech to his supporters, as reported by Parr and published in Field (Cf. Field, i, 340-41).

^{xxiii}MWS comments on the colonial status and political subservience of the Scottish judiciary. Cf. (above) c.606/3: 96): ‘... in Scotland where the laws against sedition were severer than here, & juries more entirely under the direction of the court’. On 22 May 1794, under pressure from Home Secretary Henry Dundas, the law of Habeas Corpus was suspended in England; simply, there was no rule of Habeas Corpus in the Scottish legal system, based on Roman law.

^{xxiv}St Clair dates this letter 23 January 1794, adding that ‘the trials at Edinburgh were a fiasco’ (C109-10).

^{xxv}Dep. c.532/2, draft letter [from Godwin to Gerrald], quarto fold, numbered in MWS style and sequence 112)-115), bluish paper, undated decorative watermark. Some words overinked: ‘dear’ to ‘clear’ (112); ‘pilfer’ to ‘fritter’, ‘heat’ to ‘heal’ (115). This sequence of pages numbered 112)-115) corresponds to a gap between pages 111) and 116), missing from the Bodleian folder c.606/3. Another draft of this letter is in Duke reel 13, dated 23 Jan. 1794, 7 pp., lacks signature, labelled ‘*Letter VI. Sent to Joseph Gerrald on the evening of his departure from London to take his trial in Scotland*’. Variations between drafts shown below.

^{xxvi}The sentence ‘I have been told ... groundless calumn[y] upon the character of the human mind’, lacking in Duke reel 13 draft.

^{xxvii}Duke reel draft, ‘the firm fixt mind’.

^{xxviii}A misquotation of Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*, ii, i. Duke reel draft quotes in verse lines.

^{xxix}Marilyn Butler, *Burke, Paine, Godwin and the Revolution Controversy* (Cambridge, 1984) [Butler 1984], notes that ‘John Horne Tooke ... was jailed during the American Revolution for soliciting subscriptions for ‘our beloved American fellow-subjects ... inhumanly murdered by the king’s troops at or near Lexington’ (Butler 1984, 18).

^{xxx}The Scottish Justice-Clerk, Lord Braxfield, was the presiding judge at Gerrald’s trial and interrupted Gerrald’s address to the jury with insults and sneers, as he had done in August 1793 in the case of Thomas

Muir, his fellow Scot. The published accounts of Gerrald's trial enraged English liberal opinion but attempts to have Braxfield disciplined by the law lords in Westminster came to nothing. At a safe distance of a century, Henry Cockburn describes Gerrald as 'an Englishman, a gentleman, and a scholar' (*An Examination of the Trials for Sedition ... in Scotland* (2 vols.; Edinburgh, 1888) [Cockburn 1888], ii 41).

^{xxx}MWS has cancelled the page number 117) and left this paragraph from Gerrald's address to the jury on an unnumbered page. She numbers the next page of her commentary 117).

^{xxxii}The 'Secretary of State' for Scotland and MP for Edinburgh, Henry Dundas. John Smith's *Gerrald: a Fragment, ... sent as a Delegate to the British Convention at Edinburgh, by the London Corresponding Society*, published 13 June 1795, quotes a letter 'recently appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*': ' "They retained Mr Gerrald in England till after the memorable trial of the Acquitted Felons. They were willing that no man should be ignorant that if he had been tried in England, and by an English Jury, he would have been acquitted with honour' (Smith 1795, 21-24). I have not ascertained the author of the *Morning Chronicle* letter. It is tempting to find a Godwinian double negative in : 'willing that no man should be ignorant'. The activist, author and bookseller Smith was Gerrald's fellow-prisoner in Newgate in Feb. 1795, but was subsequently acquitted.

^{xxxiii}Field, i, 343-4 quotes a letter from Gerrald dated "Portsmouth, May 16, 1795, on board the Hulks".

^{xxxiv}MWS quoting Field, i, 349, who footnotes his source as 'Collins' *History of New South Wales*', i.e. David Collins, *An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales* (London, 1798). The anonymous letter to the *Morning Chronicle* also ends 'Mr Gerrald ... is in the thirty-fifth year of his age'. Smith points out the error - Gerrald, born 1763 and died 1796, was in his thirty third year in 1795 (Smith 1795, 20, 24).

^{xxxv}*Bodleian rubric Dep. b.214/8: 'One letter from J Gerrald to Godwin, also copy of this letter'. The original is single octavo fold, addressed on outer, laid paper, large pinhole in left top corner, seal marks rusted on right top corner, decorative undated watermark. Copy is in unidentified hand, MWS numbering style 118) and 119), wove paper, written r and v, no watermark, large pinhole matching that in Gerrald original. This sequence of pages numbered 118)-119) corresponds to a gap in the Bodleian folder c.606/3. My text is the copy numbered in MWS style. Variants between copy and original noted below.

^{xxxvi}Venlo, a Dutch town, near the river Meuse.

^{xxxvii}Thomas Holcroft's Diary entry on 12th [July 1798], tells an anecdote of General Claesfait 'during the war with the Turks', cited in Hazlitt, *Memoirs of Holcroft* (Howe 179, 215).

^{xxxviii} Cf. St Clair (C134-5 and n12): 'Joseph Gerrald remained in prison in London during the treason trials, visited frequently by Godwin and other friends, and reassured that the power of truth had proved stronger in England than Scotland. He continued to hope for a French victory and a French invasion that would remove Mr Guelph - as he called George III - from the throne. ... Hopes revived after the English acquittals that he might be reprieved or the sentence moderated, but in May 1795 he too was sent to Botany Bay, where he died within the year'.

^{xxxix}Original gives 'charm'.

^{xl}Original gives 'Pone me pigris ubi nullacampis/Arbor oestiva recreatur aura/Dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo/Dulce loquentem'. Quoting Horace, *Carmina*, 22, first couplet of quatrain 5, second couplet of quatrain 6.

^{xli}Lalage is the pretty woman of Horace's Ode 22. Godwin gives Titchfield Street, Marybone [Marylebone] as his address in early 1791 (c.606/1: 1). Hart Street was the address of Mrs (Elizabeth) Inchbald in 1784, a

‘respectable address’ according to her biographer James Boaden (Boaden 1833, i 184, 228).

^{xliii}Dep. c.532/8, MWS hand, quarto fold, written r and v, unnumbered, watermark Joynson 1839, rusty pin marks match those on copy of Mary Wollstonecraft 1796 letter to Godwin numbered 40, and MWS note on Sarah-Anne Parr, also in c.532/8. See 5: *women*.

^{xliiii}‘Parr, Samuel (1747-1825)’, *DNB* (1922), xv, 362, signed [L]eslie [S]tephen, notes Parr’s assistance to Oliver, and cites Field i, 373, to the effect that Parr (with the majority conservatives of the 1790s) blamed the influence of Paine’s books for affecting Oliver’s judgment. Like Gerrald, Oliver was Parr’s former pupil.

^{xliv}I have not located ‘the above letter’.

^{xlv}Hatton in Warwickshire, the parsonage of Samuel Parr since 1783. Godwin’s first visit to Hatton on 5 October 1794 was at Parr’s invitation (C128). Cf. MWS in c.532/8: 124): ‘Not long after his return [in 1794 from a visit to Norwich] he received the following letter from Dr Parr entreating a visit soliciting him.’ See 2: *politics*.

^{xlvi}The 1794 London trials for High Treason, Chief Justice Eyre presiding, with Vicary Gibb and Thomas Erskine defending, ended in twelve acquittals after hearing evidence from witnesses in the cases of Thomas Hardy and John Thelwall. The trial then proceeded to summing up for acquittal without taking evidence in the other cases. The prosecutor was Attorney General John Scott, later Lord Eldon, the Lord Chancellor who in 1817 denied Percy Bysshe Shelley’s suit for legal guardianship of the two children of his first marriage.

^{xlvii}Godwin’s letter to Holcroft’s daughter Fanny is missing from the Bodleian folder. Quoted in St Clair from c.532 (C129, n3). Godwin concluded with the wish that ‘you should not summon me to town without the possibility of some small benefit’. MWS comments on the friends’ ‘different views’ and Holcroft’s ‘transient dissatisfaction’ indicate probability that MWS had read Holcroft’s reproachful letter in reply (also quoted C129).

^{xlviii}MWS glances not for the first or last time at what she calls a ‘discrepancy’ of Godwin’s and Holcroft’s politics. Cf. Hazlitt, *Memoirs of Holcroft* (Howe, 163-65). See 2: *politics*.

^{xlix}*Cursory Strictures on the Charge delivered by Lord Chief Justice Eyre to the Grand Jury* (London: D. I. Eaton, 1794). First published anonymously *Morning Chronicle*, Oct. 21, 1794. Anonymously attacked in a pamphlet, *Answer to Cursory Strictures*. Godwin’s *Reply to Answer to Cursory Strictures* published by Daniel Isaac Eaton. All three published while trials were proceeding (C131). In b.228/4, Godwin’s letter to Harriet Lee in 1798 declares his authorship of *Cursory Strictures*, ‘an attack upon the judge by whom I expected Horne Tooke, Holcroft & other of my friends to be hanged’. See 6: *writing*.

^lJames Marshall. See 1: *literature*.

^{li}The line praising Godwin ‘himself ... their just friend and successful advocate’ is repeated on c.606/3: 132 (below). Preceding words of the sentence lacking in both cases.

^{lii}MWS phrase ‘accused traitors’ recalls the controversial label ‘Acquitted Felons’. Cf. MWS comment in c.606/1: 113): ‘H[olcroft] was a man of stern & irascible character. From the moment that he espoused liberal principles he carried them to excess. He was tried for life as a traitor for his enthusiasm for the objects of the French Revolution’. See 1: *literature*.

^{liii}Statute 25 Edward III, a statute ‘for the protection of tyrants’ and defining the capital crime of high treason ‘when a man doth compass and imagine the death of the king’. . The prosecutor at the trial of Robert Watt in Edinburgh High Court of Justiciary, 27 August, 1794, told the jury: ‘The offence charged is compassing and imagining the death of the King. The Act [of Edward] charges not the offense done, but the intention of the

person, viz. that of compassing the death of the King' (*Trials at Large of Robert Watt and David Downie* (London, 1794), 7)

^{liv}The legal standard of proof as to guilty intent [*mens rea*] was the main plank of Thomas Erskine's nine-hour opening address to the jury in the trial of Thomas Hardy: 'It is the act with the specific intention, and not the act alone, which constitutes the charge. ... the establishment of the overt act, even if it were established, does not establish the treason against the king's life, BY A CONSEQUENCE OF LAW' (Erskine, *Howell's State Trials*, 878-95, cited in Thomas Pfau, *Romanticism, Radicalism, and the Press*, ed. Stephen Behrendt (Detroit, 1997), 45). Godwin had already probed this anomaly in *Cursory Strictures*, arguing that the law protects itself from the imputation of intention to the legislators and cannot arbitrarily abrogate this principle.

^{lv}Twelve members sat in a Grand Jury to 'find a true bill', i.e. determine what would now be called a *prima facie* case. In this case, Chief Justice Eyre's direction to find a true bill was followed by the Grand Jury.

^{lvi}Godwin echoes *Hamlet*, i, v, 'There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave, /To tell us this.'

^{lvii}Erskine put Prime Minister Pitt in the witness box at the 1794 trials, where he made a reluctant admission of attendance at a Parliamentary Reform meeting.

^{lviii}Sir Michael Foster's edition of commentaries on Sir Matthew Hale, *The History of the Common Law of England* (London, 1713).

^{lix}Cf. (above) Godwin to Gerrald, in c.532/2: 114): 'Ireland was always the least emancipated part of the British Empire. In Ireland they thought proper to pass a tyrannical Law taking away this inalienable privilege'. As writer of the British and Foreign History section of Robinson's *New Annual Register for 1785*, Godwin had reported: 'The [Irish] assembly resolved that the bill lately passed was diametrically opposed to the principles and spirit of the constitution, and that individual liberty and the liberty of the press, could not exist any longer than they were united' (*NAR 1785*, 55-59). See 2: *politics*.

^{lx}*Monthly Mirror* Jan 1805, i, 5-7, used an engraving by Ridley of Lawrence's courtroom portrait ('In the possession of Dr Batty') as illustration for 'Biographical Sketch of William Godwin, Esq'.

^{lxi}The charge of high treason against the London defendants carried the death penalty, thus was 'worse' than the Scottish charges of sedition and sentences of transportation to NSW.

^{lxii}i.e. *Cursory Strictures*, Godwin's 'open letter' published in the *Morning Chronicle*, not the 'following letter' to Eyre (b.227/2 b).

^{lxiii}b.227/2(b), single sheet, written r and v, numbered in MWS style and sequence 151) 152).

^{lxiv}The last ten words on page numbered 152) appear to have been brought up from the next sheet of the letter, which is missing from the folder b.227/2(b).

^{lxv}Dep. c.607/6. MWS hand, unnumbered quarto fold, wove paper, watermark Joynson 1839. See 2: *politics* for this page of c.607/6 in full.

^{lxvi}5th November, Guy Fawkes Day, and publication date of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, was honoured by the Revolutionist societies. See 2: *politics*.

^{lxvii}John Johnstone, *The Works of Samuel Parr ... With Memoirs of his Life and Writings* (8 vols.; London, 1828)

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endnotes *documents

^{lxviii}Duke reel 13, Godwin hand, 4pp., heading 'Letter VII', dated 18 Sep. 1794, no MWS numbering or annotations. On the microfilm reel, this follows 'Letter VI' to Joseph Gerrald (above). St Clair identifies it in

c.511: 'Copy of a letter to John Thelwall, arrested and imprisoned in the Tower of London. ... [Godwin] knew that the letter would be intercepted by the authorities - perhaps read personally by William Pitt and the Privy Council' (C127, n1).

^{lxi}St Clair writes that the headings, marginal notes, and numbers on Godwin's draft letters, including 'Letter VI', to Joseph Gerrald, and 'Letter VII' to John Thelwall, were intended by Godwin for the guidance of his future biographers (C127). MWS script pays close attention to Gerrald but does not at any point mention Thelwall. Amelia Alderson's letters to Godwin throw some light on the relations between the two men. See 4: *pedagogy*.

^{lxx}Godwin evidently gave permission to the Glasgow firm to publish his letter. It has been recently republished from *The Trial of Joseph Gerrald, before the High Court of Justiciary, at Edinburgh, on the 13th and 14th of March, 1794, for Sedition; with an Original Memoir, and Notes* (Glasgow, 1835), in Pamela Clemit, *Lives of the Great Romantics*, i *Godwin* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1999) [Clemit 1999], 121-125.

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Chapter note 3: *law*

Chapter 3: *law* is the briefest of our six chapters; it consists of manuscripts from six folders, Deps. c.606/3, b.227/2(b), c.532/2, b.214/8, c.532/8, and c.607/6; the *documents are taken from Duke reel 13. Mary Shelley's account of Godwin's role in the political trials in Scotland and London in 1793 and 1794, in Dep. c.606/3, is the longest sequence in MWS holograph script of *Life of William Godwin*, and makes up the greater part of this chapter.

The Bodleian rubric for Dep. c.606/3 is:

Mary Shelley, Life of Godwin. Fragments of draft on wove paper of bluish tint (numbered 64, 86-7, 95-6, 102-3, 108-111, 116-17, 127-130, 132-150). 35 leaves.

Certain of these leaves [pages 64, [64v], 86, [86v], 87, 102, 103], consisting of MWS transcriptions of Godwin's letters and journal entries on topics unconnected with the trials of 1793 and 1794, are presented in our Chapter 2: *politics*, as are a group of numbered pages from Dep. c.532/8, on the same 'wove paper of bluish tint', that were probably displaced from folder c.606/3 at some stage. See chapter note 2: *politics*.

In his account of the political trials of 1793 and 1794, Charles Kegan Paul (1876) quotes almost the whole of MWS script c.606/3, under the subheading 'Mrs Shelley's Notes' (CKP i 124-7, 128-35). Godwin's letter of 23 January 1794 to Joseph Gerrald is given in Paul i 125-28. Paul's diligence in collating these papers has undoubtedly helped to hold the materials in MWS handwriting together, but not the letters from Godwin, and letters to Godwin from Thomas Holcroft, Joseph Gerrald and others, which have been detached and transferred to other folders. And although Mary Shelley's narrative of the trials is substantially preserved in folder c.606/3, there are baffling gaps in pagination according to the rubric. Happily, we have located three letters with pages numbered in MWS style and in sequence with her commentary in Dep. c.606/3. These three are: Godwin's letter to the press signed 'Valerius' in b.227/2(b) numbered 97)-100) inclusive; Godwin's letter to Joseph Gerrald in c.532/2 numbered 112) -115) inclusive; and the original, plus a copy, of Gerrald's letter to Godwin in b.214/8, numbered 118) -119).

No watermarks are identified on the paper of Dep. c.606/3.

Two handwritings are identified in this chapter, Mary Shelley's (MWS) and William Godwin's (Godwin). A letter from Joseph Gerrald in Newgate prison to Godwin, in Joseph Gerrald's handwriting, together with an undated copy of it, is foldered in

Abinger Dep. b.214/8, and our text is from this latter copy, in an unidentified hand, numbered in MWS style 118) 119), in sequence with MWS commentary. The endnotes indicate significant variants between our copy-text and the original letter. The Latin verse quoted from Horace's Odes was a source of many of the errors made by whoever copied out the original. In his discussion of this letter, St Clair (C134-5) provides a clue to its description of a tropical paradise--Gerrald was expecting to be transported to Freetown in Sierra Leone, not to Port Jackson, New South Wales. Coincidentally, a learned joke shared with Godwin, referring to Mrs Elizabeth Inchbald as 'the Lalage of Hart Street', 'sweetly laughing', presumably eluded Mary Shelley's notice.

We have presented in this chapter 3: *law* a single page document from Dep. c.532/8, MWS script on watermark Joynson 1839 *papier satine*, unnumbered, with the heading 'note'. This treats of Dr Oliver's trial and execution for murder, and we have included it in this chapter 3: *law* for its topical relevance to Dr Samuel Parr and the law courts. This 'note' has at some stage been pinned to other papers in the folder c.532/8, covering Mary Shelley's comments on Dr Parr's daughter, Sarah-Anne (Mrs Wynne) at the time of Godwin's marriage and later. With this exception, MWS script on 1839 watermark paper in c.532/8 is to be found in our chapter 5: *women*. The MWS 'note' refers to a letter ('the above letter') written by Samuel Parr about the trial of Dr Oliver, but no MS of this letter has been so far located in the folders. Mary Shelley is possibly referring to a letter of Parr's published in one or both of two biographies of Samuel Parr cited by her: William Field, *Memoirs of the Life, Writings and Opinions of the Rev Samuel Parr, LLD* (2 vols.; London, 1828); John Johnstone, *The Works of Samuel Parr ...With Memoirs of his Life and Writings* (8 vols.; London, 1828). Our chapter 2: *politics* presents MWS script on undated paper in c.532/8 about Godwin's relationship and correspondence with Parr.

We have not been able to locate Godwin's letter of 9 October 1794 from Hatton to Thomas Holcroft's daughter, Fanny, nor Holcroft's reply from Newgate on 10 October. The MWS sequence of pages c.606/3: 127) [127v] [128v] 128) 129) does not appear to have left space for them. They are cited in the endnotes to this chapter 3: *law* with acknowledgments to William St Clair who indicates the MS originals in Abinger Deps. c.531 and c.515 respectively (C129, and n3, n4).

The documentation of this chapter 3: *law* refers to a standard bibliography of 18th- and early 19th-century British-Australian publications relevant to Godwin's advocacy on behalf of those sentenced to transportation to NSW in 1793. J. A. Ferguson's *Bibliography of Australia Vol. i 1784 -1830* [Ferguson 1975] indexes the trials of Joseph Gerrald, Maurice Margarot, Thomas Muir, Thomas Fyshe Palmer, and William

Skirving, labelled the 'Scottish Martyrs' or 'Scottish Reformers', though only two were Scots-born.

The absence of watermarks on the papers of c.606/3 curtails speculation as to the date of Mary Shelley's composition of this, our third chapter, but it is evident that she was well into the task by now and handles her materials with confidence. For the Scottish radicals she diversifies her historical narrative with contemporary letters. In her account of the 1794 London Treason Trials of twelve accused men, she stages Godwin's day-by-day dealings with the crisis, and sets a concise paraphrase of his pamphlet *Cursory Strictures* into a vital process of composition--Godwin striding about his London rooms, dictating to James Marshall, as if on his feet in court while his friends stand in the dock, charged with capital offenses. This imaginative scenario positions Godwin's private tutelage of herself alongside his public advocacy of uncorrupted law, so that the rather awkward moves noted elsewhere in MWS script between 'my father' and 'Mr Godwin' achieve a better fit in this chapter.

Godwin's role by proxy in the 1793 Scottish trials for sedition leads into the second section of MWS narrative in c.606/3, on the West Indian-born barrister and radical, Joseph Gerrald. It draws on Gerrald's relationship with the Anglican clergyman and his former headmaster, Rev. Dr Samuel Parr, and on Parr's with Godwin. Gerrald was author of a pamphlet, *A Convention the Only Means of Saving us from Ruin: In a Letter, Addressed to the People of England*, published at the radical press of Daniel Isaac Eaton in 1793, the year before Eaton published Godwin's *Cursory Strictures* in pamphlet format. Though Gerrald's pamphlet is not mentioned by title in Godwin's letter to Gerrald before his trial (c.532/2), nor in MWS commentary, the fact that Gerrald is a published author raises the stakes in his defense for both Godwin and Mary Shelley, as proponents of liberal ideas and a free press.

Gerrald's official role as delegate from the London Corresponding Society to the British Convention in Edinburgh in November 1793 led to a warrant for his arrest on a charge of sedition. Like his Scottish colleague and fellow-organiser Thomas Muir of Huntershill, who had already been sentenced to fourteen years' convict transportation in August 1793, Gerrald was urged by a group of friends to flee the court's jurisdiction abroad, but returned voluntarily to Scotland to face trial and defend himself and the cause of reform. The Scottish legal system differed from the English in regard to the statute of 25 Edward III (of England Ireland and Wales) defining the capital offense of High Treason. There was no right of appeal under Scottish law: and the Act of Union of 1707 had failed to codify the ancient penalty of banishment. In 1793 the British penal

system of transportation to the infant colony of New South Wales was still in its initial chaotic stages. In October 1794, the junior barrister at the London Treason Trials, Thomas Erskine, himself a Scot, successfully argued on these grounds in defense of his clients, and there was an attempt in 1795 to invoke similar arguments retrospectively, to prevent Gerrald's transportation. But Gerrald's was an isolated case unable to penetrate the solidarity of the Pitt-Dundas government's regime in Scotland.

It was in this crisis of Gerrald's cause, when he had decided to return to Scotland in January 1794, that Godwin came forward with a piece of writing of the mixed mode that we have already seen in chapter 2: *politics*, an 'open' or 'public' letter, like those to Richard Brinsley Sheridan in 1791 and Thomas Erskine in 1792. Godwin's mentorial letter to Gerrald (c.532/2) is modelled on classical Ciceronian lines and resonant with the tones of Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, a hero for English dissenters. He urges Gerrald to seize the initiative and not allow any other man's words to come between him and his destiny, confident that sincerity lends eloquence to a just cause that must not and will not be withstood. There is a hollow irony in such advice at such a juncture. Godwin deploys the open rhetoric of the *agora* while remaining under close cover of the schoolmaster. At this date Godwin and Parr had not yet fallen out over politics and MWS script draws them into parallel over Gerrald's cause, even as she takes the opportunity to differentiate Parr's parsonical intervention in the case of the convicted murderer Oliver (c.532/8), from Godwin's principled opposition to political persecution.

Gerrald's trial that followed was a travesty of justice, as MWS script (c.606/3: 116) states: 'Those who presided over this trial did not hesitate to prejudge his case'. MWS script confirms Godwin's attachment to the primacy of literary culture as a commonwealth of values. Gerrald, all the more in 'supposing that he acted from principle, & that his motives were pure', met a martyr's fate.

In her commentary on the political trials, MWS script recapitulates the central importance of Godwin's commitment to political justice, the formative influence he assigned to moral pedagogy, and (with a side-glance at Mary Shelley's own affective ties to Scotland) the desirability of amalgamating Scottish independence with southern liberalism. Here, MWS script shows the influence of Walter Scott's *Waverley* novels. In 1831 Godwin himself had paid tribute to Scott in the *Advertisement* to the Standard Novels reissue of his *St Leon: A Tale of the Sixteenth Century* (first published 1799), and, as with the other new introductions to their old novels, written by Mary Shelley and Godwin in the 1830s, their critical positions are closely aligned. Occasionally in the

MWS script c.606/3 we catch an echo of Mary Shelley the young Shelleyan, characteristically warm on behalf of a reformed state and a socially just politics. This is quickly subdued to a reflection of English contemporary standards, a Scotland *then* measured against an England *now* (under the young Victoria), to the advantage of the latter.

Godwin's advice to Gerrald to dispense with a barrister and conduct his own defense at the Edinburgh High Court of Justiciary in March 1794 proved ruinous, but was not without Scotch precedent. Launching the First Scottish Convention in Edinburgh's Lawnmarket, in December 1792, Thomas Muir, younger, of Huntershill, had inflamed the authorities by reading aloud an *Address from the Society of United Irishmen to the Delegates for Promoting a Reform in Scotland*. Notwithstanding the legality under Scottish civil law of invoking a popular convention, warrants were issued against the convenors, and Muir was forced to flee to France, but returned to face the music and his trial for sedition took place before the Justice-Clerk Lord Braxfield on 30 August 1793. Muir defended himself, refusing Henry Erskine's offer to act for him. Lord Advocate Robert Dundas prosecuted¹ Muir was found guilty and sentenced to fourteen years' transportation. At his trial for sedition in Perth the same month the clergyman Thomas Fyshe Palmer was sentenced to seven years' transportation, and like Muir, was moved to the Woolwich prison barges to await his passage.

Godwin's pseudonymous public (but probably never published) letter, written in March 1794 and signed 'Valerius' (b.227/2(b)), protesting on behalf of Muir and Palmer in the Hulks, is introduced in the first pages of narrative (MWS script c.606/3: 96), displacing it from its date of writing (March), before she presents Godwin's private letter to Gerrald (written in January). This is yet another reminder that Mary Shelley's historical narratives take little account of material occasions of writing or publication. *Caleb Williams* was published in May, 1794, and Godwin went on a visit to his friends in Norfolk, 'his native country' (MWS script c.532/8). This journey is reported in MWS script as a high watermark, with Godwin rejoicing in the 'purely English style' of the Author of *Caleb Williams*.

Caleb Williams was published in May - it raised the reputation of the author to the highest pitch - those who had no taste for ^political disquisition^, or who did not agree in the tenets of Political Justice, were

¹Kenneth Logue, *Popular Disturbances in Scotland 1780-1835* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1979), 14, n17, citing *Howell's State Trials*, xxiii, 117 et seq..

carried away by the engrossing interest, the elevated feeling and dignified yet purely English style of the novel. Its reputation became European. In this country its influence extended into every grade of society. Those in the lower grades classes saw their cause espoused, & their oppressions forcibly & eloquently delineated - while the higher rank acknowledged & felt the nobleness, sensibility & errors of Falkland with the deepest sympathy. (c.532/8: 120)

This passage is presented in our chapter 2: *politics* in its place in a long sequence of MWS script, mainly on the topic of *Political Justice*. It is taken from Dep. c.532/8, but as the endnotes to chapter 2: *politics* point out, it is written on 'wove paper of bluish tint' similar to the papers in Dep. c.606/3, the MWS narrative of the Treason Trials which forms this chapter 3: *law*. Re-citing it here in its contemporary context, the period when Godwin wrote and published it, and the historical date, May 1794, which heads MWS narrative of events immediate to its publication, allows us to gauge its rhetorical displacement of actual current events, Gerrald's wretched incarceration, Muir's and Palmer's imminent transportation, into a moving figment of Godwin's heroic authorhood, a paper and ink battle reflected on the walls.

'... their cause espoused, & their oppressions forcibly & eloquently delineated', mimes courtroom advocacy, like Thomas Muir's, or parliamentary grievance debates, like William Adam's, both of these named in MWS narrative in c.606/3. While the novel's influence is pervasive of all classes of society, its subtlest effects on 'sympathy' are felt by the 'higher rank', those whose education has refined their sensibility and enabled them to recognise that the high born Falkland, with all his 'errors', is one of themselves. A distaste for 'political disquisition' (what Keats had termed 'a palpable design on the reader'), and disagreement with 'the tenets of Political Justice' are positive qualifications for the ideal reader of *Caleb Williams*.

This passage engages by reminiscence the debate at the close of 1790 between Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Men*, and Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, on the symbolic politics of chivalry. MWS script has repeatedly stressed Godwin's admiration of Burke, and there is some warrant in Godwin's textual corpus for her emphasis on Burke's elevation of English national unity when fronting Europe, and the platooning (if not indeed the dragooning) of the lower classes into having their 'cause espoused' by those more educated than themselves.

In October 1794, Godwin left London to enjoy a brief respite at Hatton, Samuel Parr's Warwickshire parsonage (c.606/3: 127)). But the holiday was dramatically interrupted by news of Thomas Holcroft's detention in London. St Clair quotes from Godwin's papers: 'In the *Morning Chronicle* of 7 October just arrived [on 9 October] from London, it was reported that a grand jury had found "true bills" against twelve of the arrested informers on a capital charge of high treason under the 1351 [25 Edward III] Act, and that the name of Thomas Holcroft had been added to the list of those charged'. (C129 n3, quoting c.531).

After learning of the arrest of his close associates in the Society for Constitutional Information and the London Corresponding Society, and the imminent issue of a warrant for his own arrest, Holcroft published a statement in the London press and voluntarily presented himself to the authorities at Hicks Hall, Clerkenwell. Hazlitt's *Memoirs of Holcroft* outlines the crisis that developed after Holcroft's letter to the Editor of the *Morning Post* was published on 1 October 1794: 'The see-saw of contradictory reports continued for some days. A daily paper asserted, and as it professed, with authority, that the rumour of Mr Holcroft's being included in the indictment was absolutely false; and a friend, who had determined (should it prove true) to give him every aid in his power, quitted town the very day before the bill was returned' (Howe 145). This friend was, of course, Godwin.

This striking incident launches the main portion of MWS narrative, the progress of two court proceedings against twelve men on charges of High Treason or 'encompassing the death of the King', the definition of this capital crime by the Statute of 25 Edward III. The first hearing empanelled a Grand Jury of twelve citizens, and the trial proper began after the Chief Justice Lord Eyre handed down his Charge to the Grand Jury to 'find a true Bill', that is, instructed them that the defendants had a *prima facie* case to answer.

Godwin's pamphlet, *Cursory Strictures on the Charge delivered by Lord Chief Justice Eyre to the Grand Jury* was published anonymously in the liberal newspaper *Morning Chronicle*, on 21 October 1794, and subsequently appeared in pamphlet form. It caused a stir and earned political and judicial disapproval, but it put new heart into the civil libertarian cause. Godwin's authorship remained close guarded even when conjecture attributed authorship of *Cursory Strictures* to the barrister Felix Vaughan and others, but he gradually let his friends into the secret, including as one anecdote has it, a grateful Horne Tooke.

In our chapter 6: *writing*, one of Godwin's letters in 1798 to Harriet Lee refers with pride to his pamphlet:

For myself I have devoted myself for the happiness of my species; I have published various writings in circumstances of great danger, one an attack upon the judge by whom I expected Horne Tooke, Holcroft & other of my friends to be hanged; a publication that appeared but a few days before their trial, & which is supposed by them to have eminently contributed to save their lives. (b.228/4)

After witnesses had been called in two trials, and the defendants acquitted, judicial procedures were abridged. Thomas Hardy and John Thelwall being acquitted, John Horne Tooke's trial was curtailed, and he too was acquitted on 22 November.

Thomas Holcroft, the next in line, was able to step down without interrogation, on Monday 1 December 1794. But according to his biographer William Hazlitt, Holcroft hardly felt the 'general joy', since he was refused the right to address the court and clear his name. The consequent pain of mind provoked him to publish two protest pamphlets in 1795 (Howe 151-2). The first of these pamphlets, *A Narrative of Facts*,² used the print medium to compensate for being silenced in court. The second, titled *Letter to the Hon. William Windham*, denounced official connivance at press vilification of the so-called 'acquitted felons', casting a permanent slur on the name of men who had been found 'Not guilty' of a capital charge in the highest court of the land. In her script c.606/3 Mary Shelley precedes her account of the 1794 Treason Trials with a commentary on the unwisdom of Holcroft's political activities, during Godwin's struggle to defend 'the cause of the accused traitors' (c.606/3: [137v]). And in *1: literature*, MWS script comments that Holcroft 'carried [liberal principles] to excess ... and was tried for life as a traitor for his enthusiasm for the objects of the French Revolution' (c.606/1: 113).

Godwin's role in securing acquittals at the London trials makes the jubilant climax of Mary Shelley's narrative, despite the debacle of Gerrald's trial and the cruel fatalities of the transportation system. One omission in MWS account is the name and fame of the barrister Thomas Erskine, led by senior counsel Vicary Gibbs, who successfully

²Thomas Holcroft, *A Narrative of Facts, Relating to a Prosecution for High Treason; Including the Address to the Jury, Which the Court Refused to Hear* (London: H. D. Symonds, 1795). Cited in Judith Pascoe, Chapter 2, 'The Courtroom Theatre of the 1794 Treason Trials', *Romantic Theatricality: Gender, Poetry, and Spectatorship* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997)

defended Thomas Hardy and Horne Tooke in the trials that went to the jury (Howe, 147, 292). It seems that she devised her account of the 1794 trials to turn upon a single heroic figure--William Godwin. She was perhaps the less inclined to give credit to Erskine's advocacy after reading what Godwin had anonymously conveyed to Erskine after his failure to secure an acquittal for Tom Paine in December 1792. We presented this letter in *2: politics*, in its contemporary context. Here is part of what Godwin wrote then:

You stated it as one of the great privileges of the English constitution, that every man arraigned of any crime was enabled to secure himself an advocate to plead his cause. You claimed considerable credit upon that occasion for having persevered through every obstacle in the assertion of this privilege. It is my particular intention to controvert the reasonings of this part of your speech. You will perhaps be surprised to hear it affirmed, that you had a considerable share in procuring the verdict of guilty against your client. (b.227/2(b): 36)-37)

This private-public letter, private because Erskine cannot trace the writer (or not without difficulty), and public because it enunciates a principle of public policy, was written at nearly the same time as the publication (February 1793), of *Political Justice*. Godwin flexes his forensic professionalism but devalues Erskine's, and privileges eloquence which subjectively believes what it professes. Godwin's letter to Gerrald (c.532/2), almost exactly one year later modifies this argument, only to make it more absolute.

Where Erskine in December 1792 should have defended Paine's untrammelled right to publish his ideas (and not tried to defend the ideas in his book), Gerrald in January 1794 is exhorted to defend himself without a lawyer, and to appeal to no legal principle, save the right of a free-born Englishman to be 'whole [him]self'. This scouts representation (re-presentation), of one man's 'cause' by another man's 'voice'. Yet paradoxically it makes every instantiation of truth to belief (sincerity) representative of all others: 'You represent us all'. The universal standing of the individual speech act places Godwin's present writing--the letter conveying these sentiments--in a liminal space, present-absent to Gerrald's extreme danger, present in experienced time but not in embodied space, thanks to the fluent resilements of the written line. This compares with the *techne* of the "open" letter, such as the letter to Sheridan in April 1791, which precisely commissions an audience with a man in power, and in parliamentary power of voice at that, to be the agent at remove of what Godwin the writer authorises.

Let me quote here from the paraphrase of the 1791 letter in MWS script c.606/2 (in 2: *politics*)

Had you rather be indebted to [sic] your eminence to the caprice of monarchs, than to the voice of a whole nation, accumulating its gratitude on the head of the general benefactor? Had you rather have the nominal profession of power, with your hands free for the purposes of corruption, but chained up from the exertion of every virtuous effort; than have the real profession of power; able to make every act of your administration a blessing to Britain, to Europe & to mankind
[?]

Each of these letters, to Sheridan, Erskine, Gerrald, brings in question the relative power in and on the world of the writer and his addressee. What binds them in expressive self-consistency is the privilege (and ascetic self-abridgment) of the writer, not to act or suffer beyond the text.

Shelley rounds off her account of the year of trials 1793-1794 with a document in b.227/2(b), numbered in sequence with her script in c.606/3. This is the draft of a letter (discreetly unsigned), written after the trials by Godwin to Lord Chief Justice Eyre, to claim authorship of *Cursory Strictures*, and to instruct the judge on principles of the law, as Eyre himself had *ex officio* instructed the Grand Jury. Godwin's pedagogical stance is never more explicit than in this letter.

A historical footnote to MWS account seems in order: the trials of Robert Watt and David Downie for High Treason were conducted in Edinburgh over the same months August-October 1794 as the London trials, and brought down guilty verdicts and death sentences for both men, though Downie's sentence was subsequently commuted to transportation. This coincidence of ordeals does not enter into Godwin's manuscript archive, nor the MWS narrative, though her remarks about the severity of the Scottish courts gesture in the direction of these grim events. An account of the Watt and Downie trials in John Barrell's recent study, *Imagining the King's Death* (Oxford, 2000), sheds new light on the complex web of political and historical ties between Scottish and English justice systems.

.....

*documents attached to chapter 3: *law*:

Duke reel 13, a draft or copy of 'Letter VII', an unsigned note dated 18 Sep[tember] 1794, from Godwin to John Thelwall in Newgate, identified by St Clair (C127, n1) in Dep. c.511.

Duke reel 13, an 1835 letter to Godwin from Muir, Gowans & Co, Glasgow publishers, requesting permission to publish his letter to Gerrald in 1794 in their forthcoming *The Trial of Joseph Gerrald, before the High Court of Justiciary, at Edinburgh, on the 13th and 14th of March, 1794, for Sedition; with an Original Memoir, and Notes* (Glasgow, 1835). Reprinted in Pamela Clemit ed. *Lives of the Great Romantics*, iii, i 'Godwin' (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1999), 121-125. Godwin's letter as published in Clemit 1999 is dated 'W. Godwin/Jan. 29, 1794'. Godwin himself may have changed the date on the copy he sent to the publishers from the c.532/2 MS version 'Jany 23 1794'.

.....

Mary Shelley, Life of William Godwin

4: pedagogy

Thomas Abthorpe Cooper

c.606/2

”””

122) 1788.

[...] ⁱ

- In the summer of this year I took lodgings for two months at Guilford in Surry, & received as an inmate my kinsman Mr Thomas Cooper, then twelve years of age, who had just lost his father in the East Indies, by whose premature death, his family were left unprovided I pass over some insignificant matters of literature in which I was engaged in these years - but, about the period at which I am now arrived, I found my disbursements clearly exceeding my receipts, & had foolishly anticipated in future receipts, & being under the necessity of retrenching I took a cheaper lodging than I had lately been accustomed to, in Great Marybone St. It was at this time that I became extremely intimate with Mr Holcroft.

.....

c.607/3 ⁱⁱ

”””

136)

This year ⁱⁱⁱ as is apparent from the above memoranda brought little change - & little event. The struggle for a livelihood occupied called forth Godwin's mind time & exertions exertions, while his mind was yet unawakened to any great undertaking - to earn a maintenance by literary labor is always at once dispiriting & anxious - the pay is uncertain - & the success also - while to write with pleasure elevation & self satisfaction an Author must feel that pride which does not admit of weighing words against gold - & that appearance of success which can never fill animate the soul except when excited by a subject that fills & sustains. In the midst of much cares & privation Godwin derived consolation from the equanimity of his mind temper & his taste for society. Though he could not be said to shine, he was always very fond of society - as is proved by the care with which in various places he has enumerated his circle of acquaintance - & his care assiduousness in never letting them fall off.

Always benevolent & desirous of being useful - even in the midst of poverty, he afforded assistance to one in need. Mr Cooper was connected to with Mr Godwin on the mother's side

through marriage, Mrs Cooper his wife being first cousin to his Mother; he went out to India as a surgeon in a medical capacity, & was appointed surgeon to the factory at Banlash in Bengal in which situation he remained till his death - he added endeavoured to add to his income also by some mercantile dealings that did not turn out advantageous well - & all the effects he left at the time of his death decease were destroyed by in a

”””

137)

storm on their way to Bengal - on his death therefore his family was reduced to indigence. It was with them that Mr Godwin passed some time at Stockbury during his college vacations. He now repaid this kindness by taking the orphan child of Mr Cooper into under his house care^{iv} & undertook his education. Godwin from the very nature of his understanding opinions which led him to analyze [^]mind[^] & comment upon draw conclusions as to character, [^]& to have a sanguine faith in the practicability of improvement[^] entertained rigid opinions on the subject of education. Tom Cooper was a spirited boy, exceedingly independent resolute [^]& true[^] and no doubt probably proud wilful & indolent. Godwin conscientious to the last degree in his treatment of every one, extended his utmost care to the task of education - but many things rendered him rather unfit - his severity was confined to words - but these were pointed & humiliating - his strictness was indurating^v - and this was more particularly the case in early life when he considered the power of education to be unlimited in the formation of the understanding & temper. He no doubt took great pains with his kinsman; but I imagine did not burthen himself with all the detail of education but placed him for a time in a school at Shacklewell near London but he undoubtedly spent his holiday with Godwin. He inspired him with great respect but he did not render him happy. The boy remained with him two years (part of which time I imagine was spent in school at Shacklewell) when he was threatened with consumption - this for a time caused a separation - two years after we shall find Cooper the youth again under his roof

pains with his kinsman & devoted considerable attention & care to his instruction. To further his endeavours, he kept notes of the occurrences that disturbed their mutual kindness, evidently as appeals to the boy's (turn over)

”””

138)

Insert) lads own feelings & understanding - in endeavouring to awaken in him a desire of reparation when he had done wrong & also of detecting & remarking on any defects in his own behaviour. These papers deserve to be preserved as they throw light on his views of education - & also as evidence of the conscientious & persevering nature of his endeavours. At the same time they display his faults as a teacher. He was too minute in his censures; too grave & severe in

his instructions - at once divided too far from his pupil, & too little through want of sympathy, & too much on a level from the temper he put in his lectures. The first in the series is a letter which explains to the boy himself the motives of his conduct & tries to inspire confidence. It is dated early in the year succeeding to the one at which we are arrived^{vi} - but it is best to place in one view his conduct with regard to the orphan he took under his care.

.....

Duke reel 5^{vii}

”””

If one man can feel friendship for him whom he considers & hates as his greatest foe, if a dependent can feel friendship for his benefactor, who every day takes care to tell him how much he is bound to his generosity, & on the slightest misunderstanding, threatens, if he does not behave himself as he should, to turn him out of his house, at the same time saying, If I do not remain your friend, where can you find a hole to stow your miserable carcass? you know your relations are poor & cannot afford to keep to you, therefore reflect on your condition, & respect me more than you have hitherto done, whose generosity & condescension have designed to take you into my service,

- If, I say, friendship can exist between either

circa 14 April 1790^{viii}

.....

c.607/3

”””

[139v]

[blank]

Insert

The sort of journal of this period is short & runs as follows:

”””

139)

July 8th 1790 ^June to Aug 1789.^ Give energy, & mental exertion will always have attraction enough.^{ix}

July 8. 1790 Not to impute affected ignorance lequel n'existe pas.

Not to impute dulness, stupidity.

Suavite, oh! suavite, sed fortiter, excita mentem.

It is of no consequence whether a man of genius have learned either art or science before twenty five; all that is necessary or even desirable is that his powers should be unfolded, his emulation seized & his habits conducted into a right channel.

We should endeavour to stimulate the minds of others, & for that purpose to gain their good opinion^x

He ought to love study, science, improvement.

Is not his temper embittered by sternness? i.e. overexactness in lessons & proposing to play the censor on trivial occasions?

Why not treat him like Willis?^{xi} It is a sufficient exercise of his patience to lead him step by step to the truth desired; without suffering oneself to be irritated by the circumstance of an unexpected bar rendering a reiterated attack necessary. Complain more rarely of inattention.

Do not impute intentional error, le quel n'existe pas.

August 3 - 1790 In going from me after some questions of construction in Virgil, he slapped one door & then another, the second belonging to the staircase: I called him back, & he said "Dear, I did not slap them."

Inflicting punishment does not disgrace me - put yourself in my place: general souring - particular ditto: duty to comply with my not unreasonable desires.^{xii}

....

”””

142)

August 3 - 1790 In going from me after some question of construction in Virgil he slapped one door & then another - the second belonging to the staircase. I called him back, & he said, "Dear, I did not slap them."

Inflicting punishment - does not disgrace me - put yourself in my place; general rousing - particular ditto - duty to comply with me in my not unreasonable desires.

[written upside down]

that at length caused an the entire dissolution^{xiii} of a friendship long clung to. The notions also that Godwin entertained of the propriety of one man exerting himself to reform & enlighten another rendered their correspondance stormy. Godwin relying on his own rectitude^{xiv} & the disinterestedness of his wish to inspire another with that calm adherence to duty which was natural to himself, did not on all occasions, measure his terms when he desired to reprove &

rectify. There are many traces of this rather too plain spoken temper mode of proceeding arising in some degree from temper - but fostered & permitted under the name of sincerity - in his correspondance with Holcroft - but with Dyson^{xv} he kept no terms whatever.

These remarks are necessary to introduce the notes made papers that remain with regard to his intercourse with Cooper - which deserve notice partly from the view it gives light it throws on his views of education & partly to shew the fervour & perseverance of his endeavours to well bring up the orphan he took under his care. The first in the series is a letter, which explains to the lad himself the motives of his conduct & tries to excite confidence & affection.

....

”””

140)^{xvi}

April 19 1790

My Dear Boy

I am more pleased than displeas'd with the paper I have just seen. It discovers a degree of sensibility that may be of the greatest use to you, though I will endeavour to convince you that it is wrong [sic] applied. I was in hopes that it was written on purpose for me to see, for I love confidence, and there are some things that perhaps you could scarcely say to me by word of mouth. I have always endeavoured to persuade you to confidence, because you have not a freind [sic] upon eath ^earth^ that is more ardently desirous of your welfare than I, & you have not a friend so capable of advising & guiding you to what is most to your interest.

This confidence would have been of use to you in what has lately passed, and its continuance would be of use to you in all your future life. If I had seen this paper before last Tuesday what passed on that day would not have happened. But I am closely engaged in observing what passed through your mind & I observed a sulkiness & obstanacy [sic] growing ^up^ in it. You said to yourself “When I behave ill, I am only reprimanded & I do not mind that.” Thus when I have been endeavouring in strong language to point out your errors, and lead you to amend them, you have been employed with all your might in counteracting the impression I sought to make.

There is in this paper a degree of sensibility that has great merit. The love of independency, & dislike of unjust treatment is the source of a thousand virtues. If, while you are necessarily dependant on me, I treat you with heaviness & unkindness it is natural you should have a painful feeling of it.

But heaviness & unkindness are relative. The appearance of them

”””

141)

may be the fruits of the greatest kindness. In fact, can my conduct towards you springs from any but an ardent desire to be of service to you? I am poor, & with considerable labour maintain my little family; yet I am willing to spend my money upon your wants & pleasures. My time is of the utmost value to me; yet I bestow a large portion of it

upon your improvement. Supposing I should be mistaken in any part of my conduct to you can it spring from any thing but motives of kindness?

I ask for your confidence because without it I am persuaded that I could not can not do you half the good I could wish. It is not an idle curiosity. I care nothing about myself in this business. If I can contribute to make you virtuous & respectable hereafter, I do not care whether I then possess your friendship, I am contented you should hate me. I desire no gratitude & no return of favors. I only wish to do you good

W Godwin Apr. 19. 1790.

....

”””

143)

[H]e should endeavour to stimulate the minds of others & for that purpose to gain their good opinion.

How ill was it in this respect with John Hollis?^{xvii} How ill with Mr Webb.^{xviii} -

An interruption was given to the scheme of education carried on by the illness of Cooper. Dr Lister was called in and there appeared to be symptoms of consumption. He however surmounted this attack and Godwin again applied himself to the task of his education - as appears from the following notes

Oct. 10. 1790. It is now again probable that our connection will be permanent, let me then again aim at gentleness, kindness, cordiality

Oct. 11. P.M. tell him of Mr Salter's transaction - mention Burney's school^{xix} - he mentions Soho (Mr William Nicholson received several pupils into his house in Soho Square)^{xx} - hint at the superiority of being with me - am heard with pensive attention.

Oct. 12. Read Telemaco^{xxi} & [?Vertot]. Dispute about bantering the faults - he maintains he did not banter them.

13th. Read Herodotus & Virgil - harmony but with some remonstrance of inattention

14th - ditto - ditto -

15 A little ruggedness. Observe to him on occasion of a letter from G. M. C. to E. C. that, "Secrets being absurd things we ought to conclude that our friend does not intend any, when we have no particular reason to suppose that he does." The observation is unsuccessful.^{xxii}

....

”””

144)

17th^{xxiii} chide him for rudeness to Mr M.^{xxiv} - am heard with great sensibility - the rudeness was public in the mercer's shop.

21. Take from him the translation of Gil Blas^{xxv}, which I yesterday forbade him to peruse.^{xxvi} Geometria lacrimans^{xxvii} - takes a walk, being engaged to the Society's Room, Adelphi - came home too late - does not choose to apologize - insist.

24. Dyson engaged to dine with us - they walk to Kensington - lends Dyson a book which he says he will read to himself - but reads aloud - appears offended during the walk home, & will not tell why - Dyson upon that account refuses to dine - suffers him to go from the door, but changes his mind & pursues him - tells the story to Holcroft & me very ingenuously & blames himself for not answering Dyson's questions - Dyson said, that he was always particularly silent when Dyson dined with him.

25 Call on Dyson, who proposes to call on him first - & offers apology for apology - ineffectually recommend that plan, - he had intended after three or four days to meet Dyson as by accident.

27 Dyson calls - no apology - reason afterwards the impropriety of resenting trifles & the superiority of Dyson

28 Makes a good humoured jest on Mr M. who is offended - ^{xxviii}

high words between them. Mr M. refusing to be silent & talking of knock down blows & canes - I remonstrate to Mr M. but he being in the next room puts down the abusive language of Mr M. & next morning gives me a copy interspersed with expressions of resentment - argue on the folly of such resentment ^{xxix}

On this occasion Cooper wrote to Mr Marshall the following letter which shows the boy's temper disposition better than an

”””

145)

hundred remarks.

Sir

I am convinced that I was wrong in not immediately desisting from that from which you desired me to desist. I therefore ask your pardon, & I shall endeavour to make amends for my misconduct by my future behaviour.

We have lived, Sir, for some time in the same house, and I believe with a certain degree of friendship & good understanding. I am sorry that that friendship & good understanding has received such a shock as it has done today. I was certainly wrong, as I have already said, in not complying with your desire, that non-compliance brought on high words; in course of which you directly called me a liar, you called me so not by implication, you said, "You are a liar."

I am glad that I have escaped doing that which your words naturally excited me to do.

T. Cooper^{xxx}

November 3. Penance him for being out of humour with me without reason - because my not choosing to read before him Burke's pamphlet^{xxxii} after he had pronounced it "stupid stuff" a priori

December 1 Tears for the supposed imputation of a lie. C. I will not bear it, you would not treat any body else thus. G. Every body says that I treat you too well. Do not threaten me. Go to the Devil as soon as you please; from instruction to ignorance, from virtue to vice. You are as anxious to escape from opportunities of improvement, as your friend Dyson is obliged to be to obtain them.

^{xxxii} T. C. I do not understand you. - G. the expression is perfectly proper; paltry critic - C. I wish you would not say so. I did not under

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146)

stand.^{xxxiii}

Tears ut supra - G. The being for ever apprehensive of the imputation of a lie is mean & contemptible; I meant no such thing. Geometry on his part very ill; on his part much discontent - G. Now that the thing is fresh in your mind recollect the high value of the pleasure you derive from being imperfect, & be sure to be equally imperfect another time.

13. He is too apprehensive of error, particularly geometrical error; i.e. the consequences have been made too painful to him

Jan 30 1791 He breaks a looking glass having put it to stand on a table - & not having taken sufficient care of the manner of putting it. Take pains seemingly fruitless to make him perceive himself in fault.

31. Do I not dwell too much in lectures & am I not too minute in the discovery of faults? To give pain unnecessarily deserves to be avoided. NB. At sixteen scholastic authority ought to cease: at that age I was an usher.

Feb 3 Examined by me with considerable gravity, he asserts that he never directly nor indirectly informed his sister that Mr H was the author of the [?G. D]. Questioned by Mr M a few hours after, he confesses, that she questioned him, & he told her that her suspicions were was right. This contradiction being stated to him as dishonourable, he says that, if he had ever so good a defence, he would not allege it, because I am determined to see his actions in the worst worst light. Upon further discussion, he acknowledges that I am not so determined. I press him, if he hate me, to avow it; he does not hate me: great sensibility

8th Goes before 1/4 before one, as he says, to engage Dyson for the play, & promises to return as soon as he can - sits for his picture - returns at three. Forbid his going to the play this night - extreme mortification - "I have made myself utterly

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147)

contemptible to him - it is a disgrace too vile to be endured - it revives in his mind another occasion, in which he was treated worse than a dog - and which he cannot recollect having submitted to without self-detestation - (I might perhaps have been right in that affair - I, in the letter I wrote him acknowledged myself in the wrong in my treatment of it) -^{xxxiv}

10th Revive the subject^{xxxv}

These papers are concluded by the following fragment of a letter addressed to his pupil by Godwin

[blank] ^{xxxvi}

.....

b.227/2(b)

^{xxxvii}

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148)

My dear friend

It is near twelvemonths since I did myself the pleasure of writing to you. My letter at that time was not neglected; I hope it will not be neglected now. Attend to the following queries. You will answer them truly to day; but what I require is that that answer should not be merely the answer of the present half hour, but that it should continue in your memory, remain clear & distinct, like an axiom, in your mind, & cut up by the roots all that misinterpretation, that at present supersedes the benefit of every blame I can impute to you. When I assert the general rectitude of your character, am I sincere or am I not?

When I point out to you faults, which I always declare to be common to persons of your age, but which I wish you not to have, do I contradict my assertion of the general rectitude of your character?

Do I know my own opinion of your character?

Ought I to resolve never to point out to

”””

149)

you a fault^{xxxviii} lest I should be misinterpreted to mean that you have no good qualities? You are uncommonly desirous of becoming wise, virtuous & honourable, & this desire will inevitably be crowned with some success: it naturally leads to the highest. You believe that every man is just what his education, the occasion & motives of improvement he possesses, oblige him to be. - From whom must you derive your education? with whom are you in habits of intercourse, who that is more able, or who that has half so many opportunities of nurturing in your mind talents & virtue, as I have? Will it make no difference to you twenty four years hence, whether you listen to me with a desire of improvement or a desire of opposition? Is it of no consequence that you are cultivating prejudices against me, & endeavouring to become my enemy? If you love & esteem me, you will then be the better for my pains: if, while the rest of the world & the best judges of merit respect me, you harbour feelings of resentment & disgust, all my efforts, my anxiety, my love will be fruitless

....

c.607/3

^{xxxix}
”””

[unnumbered]

Dear Sir.

I am inexpressibly grieved at the perusal of y^r letter to T.C. I write because writing may perhaps be the most impressive way of addressing you, & I wish the impression to be indelible. I have no doubt if you continue to exist that your powerful understanding will enable you to perceive & detest the vices of which you are at present guilty[.] It is for you to consider whether that be a sufficient reason for you or me to neglect the means of instant reformation.

T.C. was right when ‘he called you a misanthropist’. This ^{^is^} the second time you have written a letter to him in which y^e desire to do good was set at proud defiance; in which y^e only object was to wreak a spiteful &

malignant temper. In both you described his character in language which you did not yourself believe. I do not mean that you did not believe it at the time you wrote it; passion makes us believe anything: but that you never believed for one cool & deliberate moment believed ^believed^ it. You cannot be blind to his talents; you have had so many proofs of them. Y^e letter he has last written ^to you^ & which now lies before me, whatever faults it has, contains many marks of strong thinking & right feeling. I wish I could say as much of y^{rs}. What vices have you to charge him with that should render him a nuisance on the face of y^e earth? why truly that he does not think in all respects as you do, that his opinions you conceive tho' in that you are mistaken are the same as those of Epicurus, Aristippus, Horace, Voltaire & others who have done honour to human nature. What intolerance is this

One expression of your letter is too curious to to pass unnoticed. You say, you struck him from a feeling uncorrected by philosophy, & supported by an opinion that such modes of reproof were necessary for minds like his - that is, from philosophy & no philosophy - from an opinion you have which you know to be unphilosophical, or in other words to be untrue. & what good did you intend to his mind by striking him? Just as much good as you intended by your letter or by your former letter about Boccace which you acknowledged you had written when philanthropy was gone abroad, & blessed govern

»»»

ment [illeg.] with this lie, of philosophers who are to deal their blows whenever it shall please their high mightinesses to be in a passion. You have already perhaps ^done an^ irreparable injury to T's mind, who, like all young people is very apt to judge of philosophy by those who practice it ^on any set of principles, by the conduct of those who profess them.^ Ought we to beat our fellow mortals four our own sakes or for theirs? If for theirs we ought at least maturely to deliberate in each instance whether beating be precisely the best mode of reforming their characters & meliorating their minds. The doctrine of beating is a very conformatable ^comfortable^ one, because it indulges all our indolent propensities, & tells us that (tho' truth be allsufficient in itself, no philosopher doubts that) yet I am not able to convey ^it^ with energy enough & therefore it is in vain to try. Not to add that as in your case it teaches us to indulge our passions, & persuades us that there is no reason for us to be very anxious to subdue the brutality of our nature.

I trust I need not repeat here the high opinion I have of you or the great love I bear you. I look on you with admiration as intended for the lasting & comprehensive benefit of mankind. But this very feeling renders me more anxious to see you correct yourself of the odious faults which are the subject of this letter. I have taken no notice of the beginning of the quarrel According to T's account you were wrong there but all I have written will serve perfectly well on the supposition that you were right

March 21. 1792.

WG

Since writing the above I ^have^ recieved your letter; but I do not percieve that it makes any material alteration in the case. I shall ^be glad^ to see you whenever it is convenient. Mr Holcroft has rea[d] what I have written perhaps it would be of ^use^ to you to conver[se] with him while the impression is fresh on his mind.

.....

***documents Tom Cooper**

Duke reel 5

”””

Perhaps Dyson was most in fault, he did ^not^ advert to the “hypocrite” in the last part of the conversation, you appeared to lay less stress upon it, & I thought it right not to bring forward what was not brought forward by yourselves, till at last I forgot it. (H.^{xl} misleads me)

Extraordinary quality of T.

Greater essential rudeness of the other

....

”””

- tell him that promises are no farther of avail than as recognitions of the rules of duty - prepares to go to Dyson (to whom I intended to mention the outlines of the story) that he may be beforehand with me, & paint it in the glowing colours of his imagination - prevent him, & consent not to mention it - tell him, that punishment, that slavery, that no thing external can disgrace a man - expects that ingenuous confession should be regarded as the adequate atonement of error - goes without his dinner

10

Revive the subject of the eighth^{xli} - observe that he has since appeared to treat me with particular kindness & attention, which I considered to be an indirect acknowledgment of injustice - press him to tell me whether it were so - he ack

”””

knowledges that he had been unjust to me; but says, that he cannot wholly justify me.

May not upon this incident be built a system of forbearance & equality, which may conduce to the mutual satisfaction of both

Mar. 4

Quarrels with Dyson

.....

Duke reel 5

”””

Attend to the following queries. ‘You will answer ^them^ truly today; but what I require is that that answer should be not only the answer of the present half hour, but that it should continue in your memory, remain distinct & clear

as an axiom in your mind, & cut up by the roots all that misrepresentation, that at present supersedes the benefit of every blame I can impute you.

”””

Ought perhaps only to tell him of great faults
not to be true

At the time you assert a thing, you firmly believe it

.....

* document Notes on Cooper

c.607/3

xlii
”””

Notes on Cooper

Mr Cooper entered the service of the East India Company in the beginning of the year 1770 as Ship Surgeon [...]

[...] time of his decease Oct 4th 1787 [...]

A relation of Mrs Cooper's had the goodness to take upon himself the education of her eldest son, and another friend gave his aid to that of her youngest, whom she has had the affliction to lose at the age of eighteen

[...] she is induced to solicit the benevolent aid of any Gentleman in the service [...] unfortunate unhappy Widow.

....
xliii
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[unnumbered]

Mr Cooper having consulted his friends, particularly Messrs Godwin and Holcroft, and they advising him to accept Cooke's offer of playing for him he did so, and waiting upon Cooke, invited him to sup with them at his lodgings. The invitation was readily accepted, and the party was made up of Godwin, Marshall, Cooke and Cooper, some accident preventing Holcroft from attending. Godwin and Cooke, unknown to each other except by the voice of fame, mutually wished for an interview. They now met for the first time, and surely a worse assorted pair never met. Cooke was, however, unusually amusing, & Godwin was interested and pleased by him during the early part of the evening; but in proportion as the rosy God inspired his votary, he became less interesting to the philosophic sceptic, whose apathy being seconded by his domestic habit of early yei yielding himself to sleep he fairly sunk under Cooke's oracular eloquence, and gave himself a prey to "dull forgetfulness". Cooper by this time indulging himself in our country custom, "a custom more honoured in the breach than the observance", was smoking a segar, Marshall taking his hot brandy and water, Godwin sleeping, and Cooke drinking wine, and talking incessantly to the philosopher, till he discovered that he was talking to one who could not hear; then after a pause, and looking earnestly at the placid expression of the sleeper's benign countenance, he broke out into the following apostrophe:

"Asleep! - fast asleep! - How perfectly quiet he rests - and yet he is a democrat! there is a smile upon his countenance that looks "peace and good will to man", and yet he has thrown the torch of discord abroad and set half mankind in flame. What a beautiful head - how much the expression, as if he had been nourished alone by the milk of human kindness; what a head - as the fox said in the sculptor's shop, yet I can't say this head wants ^for^ brains. What a noble head - and yet pregnant with such monstrous errors! Errors, that if received would destroy the bonds between [sic] subject and sovereign, between parent & child, wife and husband, wife & husband and wife, give a loose and free sway to selfishness and sensuality, involve the world in anarchy and steep it in blood - such philosophers - O how I detest them! I could wish Government to exert its force for their extermination, by death - by

torture - “ then looking at Godwins face - “but not him - not this - O, no, no! - his conscience is good or he could not sleep thus or look thus!”

Dunlaps Life of Cooke^{xliv}

Vol 1st Page 300

.....

Thomas Wedgwood^{xlv}

c.606/4^{xlvi}

”””
17)

Godwin commenced this year^{xlvii} his acquaintance with a man known to himself & all his literary contemporaries as the most generous the most amiable of men. Thomas Wedgwood of Etruria in Staffordshire a name dear to all who reverence virtue & goodness. His enthusiasm in the cause of Knowledge - his earnest desire to serve his fellows rank him high among good men. He was afflicted with bad health which acted on his nerves and ^frequently^ rendered him low spirited to a painful degree. The commencement history of his intercourse with Godwin is so well pourtrayed in their correspondance that no further observation need be made. It will be seen that at one time^{xlviii} they meditated making common household together.

”””

[unnumbered]

Wedgwood projected as [sic] this time taking a house conjointly with Godwin and making common household. This establishment was to be conducted on the most economical footing, as suited to the circumstances of the one, & the generous views of the other, which led him to limit his personal expences, that he might have more to spare to others. I find the following notes on the subject

[blank]

....

”””
18)

Their establishment was to be conducted on the most economical plan as suited the narrow circumstances of the one, & the generous views of the other which led him to limit his personal expences that he might have more to spare for others. It will be seen what prevented the execution of this project^{xlix}

....

”””
41)

I add a few letters written to Godwin this year.

[blank]

From this date, Mr Godwins own letters will be more frequent He accepted and made use of the copying machine¹ & to this we owe the preservation of very many of his letters. Some of the

copies were obliterated or damaged by time, but on the whole the machine succeeded. It did not in the least damage the originals. Mr Josiah Wedgewood at my request most kindly sent such letters as he could find from Mr Godwin to his brother^{li}, & those that underwent the operation of being copied are as well preserved as the rest.

....

”””

[number illeg.]

I commence this year with a few letters dated at the conclusion of the last, but which would have interfered with the subject that set its dark seal on that year.^{lii} The letters from Thomas Wedgewood besides being almost necessary to the understanding those of his correspondant, are so full of noble & generous feeling of intelligence & interesting display of character that they cannot be considered superfluous.

....

”””

[unnumbered]

I cannot discover with any exactness to whom the following letters were addressed. Either I believe to Thomas Wedgewood or to Basil Montague.^{liii} Wedgewood was at one time deeply afflicted by hypochondria^{liv} - or some other friend

As Mr Josiah Wedgewood has kindly sent me all Mr Godwin's letters to his brother that were preserved, & none of these appear among them I encline to think ^it does not seem likely that^ they were sent to him. ^They may have been were perhaps addressed to Mr Basil Montagu^ These have been preserved by means of the copying machine he & the copy made ^in some cases^ before the date was appended & in all as in most without an address - so that where the subject of the letter does not inform, the name of the correspondent remains unknown.

.....

Duke reel 5

lv

”””

[top of page, MWS hand]

T. Wedgewood?

(166

Mr Underwood of Lambs Conduit Street has just put into my hands a letter of yours, and shewn me extracts of others. I should be happy to render you any service in my power. Your manner and character struck me forcibly when I saw you at Oxford I have thought of you a thousand times. There was a singularity in your temper and feelings that could not fail to excite my sympathy.

You are upon the whole certainly at present an unfortunate man. I am glad that my writings have in any degree contributed to your pleasure in moments of dejection and gloom. I should be much more glad if I could point out to you a remedy for your disease. Dr Darwin,^{lvi} you say, assures you it is a disease of the mind. There is perhaps some deception in that way of distributing the disorders of the human frame. The mind and the animal frame are so closely connected, that scarcely any thing can unfavourably affect the one without deranging the other. I think it not improbable that your unhappiness may be connected with some vice of organisation, as far as I can annex a distinct meaning to that term. But in these subtle diseases, take insanity for

[inserted in MWS hand]

I do not know to whom the ^{three}^{lvii} following letters were [illeg.]

”””

(167

an example, it seems as if the remedies might sometimes be found in material, and sometimes in mental applications. I see no good reason to doubt that a certain discipline of the mind may have a powerful tendency to restore sanity to the intellect, and consequent vigour to the animal frame. I know a young man, subject to the same evil under which you labour and of a strong understanding, who has in some measure found out the remedy for himself, and has considerably added to his happiness by watching resolutely the operations of his own mind.

The first thing you have to guard against, as the most pernicious error into which you can fall, is the feeling yourself flattered, as something honourable and delicate, by your own misery. Do not, from this or other motives, cherish and indulge painful [?emotions]. Resolutely expel them, if possible, from your mind. Determine vehemently and hardily to be as happy as you can. You will find great advantage in this respect from attending to Hartley’s theory of the association of ideas. Cultivate cheerful impressions; break off abruptly the thread of painful ones. Set your face, as much as possible, against a spirit of timidity and procrastination. Endeavour to be always

”””

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always [sic] active, always employed. Walk, read, write and converse. Seek variety in this respect. Whatever you engage in, engage in firmly, and give no quarter to the inroads of irresolution and listlessness. If at a given time you cannot string your mind to one thing, you can probably do another. Sometimes we can do a thing well, if we only spiritedly resist the first disinclination. Do not indulge in visions and phantoms of the imagination, or place your happiness in some thing you may perhaps never obtain, but endeavour to make it out of the materials within your reach. Adopt some course of improvement and impress yourself with some

ardour of usefulness which will never wholly elude the grasp of him who seeks it with ingeniousness and simplicity.

When I saw you at Oxford you gave me hopes that I might have the pleasure of seeing more of you in Town. The melancholy tenour of your mind was somewhat distressing to me, but I was not without the anticipation of benefit to yourself, and instruction to me from our further intercourse. Be assured there was no sentiment in my mind of the nature of indifference.

I would be happy in the opportunity of

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(169

affording you gratification, but give me leave to mention, that there is some no thing in which I am more faulty and tardy than correspondence; it demands so much time, and is so much of the same nature as my more serious occupation. Do not however infer from hence that I shall not be happy to hear from you; I only meant to apologise by anticipation for the deficiencies I may be guilty of

W. Godwin

....

Duke reel 5 WG-TW

”””

Wedgewood^{lviii}

....

”””**[addressed]**^{lix}

Tho. Wedgwood, esq/Etruria/Staffordshire.

”””

19

Somers Town, Sep. 22. 1795.

Dear sir

I received great pleasure from the perusal of the letter which now lies before me. The little that I formerly saw of you, gave me a great desire to know you more fully & I have often regretted the circumstances that seemed to render this impracticable. There is also a reserve established in the world which, by frequent exhibition, becomes infectious; &, as I have repeatedly seemed to suffer disappointment when I have indulged in those communications of the heart to which the ardour of my temper prompted me, I have in some instances given way to a criminal cautiousness. Your letter dissolves all ambiguity; & I cannot now allow myself to doubt that I understand you.

You divide the questions you have thought proper to propose to me into two parts. The first relates to the cultivation of the mind. This subject you appear well to understand, & therefore, unless you were to state something

specific, I do not feel it necessary to enter in to its discussion. I will only remark that those who cultivate the useful in composition, are probably very erroneous if they neglect the ornamental; & that he who, to prove the goodness of his intentions, is contented to communicate truth in a slovenly form, will oftener produce contempt, than the effect it is to be supposed he principally desires.

Your second enquiry is curious & difficult;

”””

20

& therefore, though your own remarks appear to me sound & judicious, I will put ^{^down^} a few things that strike me upon the subject.

In the first place I would wish to caution you against that extreme vehemence upon the subject which might prognosticate the project conceived to be a short lived one. I am an utter enemy to every thing of a monastic principle. I am persuaded that the true & only rational end of human life is pleasure. A wise man would deny himself no pleasure that was not incompatible with a greater pleasure; but he would form to himself a scale of pleasures, & it is not probable that he would relish many pleasures that would require much property to be sublimed into a small compass which, diffused, would produce in the world a quantity of pleasure a thousand times greater. I believe we ought to be ready to sacrifice our own pleasures to a great advantage to be obtained for our neighbours, but I conceive that to a man who has formed a just scale of pleasure, the occasion for this sacrifice will rarely occur.

I entirely agree with you that the increase of knowledge in the world is the greatest public good in ^{^the formation of^} which we can be engaged. This mode of benefiting our fellow men has the utmost advantage over the common one, the object of which is their animal sensations, because the pleasures which a man of intellect & an independent spirit can enjoy are infinitely superior to those of a brute, & because he is made of a fit instrument to diffuse benefit in his turn. It is curious to observe how futile & ill chosen are the majority of the subjects chosen ^{^selected^} for charitable exertion. Pope's description of the Man of Ross^{lx} furnishes a striking example.

....

”””

21

I am very little a friend to charitable institutions; not only for the reasons you assign, but because I conceive they are necessarily full of abuses, & seldom answer the purposes to which they were intended. I have detailed my objections in my chapter A National Education,^{lxi} more fully than it is possible to do in a letter.

The distribution of books I believe to be a very inefficient mode. Besides other disadvantages, I suspect books that an individual obtains in this way seldom receive a very attentive perusal.

Indiscriminate charity is liable to the same objections as charity to common beggars. It teaches a trade, & the most vicious of trades, the trade of servility & hypocrisy.

Perhaps no one of these rules, [illeg.] founded in themselves ^{^it^}, ought to be considered as not [illeg.] open to objections exceptions.

I am strongly persuaded that the object of [benefactions] in favour of which you decide, is the best of all possible objects. Yet even here we shall be liable to frequent miscarriage. We shall need a very penetrating judgment in the selection of individuals, & we shall be continually in danger of producing inaction, where we intended to produce energy. I have no doubt however that a vigilant observer will find cases frequently occurring where money may be placed with almost a certainty of producing good.

You speak of the past state of your health, but say nothing of the present. Both the objects mentioned in your letter will derive the most material advantage from a sound & confirmed health. I hope you are now in possession of that advantage. It will give me the greatest pleasure to hear farther from you.

I am, sir, with real esteem W. Godwin

.....

Duke reel 5 TW-WG

,,,,[addressed]

Mr W Godwin/Charlton St/Somers Town

,,,

24

[MWS hand]

Wedgewood says in reply^{lxii}

Dear Sir,

It was not my meaning that your suggestions to Ministers should be confined to a speculation on Corn. The reasons you have advanced in support of your determination are strong ones, their validity ^however^ seems to rest in three points - The urgency of the case - The probability of success - a comparison between the value of that success & the good that may result from the uninterrupted pursuit of your present studies. Of all these points you are certainly a better judge than myself, & it would therefore [sic] fruitless for me to attempt their discussion. I shall only add, that, as in cases of imminent danger to any human being we have agreed on the propriety of converting *to his relief* what was destined *to an object of greater apparent utility*; so, perhaps, the apprehensions of a famine may demand the prompt & strenuous exertions of talents now devoted to speculation of the greatest ultimate utility.

That there is “something erroneous in the *ordinary* commerce of giving & receiving” presents, I readily concede to you; and for the reason you reason you assign

,,,

25

at the close of the argument viz that it is a pampering of superfluous luxuries. But I strongly suspect that the principle that ^which^ floats in your mind is a thing without substance - a mere shadow that you have ^vainly^ striven [illeg.] to embody. I cannot comprehend in what way the action in question can give rise “to retrospects of a selfish nature”; You are engaged in an undertaking which I am convinced is a very important one; I feel it my duty

to assist you to the utmost of my power, in that undertaking. I offer you what I conceive of as most likely to do so - knowing that if it were [illeg.] ^otherwise^, you would not fail to inform me. After the conversations we have held on these subjects, you cannot suppose that I am inclined to pamper with luxuries or bestow with any view to a return.^{lxiii}

I think I must have mistaken the drift of your argument - as you sometimes are desirous of changing the subject of your thoughts, perhaps it may not be irksome to you to give me some farther explanation - a very few words will probably suffice.

I shall certainly take an early opportunity of waiting upon you when I return - I remain

Yours sincerely

Thos Wedgwood

22 Devonshire Place} a letter will find me here any time before Monday}

Nov. 6 1795

....

Duke reel 5 WG-TW

...[addressed]

[illeg.]/Wimpole St

Unpaid Post^{lxiv}

[MWS hand]

2 letters on presents^{lxv}

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26

I will attempt, as you desire it, to give additional clearness to what I said on the subject of presents

The second part of my argument, upon which I laid least stress, respecting luxuries, you appear sufficiently to understand.

You mistake my meaning in the phrase "ordinary commerce," by which, if I recollect, what I intended was, every species of supply afforded by one man to another, except in those urgent cases which by their nature supersede the application of common rules.

But my principal obscurity seems to have lurked in the phrase "retrospects of a selfish nature:" by which I simply intended to suggest a doubt whether there were any giver or receiver at present upon the face of the earth, of so pure a disposition, but that some improper feelings, of obligation imposed in the giver, & of selfish eagerness in the receiver, would always mix themselves in the action. To speak frankly I will suppose that you & I may possibly come as near to the right feeling as almost any of our contemporaries, but I have a suspicion that we are neither of us exempt from the common frailty of our nature.

I designed to suggest these ideas with scepticism & diffidence; but I cannot ^yet^ be persuaded that they are a “mere shadow which I have vainly striven to embody “ If you

”””

27

think otherwise, I acknowledge that I may be totally wrong, &, to dem substantiate my scepticism, am content to be, to a certain degree, overruled. I have perhaps done my duty in stating these hints.

Do you not feel how very inadequately epistolary communication supplies the place of oral discussion?

W Godwin

Nov. 7 1795

....

Duke reel 5 TW-WG

,,,**[addressed]** ^{lxvi}

Thos Wedgwood, esq/22 Pemberton Place/Wimpole Street

Etruria/Staffordshire

[MWS hand]

2d. letter on presents

....

lxvii

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28

Wedgewood’s reply is so full of good sense & ingenuous & upright feeling that I give it entire. We have here the sincere confession of a modest & generous nature such as best depicts the admirable amiable writer.

....

”””

28

[inserted in MWS hand]

Wedgewood after an Wedgewood’s answer to the scruples appears to be full of excellencies

Wedgewood’s reply is so full of good sense and ingenuous & upright feeling that I give it entire. We have here the sincere & just confession of [illeg.] & generous mind.

You have now sufficiently explained your sentiments on giving & taking presents. They appear to me such as would very naturally be entertained in a mind like yours unceasingly occupied in the secreting of the motives of human

action. I am glad to see that it is with “scepticism & diffidence” you advance them, for though my first opinion might be expressed with too much haste & presumption, I still think them liable to considerable objection.

[inserted in MWS hand]

“ - continues

Will you allow that, in cases where it is impossible to arrive at certainty in our judgments, it is desirable that our decisions should be regulated by a favourable rather than by an unfavourable view of the question? That a propensity to suspicion is an evil habit of mind I am persuaded you will not deny. Now are you not in some danger of acquiring this habit by so prying & scrupulous an examination of the hand that offers you assistance, or rather, I should say, by *consenting to act* upon those scruples which a qu practised ingenuity will never fail to suggest? Would it not be wiser to accept or to present the benefit

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29

required, without hesitation? Is not the mind more likely to be ennobled by frequent acts of beneficence & virtuous efforts to discharge the mean sensations [illeg.] annexed to them, rather than by the exercise of a dastardly caution?

Prostituted as we all are to the customs & opinions of society, the attempt to build all our actions on motives of vestal purity is obviously impracticable. I could not give nor could another accept an invitation to my table; I durst not interchange a word or a look with my dearest friend. But what would result from this total suspension of good offices? a disposition of mind unalloyed by selfishness? No - our selfishness would increase with our wants & our principles would become every day weaker & weaker from not being brought into action.

Let us beware, however, of exaggeration or of investing with undue importance, the actions [&] feelings whose existence it is impossible to deny. You have been accustomed to view the subject with a microscopic eye & some of its parts have probably been magnified to your view. But in declining to act

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30

from a dread of their influence, do you not betray more of a reproachfull ^able^ timidity than of a clear & noble spirit? Why should you shrink from the encounter? Is it not better *to act* & strive to conquer the unworthy feeling than *not to act* & thence vainly expect [illeg.] its natural dissolution?

I will now explain to you the precise motives of the action which gave birth to this speculation.

I am particularly susceptible of the pleasure which well constructed ^curious^ mechanical inventions afford. I never feel any pleasureable sensation without a desire of communicating it to others, proportionate to its intensity. On viewing the copying machine, it struck me that you were a likely person to participate in this satisfaction. I resolved to mention it. It next occurred, that as the machine might often save you the irksome & unprofitable labour of copying & insomuch advance the great undertaking we are jointly concerned in, the presenting you with one came within the plan we have had ^just been^ prescribing [.] I resolved to make you the

offer. No “improper feeling” had as yet intruded itself; attend to what followed. I had often reflected on the great advantage I had derived from a few hours of your conversation: anxious to improve this

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advantage, I became apprehensive & painfully sensible of my inferiority & slender acquirements, I became apprehensive of an indifference on your part to my society[.] I was glad therefore when it afterwards occurred to me, that by thus becoming useful to your pursuits^{lxviii} & cautiously avoiding ^at the same time^ any interruption to them from unseasonable visits, it was not improbable that you might connect some agreeable associations with my person & ^thence^ conceive some interest in my fellowship. I was glad, too, of an opportunity of convincing you of the sincerity of my professions & that you should be the first ^to reap^ benefit of those principles which you had assisted me in establishing.

The above is a perfectly ingenuous & accurate review of the ideas which ^that^ determined, & grew out of an action of my life which I can never wish to retract. There may be a speck of selfishness on the face of it but it is sound and untainted at heart.

If your knowledge of my character has created a confidence in my honesty & self-knowledge, the picture I have been sketching must contain some traits of instruction & amusement. May I solicit from you an explication as unreserved, of the feelings which accompanied *your* passive situation? But I am afraid that I have already trespassed on your patience & that you are provoked to exclaim with Cicero “Quiscunque tandem &c - “. If more agreeable to you, defer it to our next meeting. I confess that on some accounts I prefer writing to conversation. But this preference is owing entirely to my want of a prompt and clear expression of my thoughts, which time exercise alone can supply. Perhaps I should add also, of “a slowness” of conception, & of a command of a steady abstraction.

Thos Wedgwood - Nov 9 - 179[5].^{lxix}

....

Duke reel 5 WG-TW

...[addressed]

Thos Wedgwood, Esq/Devonshire Place /Wimpole Street/
Etruria/Staffordshire

[postmark]

Unpaid D. NO 14 95

[MWS hand]

3rd letter on presents

”””

32

I am charmed with the frankness which characterises your last letter; and will endeavour to imitate it in my reply.

I am afraid I am not yet perfectly understood. I have always accepted ^excepted^ from my rule all presents that contained in them important & essential benefits to the receiver. If the loan or the gift of £100 would in any case be of eminent service to me ^in my pursuits,^ I think it probable that I ought to ask you for it without scruple, & that you ought to advance it. I am not sure however that I should act thus, or, which is the same thing, I am not sure that I should think it my duty, when the case occurred, because one of our indispensable duties is to guard against the misconstructions of our species.

I am willing, upon your suggestions, to admit into the class of admissible presents, presents of the other extreme, which I did not at the time recollect, such as ordinary civilities, invitations to dinner, &c.

but I am still inclined to think that presents in the middle line, things tangible, permanent, of a certain established price & ^at the best^ of ordinary utility, include in them something of immoral. In this opinion, as I said before, I am sceptical, & can consent in some cases to the being to a certain degree overruled.

I am inclined to call it in question both the maxims with which your argument commences. “Ought we in doubtful cases to incline to the favourable side in our

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33

judgments?” No, we ought not specifically to propose error to ourselves, but to come as near the truth as we can.

“Is a propensity to suspicion an evil habit of the mind?” The terms of this question are very ambiguous; but, as it is applied to your argument, I answer again, No. By a propensity to suspicion, as it is ordinarily taken, is understood a propensity to look on the unfavourable side. This is wrong. But a determination to ascertain the weak, as well as the strong, sides of our own motives, & the motives of others, is commendable. I am accustomed to indulge, or rather to cultivate, this determination, & I find few men who think better ^more favourably^ of the species or the individual.

Your account of your own feelings relative to our commerce is a corroboration of my opinion. I believe you ought to have sought my esteem, if you desired it, by direct & not indirect means. But the whole of your reasoning as to our intercourse seems to be founded in mistake. I will suppose that my acquisitions are superior to yours. This is no reason for keeping us asunder. It would be a calamity to the man of acquisitions as well as ^to^ his neighbours, if he were compelled to hold no society but with those whose progress was equal to his own. I have always been disposed to find pleasure, as well as a presumption that my time was well spent, in your society.

To answer to your question respecting my feelings in receiving your present, the true answer, as it seems to me, is, that my habits of analysis are so inveterate that , in stating to you my analysis of the case, I have stated the ideas which in the transactions itself passed through

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34

my mind.

Your preference of correspondence to conversation seems to be founded in part in suggestions of vanity. How intolerably creeping & tedious is this interchange? I am not inclined to doubt that my time is well spent in your society; but, in writing thus, I comply with my feelings, & run counter to the bias of my judgment. I believe correspondence ought rarely in any case to be admitted, but when the parties are at a distance from each other. I should indeed have accepted of your suggestion of deferring to communicate these thoughts till our next meeting, were I not apprehensive that that meeting was at an interval inconvenient for that purpose

W Godwin

Nov. 10. 1795

I intended to have mentioned that, whatever becomes of the question of presents, you have an infallible way of conferring benefits to on me to which I can have no exception; & that if the spending time in your company were not its own reward, you made me a compensation to which I was peculiarly sensible, in your readiness to reperuse Caleb Williams, & furnish me with your remarks.

.....

Duke reel 12 TW-WG

”””

35

I am afraid of appearing indifferent as to the event of our domestic treaty. My trip into the country has been postponed to tomorrow as I am engaged today -

If you have fully decided in your own mind, as to the I shall be glad to learn your determination by a line by return of Post - I hope to call on you on Thursday however. I believe it will be almost necessary to have a female servant on several accounts -

Thos Wedgwood

....

”””

36

I had intended myself the pleasure of calling upon you tomorrow, but an engagement will prevent me, perhaps for three or four days - If you have considered the proposal I made to you sufficiently I shall be glad to receive your determination as soon as possible. I think it right to mention, what did not occur to me at the moment, something as to the probable time of my continuing a householder in London. I cannot engage for more than a year. If my health should not improve, I may be induced to travel on the continent, or relinquish altogether my present plans. If it will be more agreeable to you to be the householder & to have me your lodger, I shall be equally pleased with the arrangement.

22 Devonshire Place

Thos Wedgwood

Monday noon

.....

Duke reel 12 TW-WG^{lxx}

”””

Worcester June 25 - 1795

Dear Godwin -

I am afraid you will condemn my unkindness in having failed in my promise of seeing you when I should next come to London. The fact is, I was but two days in town & at different times. I most fully intended shaking you by the hand but engagements of one description or other multiplied so fast upon me that I really found myself unable to do so. I am now going to spend two or three weeks with my f brother in law Dr Darwin at Shrewsbury - after which I go to my brother Josiah's, Upcot near Taunton. Excuse my brevity - my health is still a bar that disable[s] me in the use of the pen - My anxiety not to suffer in your good opinion has drawn this scrap from me.

Believe me very truly your friend

T Wedgwood

.....

Duke reel 12 TW-WG

^{lxxi}

”””

Dear sir

I am afraid it will not be in my power to wait upon ^you^ before I leave town - I have therefore sent the copying paper. I think you had better mix the vial-full of ink according to the directions^{lxxii}, as no dependance can be had upon the little remnant that it now contains.

It is shocking to think what the poor are likely to suffer this winter - I hear from the country that Manchester corn dealers have already given 16d per bushel for wheat. You see in todays paper, the Minister offers to accept the communication of any individual on the subject. Surely you could give him some useful hints.

Have you been able to procure a set of your work for me? I have since thought the request was not a proper one & if you have not made it, I beg you will not.

I have subscribed for two copies of Tooke's work^{lxxiii} - if you are not already provided I design one for you.

I remain/Dear Sir/Yours sincerely

Thos Wedgwood

22 Devonshire Place

Novr. [1] 1795

.....

* documents Thomas Wedgwood^{lxxiv}

Duke reel 3 WG-TW

,,,[addressed]

Tho. Wedgwood, esq/Etruria/Staffordshire/

[postmark]

High Holborn

,,,,

I am much pleased with the perusal of your two late letters. They confirm me in the opinion that you have a turn of mind extremely well adapted to metaphysical enquiry, & that you will, if it be not your own fault, make some valuable additions to the public stock of knowledge on that subject.

Two things principally strike as worth being mentioned with respect to your lucubrations.

The first is anticipated by you, when you mention the disadvantages to which those persons must be subject, who proceed in speculation without communication with philosophers or their books. It seems to me an absurd, not to say a savage spirit, that would lead us to set up for ourselves, without making use of the discoveries of our ancestors, or submitting to that eminent law of an intellectual nature, the gradual advancement from one generation to another in the mastery of science or art.

I do not find any thing very new in your metaphysical observations in the two letters, though I find them closely & well expressed, & though I feel that I cannot too often be reminded of truths so important. I think you are mistaken when you talk of a whole life being insufficient for reading & digesting all that has been & may be published on the subject. I am afraid it would be impossible to name above half-a-dozen capital books that expressly treat of it.

Your remarks remind me less of Hartley than Hume, whom I am disposed to regard as the much greater philosopher. The grand reservoir of Hume's metaphysics is his Treatise of Human Nature in three volumes, which, I am afraid, he

,,,,

somewhat injured, when he attempted to recast it in the second volume of his Essays. Most of your observations are to be found in the second volume of his Treatise.

The other observation I wished to suggest to you is, that I suspect the great fault of us metaphysical writers is prolixity. To illustrate; I have sometimes seen a book spoken of with great commendation, entitled, Squire Search's Sight of Nature Pursued, in seven volumes. I never read it. It may contain valuable matter; but I am persuaded a metaphysical work in seven volumes cannot be a work of true eminence. What would become of Geometry, if it were thus overlaid with repetitions, illustrations, & extraneous matter? I have no other apology to offer for myself, in common with many of my brethren, but that we have not time to be short. I strongly incline to believe that simplicity & compression, by reducing many a voluminous treatise, to a thin duodecimo, would only render its principles, if true, more perspicuous & irresistible.

I do not know whether I ought to ask you for observations on any of my books. But, if I hesitate, it is for your sake, not from any doubts respecting myself. There are so few persons from whom one can obtain this assistance! Men of the greatest abilities are usually so occupied or so indolent, that the scanty hints of this sort they afford are often trifling & contemptible.

You will of course find no great difficulty in putting down some observations on my new volume,^{lxxv} which I believe will appear in about a fortnight; if you find yourself incited to read it. My favourite work, as you know, is Political Justice, of which I am not now, I believe, going to print out an edition that ought to have been ^sent^ to the press^{lxxvi} in

”””

last June: but we authors are the slaves of the booksellers, & not our own masters.

I am sorry to say that I have ^no^ distinct recollection of the nature of your hypothesis in your remarks upon pity

W Godwin

Jan. 30. 1797

....

*

Duke reel 3 WG-TW

”””[addressed]

Tho. Wedgwood, esq/Etruria/Staffordshire

[postmark]

4 F MR 97

”””

[blank]

You desire me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter & its contents, agreeably to the desire of mine of the 28th ult.^{lxxvii} I have at present time for no more.

Action after all is different from profession. I am myself an incorrigible sceptic. I now understand your character better, or at least have additional evidence of that, of which I had evidence before.

Mar. 4. 1797

W Godwin

.....

*

Duke reel 3^{lxxviii} TW-WG

..., [addressed]

Mr Godwin/at W Bangs/Evesham Buildings/Sommers town/London

[postmark]

MA 27 97

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Barnet May 26 - 1797

When I last called upon you, on taking leave, I mentioned intending calling again in a few days, with some papers I wished to submit to you. I think it right to state my reasons for not doing so.

In the course of our correspondence, you have more than once expressed a desire of knowing me better. On coming to town, I waited on you twice. It struck me very forcibly, after quitting you ^on^ the second visit, that if you really derived pleasure from my conversation, you could not have failed to have invited me to a continuance of our intercourse. I was th confirmed in this idea by reflecting on your intimation that an afternoon visit would be more convenient to you. The discussion to which the papers in question would have given rise, was likely to take up a good deal of time; I felt a conviction of the subjects repay meriting the sacrifice from you.

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I entered into your situation & felt how irksome the interruption might prove to you.

I promised to communicate some comments I had made on your Enquirer. On reflection, I was not able to satisfy myself that they were important enough to outweigh the above consideration.

I understand you condemn me for coldness of character. I plead guilty - the cause of this defect I believe [sic] to be principally constitutional - I have moments of apathy when I am utterly indifferent to every being & thing - but these oppress me only in sickness. It would not be sincere in me not to state, at the same time, that your manners have often appeared to me & to others, distant & cold. I daresay this may surprise you, as your sensibility is often sufficiently

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manifested. I too have my feelings & if you conceive that my heart is uniformly as cold as my manners, I shall give you credit for less penetration than I am now inclined to do.

I am afraid of writing what may appear to be dictated by pique - I confess I have felt some disappointment - unreasonably you will most likely think - but I cannot feel the slightest emotion of resentment at your exercising & acting upon a discrimination in regard to your acquaintance, which I every day practise in regard to mine.

I beg to be respectfully remembered to Mrs Godwin

Thos. Wedgwood

.....

*

Duke reel 5 WG-TW

”””

I received your letter of Friday last^{lxxxix} with surprise & pain. As I had no feelings respecting you that were not perfectly cordial, I did not suspect any of a different nature in you. You did not call on me so often as I wished while you were in town; but my experience of mankind has accustomed me to similar disappointments, & I cheerfully forgave you. When I expressed my esteem for your powers of disquisition, I said what I felt, & did not apprehend any doubt in you, as to the sincerity of the remark, or the inferences that follow from it. If I were a being of the most unmixed selfishness, your company would on that account be highly desirable to me; since there is scarcely any thing that I desire more than to sharpen my own powers of disquisition, as or any more that I know of, so effectual for that purpose, as collision with the powers of another. My mention of an afternoon visit was extorted from me by your supererogatory caution, & I am sure I said at the same time, that I was used to consider morning visits as no interruption; & that it was [^]particularly[^] impossible that yours, who were accustomed to be in town for such short periods, & at so long intervals, could have that effect.

I wish I could persuade you to discard this sort of scepticism in friendship, & proneness to suspect. I cannot charge myself in this instance with having afforded you any real ground. I am sure that both my judgment & my feelings prompted me in the opposite direction.

It is very probable that the habits of both of us

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have inclined us to a vicious reserve, & made a proceeding of unmixed confidence & frankness more difficult than it ought to be. It struck me, in reading your letter, that a few entire days of society with each other might have the strongest tendency to subtend that defect. If you see this matter in the same light, & encourage me to the experiment, I should be happy to see try what a visit to you in the country^{lxxx} would do towards bringing us to a mutual understanding.

May 30. 1797.

W Godwin

.....

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Duke reel 12^{lxxxix} TW-WG

”””**[addressed]**

Mr Godwin/17, Evesham Buildings/Sommers town/London

[postmark]

7 AU 97

”””

North Wales July 31 1797

Fortune has placed a considerable trust in my hands - I have lately been considering how I may be best employed - Perhaps I have hit upon the most probable mode of beneficial expenditure.

My aim is high - I have been endeavouring some master stroke which should anticipate a century or two upon the lazy-paced progress of human improvement.^{lxxxii} ^Almost^ Every ^prior^ step of ^its^ advance may be traced to the influence of superior characters. Now, it is my opinion, that in the education of the greatest of these characters, not more than one hour in ten has been made to contribute to the formation of those qualities upon which this influence has depended. Let us suppose ourselves in possession of a detailed statement of the first twenty years of the life of some extraordinary genius; What a chaos of perceptions! If one were ignorant of the resulting product idiocy would certain[ly] suggest itself as the only possible one. How many opposing tendencies which have negatived each other! how many great branches of knowledge have been begun at the wrong end & finished, with incredible toil, in a backward direction, down to the roots! how much learned, to be forgotten, how many hours, days, months have been prodigally wasted in unproductive occupation! how many false & contradictory ideas imprinted by authority! What a host of half formed impressions & abortive conceptions blended into a mass of confusion. So much for the intellectual [?divisions ?dimensions]; an equal disorder might be pointed out in the passions but it is sufficiently obvious without entering into detail.

You easily foresee my design. I wish to have ^made^ one or more grand improvements in education. There certainly are in this island men of individual talents & sufficient zeal for such

”””

an undertaking. The two great requisites are 1. A plan to be decided upon by such philosophers as can be induced to lend their assistance - Yourself - Beddoes^{lxxxiii} (I have not yet told ^you^ what I do not feel at liberty to disclose except to confidential friends; that I have had the good fortune to enable this admirable & enlightened man to gratify an ardent inclination for establishing himself in London, where he will pursue his valuable labors with the additional & inestimable advantages of congenial society) Holcroft - H Tooke will readily point out the absurdities & contradictions into which the followers of infant systems are too easily drawn. You will probably be able to name others. I shall gain no credit with you by waiting to have my name added to the list; so I propose myself. A considerable difficulty here starts itself as to the manner of decision to be adopted; but I must now wave [sic] it & be content to sketch out a mere outline of the project. Is not it rational to suppose that something important may result from these discussions, independently of the success of the expt?^{lxxxiv}

II. One, or two superintendants of the practical part. The only persons that I know of as at all likely for this purpose, are Wordsworth^{lxxxv} & Coleridge.^{lxxxvi} I never saw or had any communication with either of them. Wordsworth, I understand to have many of the requisite qualities & from ^what^ I hear of him, he has only to be convinced that this is the most promising mode of benefiting society, to engage him to come forward with alacrity. The talents of Coleridge I suppose are considerable &, like Wordsworth, quite disengaged. I am only afraid that the former may be too much a poet & subjective^{lxxxvii} to suit our views. The superintendants should assist in the prelim^y^{lxxxviii} discussions. What do you think of Stoddart? I have heard you speak highly of Dyson.

Subjects of discussion

What is Genius? Rudiments, perhaps, are (*distinct*) *vivid primary* senses, (*distinct*) *vivid secondary ideas*. with *high degrees of pleasure* associated. This admitted, the practise should be to simplify & render intense the first affections of Sense & II to excite these affectio[ns]

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under every possible favourable circumstance of pleasure. At present, little or no attention is paid to either of these possib.^{lxxxix} There is nothing elementary in the manner of administering impressions to children; their attention is vaguely sollicitated by a thousand objects at once. Sight and Touch are the two important senses: they must be taught together, but beginning with pure elements & advancing by regular progressions. Mankind are agreed ^{^thus^} to instruct the *eye & ear*, in teaching language - why should not the *eye & touch* have the same advantage. Shou'd not the nursery, then, have plain grey walls with one or two vivid objects for sight & touch. Cou'd not children be made to acquire manipulation much sooner? Let hard bodies be hung about them so as continually to irritate their palms as they happen to come in contact. Might not a few weeks gained in the first terms of the series of progression [illeg.] make a difference of as many years, farther on in the series? The gradual explication of Nature wou'd be attended with great difficulty; the child must never go out of doors nor leave his own apartment. And with no little risk; for if supplied too rapidly with impressions, the end is frustrated, & if too slowly, stupidity & limited conception are to be apprehended. I see no limit to the perfectibility of second^y ideas. From earliest infancy, children shou'd be questioned about recent & remote impressions; or otherwise induced to repeat all their parts. From this wou'd result a habit of the keenest observation & the most retentive memory If this were system^y pursued, I am almost inclined to think 2ndary ideas would almost come up to primary, or impressions; & consequently give nearly the same pleasure; so that to think of a tune on the organ wou'd be the same thing as to hear it &c. But wou'd not this perfecti[on] bring on such abstractedness & absence as to render it undesirable?

Now how to connect high degrees of pleasure with these impressions? Much will depend on the manner of the preceptor - it shou'd be animated & winning; & accompanied with pleasurable expression: a little acting, in the improvement of our dull natures, must be allowed. Much, also on the vividness, resemblances & contrasts of the objects exhibited. Much on the moments seized on for instruction, as after moderate meals & every other occasion of animal vivacity.

The other distinguishing feature of genius is the habit of rapid survey & prompt incessant combination of the above prim^y & second^y ideas. How to produce that habit?

High gratifications will be succeeded by strong Desires in their absence. Hence the extreme importance of connecting their chief pleasures with rational objects. Romping, tickling & fooling, though good in themselves & in deficient education of great value, are objectionable on other

”””

accounts. Strong desires urge to vigorous efforts to attainment. Now here is the greatest occasion for nice judgment in the superintendent, as to the time & qty of assistance to be afforded. Perhaps the slightest indication of Despair might ('be' omitted) immediately attended to & the qty afforded enough to remove, or if possible, prevent that painful feeling; with an extreme caution, however, of not interfering to a degree which might obstruct their forming the desirable habit of independent execution, forethought, activity & invention. Now to give to this habit its full power, it seems necessary that series of resembling impressions shou'd have been systematically administered, so that the view or idea of any object may, where desire urges, instantly suggest a thousand analogies. So much for Genius at present.

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What specific character does the actual state of society most demand? Not, I think, a more abstract philr.^{xc} to investigate truth; there is already a large stock of truth; but its circulation is very confined. The higher classes of society are to be the subjects of his operation. He must possess uncommon force, facility & refinement of conversation; his physiognomy, the tones of his voice, his gestures shou'd be such as irresistably to win esteem & affection whilst his reasoning impresses conviction; his manner shou'd be full of tenderness, consideration & sympathy. It shoud be impossible to look on him without love & admiration. In the selection of a child it would be right to attend to its personal advantages; nothing which can give delight & interest to the communication of truth, shou'd be neglected. I can easily concieve an individual with these endowments, producing a general revolution of sentiment. In the best regulated mind of the present day, has not there been, & is not there some hours ^every day^ passed in reverie, thought ungoverned, undirected? How astonishingly the powers & produce of the mind wou'd be increased by a fixed habit of earnest thought; this is to be given; I have more to say but shall wait for yr opinion of this.

Mrs Godwin will excuse my cautioning her against a hasty accommodation of cold bathing for children - Drs Darwin & Beddoes^{xc} condemn it as a very dangerous practise.

I am very sorry to give you the fatigue of reading pencil - I wrote as long at the table as I cou'd.

I remain at Bala^{xcii}
a fortnight longer}

Thos Wedgwood

.....

*

b.227/8(a) WG-TW

^{xciii}
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I felt some degree of despair at the commencement of your letter. A compliment in the censurable sense can only be, when something is expressed more than the heart entirely feels, or where sincere praise is impertinently

repeated. I am [?proud] that I wrote nothing more in my last letter to you than my genuine sentiments, & I gave you credit for the discernment to distinguish between real feeling & unmeaning panegyric. It is, I believe, a part of the English character, to feel that sort of mauvaise honte, which prevents men from giving utterance to their sentiments of each other; & two friends ^here^ will sometimes hold commerce for years, always talking upon general subjects, & neither assured of the rank he holds with the other. I conceive this to be very vicious. I regard it to be my duty, & I find it [illeg.] with much pleasure, to tell every man what ill I think of him, more especially when I find cause for approbation. We all of us, I believe, stand in need of this encouragement. I love these overflowings of the heart, & cannot endure to be always treating, & being treated by my friends, as if they were so many books.

I am intensely desirous of obliging you in a-

ny thing in my power, & am truly sorry for the subject of your first request relative to Montagu.^{x^{civ}} I have not now at present to offer a word on that subject, as I feel the very name of a female midwife^{x^{cv}} odious in my ears. Perhaps my sensitiveness is unreasonable, & in that case I expect it will subside. In the mean time, I trust, Montagu does not need to be stimulated by me to do any thing that he judges to be proper. I immediately forwarded your letter to him at Etruria.

I am much obliged both to you & your friends for the invitation you give me. Them I am not so fortunate as to know, therefore the chief allurements of the invitation is the prospect it exhibits of a further opportunity to cultivate your intimacy. But I am afraid I must deny myself in the present instance. My affairs press upon me, & I am urged in my present situation to redouble my exertions. I would must endeavour to provide in the most eligible manner for the dear pledges this incomparable woman^{x^{cv}} has left behind her, as well as for heavy expences & arrears which this dreadful event has accumulated upon me.

The infant has been exceedingly ill since you left us. We have sent three or four times to Dr Fordyce respecting it, & we wished much for your presence in town. The illness occurred at Mrs Reveley's, to whom the child was removed on the day [?of /?after] the death

of the mother. But last Sunday we brought it home again; & under Mrs Fenwick's care, it seems to have recovered as by a charm.

In strict, but painful, conformity to what I cannot help regard as your error,^{x^{cvii}} I shall merely add my name

Sep. 19. 1797.

W Godwin

.....

*

Duke reel 5^{xcviii} TW-WG

»»»

[postmark]

DEC 11 97

»»»

[...] I am coming to town in a few days. [...] I am delighted with the thought of conversing with you. I understand Montagu has requested you to write to me. [...]

Dec. 7 1797

Penzance

....

»»»

[postmark]

DE 28

Penzance Decr. 25. 1797.

Sir

Tobin^{xcix} interrupted us in our last conversation. I fully intended speaking to you on the subject of your last letter to me. I seem to recollect distinctly that you told me in giving it into my hand that you were no longer in need of pecuniary assistance. If our late intercourse has contributed, as I earnestly wish it may, to an increase of your confidence in my character & desire to serve you, I trust you will apply to me on all occasions without scruple.^c I saw Montagu for a few moments at Gatehouse (my brother's). I wish I could have spent a day with him, he is in a very critical situation. I think it right to caution you against a false inference you might be led to draw from a report of our conversation together. We were talking of the different manners of men: & I gave him

»»»

freely my opinion of yours; in doing this I felt some alarm from Montagu's passion for promiscuous communication & ^habit of^ inaccurate statements, lest the good understanding which I hope now subsists between us might by his means be unhappily disturbed. And I here declare that I prefer your manner of *conversation & discussion* to that of any man of my acquaintance; and that the moments spent in your company were passed with unusual satisfaction. After this caveat against the imputation of a suspicious & quarrelsome temper, I shall venture to add that I am under some apprehension that I have still your sympathy to gain & that though I may be admitted to your fireside as an occasional morning exercise I had better stop here -

Do me justice - I make no complaint - your

»»»

society is precious to me, & I shall cultivate it as well as my miserable means (of whose deficiency in all respects I am thoroughly sensible), will allow me. Reviewing our past commerce, & entering into your sentiments, it would be

presumption in me ^to expect^ that the result would be otherwise than what I suspect it to be. Yet it will be strange if two men who have so many common feelings & opinions should not in time draw nearer to each other in mutual sympathy. The post is going out - my hands are stiff with [?writing] in the cold - Write soon & do not misconceive me

Thos Wedgwood

[written on outer sheet]

Joss^{ci} desires me to say he was sorry not to be able to accept yr invitation - he proposes that pleasure when next in town

.....

*

Duke reel 5 WG-TW^{cii}

”””

I received uncommon pleasure from the perusal of your last letter. Your character opens upon me; &, as it opens, (to use an expression of Mrs Godwin's) I find *more heart in it*, than I had previously supposed. I thank you for the ingenuousness both of your commendation & censure. If you could point out any particular circumstances in which you imagine you discover my want of sympathy, it would add greatly to the benefit, for you to mention them. It is however probable enough that your feeling is a general one, which you have never yet analyzed. In that case, let us trust to the operation of habit & time.

I was much more pleased with you this last time of seeing you, than upon any former occasion. My idea of your talents rises, upon further observation; &, though good health & spirits are no virtues, yet, combined with certain other qualities, they are powerful recommendations. I am still of the opinion that influenced me in my visit to Etruria, that a short period of cohabitation conduces much to mutual good understanding & confidence. But then you were out of spir

”””

its; &, seeing you, as I did, in the midst of a numerous family, was like seeing you at the ordinary of an inn. If you come to live in or near London, we shall perhaps have an opportunity to repeat the experiment with happier auspices.

One thing let me add upon this subject. Your conversations with me have always been upon profound topics; you came with the avowed purpose of making the most of our time. I am particularly partial to profound topics, but I am much inclined to think that sympathy & friendship are most apt to be nourished by intervals of relaxation & leisure. Add to this that you talk principally of a branch of metaphysics that I have never expressly proposed to myself. I have great benefit & pleasure in hearing you; but my habitual scepticism & diffidence are redoubled; &, whatever you may think of it, I am afraid of losing with you the degree of credit for understanding I have got, by the paucity of ideas I am able to return you.

I perceive I fell into an ambiguity upon the subject of money when you were in town; but, like you, I took for granted that the subject would be renewed. When I put a copy of a letter into your hands, I meant to signify my adherence

”””

to the main topic of it. I merely said in answer to a question that you put, that I had no instant occasion for it, as I had previously supposed ^I should have^. Two months from that time would answer my purpose just as well. Remember, I have always already received £30 out of the £100 that was mentioned.

Some alterations have taken place relative to the circumstances detailed in that letter, but none that very materially affect the result.

Jan 3 1798

W Godwin

....

*

Duke reel 5 TW-WG

ciii

”””

Penzance Jany 6 - 1798

It is hardly necessary for me to inform you that the contents of your letter were highly agreeable to me. You are almost the only person of my acquaintance whose judgment is valuable to me on speculative points, & on that account I feel continually the necessity of your sanction. On the subject of friendship, no person ought to think with so much charity of others, or speak with greater diffidence, than myself. I was not satisfied of the [?proposals] of my last letter, though, as it has happily led to an explanation agreeable to both of us, I cannot now repent of it. Perhaps I am incapable of friendship

”””

my habits & disposition are certainly so unfavourable as to require a concurrence of fortunate circumstances for its birth & support. “Sickness, says Johnson, makes scoundrels of us all”. That is, impairs a [illeg.] sympathy. But feebleness of constitution & spirits is not the only obstacle; I have to contend with a timidity of disposition which has long harrassed [sic] me inconceivably & which in a thousand ways is obstructive to the growth of an entire & affectionate intimacy. It is unfortunate, in the present instance, that you should be tainted with the same disposition. However, I certainly feel infinitely less constraint in your

”””

company than that of any prior person. I look forward to the possession of a lodging in town which I shall frequently visit from the country - there I hope to enjoy your society with more ease & leisure than I have hitherto done, for I perfectly agree with you in what you say respecting the tendency of abstruse discussion.

I will thank you to acknowledge the receipt of the enclosed. You often hint at repayment - Let me entreat you not to burden yourself at all with such an intention - I have not the slightest desire ever to receive it having already much more than I know how to dispose of

TW

.....

*

Duke reel 3 WG-TW^{civ}

”””

I write now merely to acquaint you of my having received your letter of the 6th^{cv} together with its contents.

I am pleased with the style of writing we have lately employed. I have more taste, though I have sometimes suspected, & often been told, that it is a vicious taste, for letters & conversations of feeling, than of discussion.

Allow me to recommend to you a very cautious admission of the moral apophthegms of doctor Johnson. He had an unprecedented tendency to dwell upon the dark & unamiable part of our nature. I love him less than most other men of equal talents & intentions; because I cannot reasonably doubt that, when he drew so odious a picture of man, he found some of the traits in his own person.^{cvi} I have seen more persons than one or two, whom sickness has neither converted into scoundrels, nor stripped of a sympathetic disposition.

Your paying the postage of your letters to me, is contrary to established etiquette. It is scarcely worthwhile to enter into an argument about it, but I think that I can prove to you that it is wrong

W Godwin Jan. 10. 1798^{cvii}

.....

*

Duke reel 5 WG-TW

”””[addressed]

Tho. Wedgwood, esq/Stoke/near Cobham/Surrey

[postmark]

5 Oct. 98

”””

I have received your letter, & thank you for the £50 check it encloses. I am not aware that I shall stand in need of anything further till about Christmas. I acknowledge the receipt, as you desired, by return of post.^{cviii}

I am much obliged to you for the explicitness of your explanation on the subject of my intended visit. I am persuaded that a similar explicitness is the thing chiefly wanting to render mankind much more cordial & happy than they find themselves at present. You appear to me to be under some misconception on the subject. I am not aware that I stand so much in need of a person employed in the occupation of my entertainment as you suppose. At the same time I grant that my habits are so much those of vegetating in a single spot that I denominate home, that,

though I can thoroughly enjoy the act of travelling, I find myself, *tant soit peu*, out of my element, when fixed for a certain number of days to any other spot. But I do not wish to give way to this feeling. I believe that occasional change of scene contributes both to corporal & intellectual well-being. I am determined therefore, as long as I can find any body willing to receive me, to make one or two excursions of a few days each, every summer; & I had felt inclined to put you down in the list of my hosts.

Separately from what I have above said, I laboured under one or two disadvantages when at Etruria in 1797.

”””

I considered my visit as particular to you, not generally to your family, & therefore was not satisfied if an instance or two of tête à tête conference did not occur every day. In any after experiment, I should ^have^ desired to dismiss all solicitude on this point, & to leave it to the disposition of accident. Secondly, I have a peculiarity of character, the whole extent of which you have probably had no opportunity to notice. When I am first introduced to strangers, I am for the most part silent, stiff & reserved, occupied in observing them, & imagining them occupied about every thing but me. Feelings something like a state of warfare are produced, & I am never persuaded that they are candid in judging, kind in intention, good humoured & unassuming in action till familiarity has worn out this warfare. For that reason, I improve upon most persons on further acquaintance. You see, if your explicitness have some advantages, it brings also this consequence along with it, which may possibly be a disadvantage, it draws a similar candour from me. I have made no secret of exposing to you all my weakness and all my puerility. I condemn these features as much as any one, but they continue to adhere to me. The inference from the whole is, that, in any country visit I should make you, the balance in my accounts would probably be greatly on the side of pleasure against pain, & that, this being settled, it remains for you to consider & to say whether there be any thing like a similar probability on your side.

”””

I have looked over your letter again, & find a tone of such decision relative to this point, that probably all idea of any future visit ought to be dismissed. Discussion is good; but personal discussion ought to have its bounds; & it is not at all necessary that I should lead you into any further agitation of a matter, which your own feelings should tell you, under the circumstances, to be undesirable. In that case, you may consider the above as a character for a novel or a play, or, if you will, as a lecture in philosophy, & make some instruction out of it, if you can.

As you say nothing of your health, I hope I may allow myself to conclude favourably of it.

Oct. 5 1798

W Godwin

.....

*

Duke reel 5 TW-WG

”””

[postmark]

De 20 98

Stoke, Cobham, Surrey

[...] I am neither well nor gay. [...] I look forward to amended health and spirits. [...] I am yet much too dull to relish society.

.....

*

c.507/11 TW-WG

”””

[40]^{cix}

Gunville, nr. Blandford

Dorset

July 5 - 1801

Dear Godwin -

If you happen to have preserved some of my former letters to you, I want much you would lend me one in folio. I wrote to you some years ago on the subject of association of *feeling* - in which I state some cases to apply the solution - mention the relief found, in anxiety & low spirits of a walk in the garden - a case of nervous fear from reading M[ll]e Roland's account of her mother's death. If you meet with any other letters on the same subject written about that time, I shall be glad to have the letters sent.

You must excuse my making out a letter, writing does me so much mischief - Adieu -

TWedgwood

.....

Amelia Alderson^{cx}

b.210/6^{cx}

,,,[addressed]

Mr Godwin,/No 25, /Charlton Street -/Somers Town/London

,,,

Norwich. Friday August 28th - 1795

N^o 2 1,^{cxii}

I am just return'd from Mrs Southernes,^{cxiii*} & have the pleasure to inform you that she has every mark of sound health in her appearance, & of animated intellect in her conversation - Can I say more to remove your anxiety, or rather affectionate curiosity concerning one to whom the world is as much indebted as you are - for she watched over your childhood, & preserved you the means of that improvement, by which you will be immortalized, & the world I trust improved - Annabella Plumtre^{cxiv} accompanied me to Mrs S: - we thought think her a sensible woman, & I dare say our acquaintance with this cousin of your's will not end with this day's meeting - Miss P: has made an effort to continue it by lending her Mr Holcroft's narrative, & letter, & my servant is to be the bearer of them. - I shall say no more on this subject of except that Mrs S: desires her love to you

[inserted in MJG hand]

* Should there not be something said in a note of Mrs Southern?

....

,,,

Here I am again in this world of *stillness* not to say *dulness* - but it gives me an opportunity of entering into myself; of thinking over à tete reposée the scenes, & persons I have left, of marshalling the new ideas I have gained & of acting in consequence of them - therefore welcome Norwich & thy salutary stupidity - (as if stupidity *could* be salutary! what bad philosophy! however n'importe - I can't write it over again -)

I have been twice since I returned, in y^e company of those persons, who have long faces & are likely to form any society in this place; & what strikes me most in them is, their *eagerness* to deliver their opinions tho' they violate propriety & good manners by breaking forcibly in on the argument of some one else - Dr Moore^{cxv} tells the following story in his travels as characteristic

,,,

of the *cidevant frenchmen's* eternal propensity to flatter. - A frenchman after having paid some very apt compliments to every member of a company he was in, save *one*, who preserved a sullen silence, had address enough at length to compliment this taciturn gentleman on his having "de grands talens pour la silence" (I quote from a very distant recollection but I believe I am accurate) - now this story has often occurred to me in a different

light from to what the relater [in]tended by it - to have a talent for silence [illeg.] in my opinion a most desirable thing, & I know no one who has this talent in such perfection as yourself - by silence I mean the power of listening, patiently & attentively even to *bad arguments badly delivered* - were this talent cultivated as it *ought* to be I should not the other evening have had the pain of hearing one person rudely interrupting another; that other exalting his voice to make himself heard in spite of the interruption, till confusion & noise were the order of the day, & I thought myself in the national convention but alas! there was no president, & the *bell was not rung*

”””

I have read Madame Roland;^{cxvi} that is, y^e first volume - I long for the [illeg.] others - She interests, delights, & makes me *unhappy*. That such a woman should have been the victim of such monsters! - That a mind which might have lighted up the fire of patriotism in hundreds, should have been extinguished by the tyranny of one!

Did you visit Palmer on board the Hulks^{cxvii} on purpose to convert him to Atheism?-

This is a foolish question but I have reasons for asking it - If Mr Holcroft is returned, say everything that's friendly & affectionate to him from me, & tell Fanny^{cxviii} to write to me - Love to Miss H: &

so farewell! A: Alderson

....

”””**[addressed]**

Mr Godwin,/25 Charlton Street/Somers Town

[postmark]

17 Aug Unpaid Penny Post

”””

No 2. Norwich [illeg]^{cxix}

You are right in thinking it wrong to dwell on the foibles of those who have talents & virtues capable of commanding admiration - Is it not equally right to forget slight neglects, & offences from those persons to whose kindness, & active friendship we have been indebted for pleasure & improvement?

I am inclined to think it is, - that I may have a sufficient reason for forgetting the disappointment you occasioned me, by not meeting me at [?Mr] Twiss's on Monday afternoon - you inflicted pain on me but I forgive you, and am desirous of

”””

making you feel how deeply I am impressed with your attentions to my wishes on most occasions, & how highly I value your friendship, & assistance.

Mrs Imlay is a more rigid critic than you - but I acquiesce in the justice of most of her remarks - happy, most happy shall I be if the efforts, & application to which I am hastening, may entitle me to the praises of you both - I mean, the fruit of my efforts, for the effort itself is certain of obtaining them, as industry commands approbation, tho' its labours be fruitless - After a long journey made pleasant to me by the company

....

of a gentleman whom I have [illeg.] from my childhood, as the inti[?mate of] those aristocratic persons whom [?I] was once proud to call my relat[?ives] I arrived at this chill city - I found my Father well, & happ[y] & that was sufficient to reconcile [?me] to the place we met in - your let[ter] gave him much pleasure but me still more - It praised my Father to my friends; & I think it gave the ^latter^ additional value in my eyes - no bad thing, when I reflect on the value of those I have left - but why should I encroach any longer on your time?

I have said enough to convince you that I admire your talents, & love your character - & my conscience is satisfied -

Amelia Alderson -

....

...,**[addressed]**^{cxx}

Mr Godwin, /25, /Charlton Street/Somers Town/London

....

[written upside down]

Believe ^me^ I do not mean

to die like a beast - I am not idle

No 3

Norwich 5th of Feb^{ry} ^{cxxi}

As I should find it very difficult to give a reason for not having written to you sooner I shall not give a reason at all, but content myself with assuring you that tho' I may appear negligent of you, I have you have often been in my thoughts, & I have been continually endeavouring to profit by the labours of your wonderful mind -

“Tell Mr Godwin (said I to Thomas Hardy [?])” that I mean to write to him very soon, & am ashamed of myself for not having (yet) answered his kind letter”

“Ah (replied the good man,) I do not wonder at your delay, for you must mind your *p's & q's* when you write to Citizen Godwin -” Was he right think you in ascribing my silence to this cause? -

I read your “Considerations” with delight, but alas I fear my admiration of them has deprived me in the opinions of many of all claims to the honourable title of Democrat - I f am afraid I must never show my face at certain political lectures again, unless I chuse to run the

....

risk of being pointed at as a spy. -

I wish I had written to you in the first moments of enthusiasm occasioned by reading y^r pamphlet, that I might have established a claim to the prophetic art & rivalled Mr Brothers;^{cxxii} for I amused myself with fancying a dialogue ^likely^ to take place amongst some of the Corresponding Society & c upon reading y^e first part of the considerations,^{cxxiii} which ended with “d-n him, the dog is pensioned, by G-d!” - and lo! my prediction soon after came to pass - “We hear Mr Godwin has just had a pension settled on him” said a London correspondent soon after - What your old friend Mrs Southern thinks of the matter I know not - but I called on her about a month ago & sent her the pamphlet the next day - I also asked her opinion of *Caleb Williams* : [“] now pray let not thy noble courage be cast down” when I inform you, that both Mrs S: & her daughter^{cxxiv} think you talk much too favourably of wicked men, & that “Italian Letters”^{cxxv} ^yr first novel^ are vastly prettier than

”””

Caleb Williams. Console yourself my good friend by reflecting on the fable of the old man & his ass - Heighho! there had need be pleasure & profit in the acquaintance of eminent characters; for there is infinite trouble attending it - I am pestered with reports about you & Mr Holcroft. Two days ago I received a letter informing me that [“] Mr Holcroft had turned his eldest daughter out of doors, & Mr Godwin was the instigator of this cruel action” - That Miss H - & her father have quarrelled is true in all probability, I heard so from a respectable authority, but that you advised such a measure as her expulsion from the paternal roof I cannot believe - because it appears to me that judging you & Mr H: by your own pure system, expelling even a criminal child from the society likely to amend her errors, is an act so contrary to justice that it can only be excused by supposing it to have been the result of one of those impulses of anger to which we are all ^liable^ - How often have I check'd myself while animadverting severely on the crimes of errors,[sic]^{cxxvi} by reflecting

”””

that crime is *error* only, that I should pity the *criminal* tho' I abhor the *crime*, while the half finish'd invective has died away on my lips, as your patient, & long suffering philosophy arose in all its mild lustre to my view -

And shall you preach what you do not practise? Shall the pupil illustrate while the preceptor *violates* his own rules? - Oh! no, 'Tis impossible - Miss H: has deserved reproof, & may be allowed to suffer for a time but she will soon be restored to the society of her enlightened Parent.

Farewell! Pray write to me - A: A:

....

”””[addressed]

Mr Godwin,/25,/Charlton Street/Somers Town/London

”””

No 4

12th of Feb^y 96 -

My dear Sir,

“It cannot rain but it *pours*” is a vulgar proverb but one which I feel to be applicable in the present instance, as thus - I who neglected to write [^sic] you for some months now take it into my head to trouble you with two letters in the course of a fortnight - But you well know that there is no accounting for the caprices of women - & that I alas, have a great deal of the woman still hanging about me you know [illeg.] too well - but to the point - The readiness with which you undertook the task of reading my Tiberius Gracchus, & the kindness with which you pointed out its very few merits while with equal kindness you expatiated on its defects, has often recurred to my remembrance, tho’ indolence & other circumstances have prevented my taking advantage *since* of that wish to serve me which your conduct at that time fully displayed - But I at this moment feel inclined to ask a ^similar^ exertion of the friendship I experienced from you at Norwich, but I ask it from hopes more founded, & from ambition more daring -

(Will you forgive me if I request the purport of this letter to be *entre nous*?)

”””

I read, & I admired The Sorcerer^{cxxvii} - I went further - I thought it capable of dramatic effect, & I dramatized it, & while I was employed on the character of Francesco, I flattered myself that all its varieties would be forcibly & admirably given by your pupil Mr Cooper^{cxxviii} provided I had means of getting my play read by Mr Harris^{cxxix} & ability enough to make it worth his acceptance - but I soon found that Mr Cooper played no more & that Mr H: was *all but inaccessible*

However I proceeded, as I knew that my interest at Drury Lane was certain, & making my mind up to relinquish Mr C’s youth & beauty for my Hero, I resolved to present the piece to Mrs Twiss,^{cxxx} and through her to Mr Kemble - In rather better than a fortnight my tragedy was in reading order, I mean tho’ the language was not polished & c the scenes ^& the situations^ were so arranged, at that situation so that I knew it would be easy for Mr H: to decide whether the general dramatic effect would be good, after time & application had polished the stile into some degree of excellence - accordingly I sent The sorcerer to Mrs T: - She gave it to her brother but learnt from him that the *proprietors* were

”””

the readers of plays now, but he said he would give it to them, & very civilly assured me of his good wishes - But I taking fright at my fate’s being referred to the awful proprietors, wrote again, entreating Mr K: to read, & give me *his* opinion - this at first he positively refused - but at last to oblige his sister he complied, & yesterday I received his opinion, which is, that it is full of repetitions, & in short he sees “no use in giving it to the proprietors as it is, nor does he see how it can be altered [“] -

I am disappointed, because I think the story impressive, & I hoped he would think it worthy of being *improved*; but if *you* will read the piece when I come to town, point out its errors, & encourage me to amend them, nay perhaps put me in a *way* of doing so, I will not give up the hope yet of its succeeding on the stage - Mr Holcroft has perhaps informed you that I am desirous of putting myself under his, as well as your tuition^{cxxxi} ie I am now finishing a *second* comedy, & when I tell you it is the *first wish* of my *heart* to write a good play, & have it performed at *either*

house, I *hope* you will suppose that with application, & y^e advice of good judges, I may in time succeed - I am very anxious to hear from you; but pray let y^r letter be kind - do not *chill* me - I am sooner depressed than encouraged, & by that Truth which you worship, I swear to you

”””

that I always feel more doubtful of, than confident of my talents in every respect - Do you ever see the Batts? - What are you employed about? Does Thelwal resent y^r pamphlet,^{cxxxii} & has y^r acquaintance ceased? How is Horne Tooke?

I long for another day at his house, but Mum -

When we meet I will tell you why I did not visit him & his amiable daughters a second time - I sacrificed my wishes to - nonsense.

Pray give him, & them my best wishes

Farewell! in about 5 weeks, I shall see you

A: A:

[bottom of page, MJG hand]

The answer to this letter w^d be very interesting

....

”””

No 5.^{cxxxiii}

You are very impudent to say “no” for me, when in all probability I was disposed to say “yes” - But I will be patient, & abide by yr decision, as I know full well the value of the time which I wish to be employed in my service, & am fearful averse to interrupting by my impatience studies, which may be employed in the service of mankind in general -

I did not expect anything so civil from you relative to my play^{cxxxiv}, & am myself “agreeably surprized [“]. - I look forward to many, & severe criticisms from you when you read it over à tête reposée, but I long for them - as I wish to be employed, & sigh already for the leisure of my own study at Norwich

Merry called on me soon after my return this morning, & from one of the letters from Norwich which he brought me I learn that you are expected at Bracon^{cxxxv} this summer - Truly the information rejoiceth me -

Merry spoke of you this morning in the kindest manner & why may not Mrs M’s^{cxxxvi}

”””

prejudices fade before the power of a more ^intimate^ acquaintance with you? - At present, she does not know you -

Fare thee well! -

A: A:

1st of April - 96

.....

c.607/2^{cxxxvii}

”””

[written in pencil, MJG hand]

Are not these though signed Almeyda Amelia Opie^{cxxxviii}

Monday Eve. Apr. 11 1796

I think it necessary to take this method of expressing the pleasure which your very just criticisms on my play have given me because I am fearful that were I not to do so, your extreme aptness to misunderstand, & misrepresent me would lead you to imagine that my self-love was more wounded than gratified by your indorsement of Mr Twiss's note.^{cxxxix}

Many of the errors which you have pointed out in my performance had, in spite of myself, forced themselves on my observation, but indolence prevented my trying to amend them - your remarks have bannished this indolence by exciting my hopes, & stimulating my ambition - last night (a painful & a sleepless one) my scenes passed in regular array before me, & my *brooding spirit*^{cxl} was I hope successfully employed on them. - but I wish to converse with you on the subject - I have many questions to put to you ask you, & I believe yr patience, & forbearance to be of respectable dimensions rather than otherwise, consequently, equal to the stretch which I may put them to -

”””

I am now fully convinced of the existence of a Devil - but the fiend abideth not in the hot dwelling commonly assigned to him - no no - Society is his dwelling place, & his name on earth is Ill Humour - Various are his shapes. Sometimes he assumes the form of serious discussion, & close argument - at others, the more lively shape of *agreeable raillery*; - Verily, verily, he delighteth not in Contradiction, but at its approach, he summons up all his force & attacks even Philosophy herself -

Is not this true O Philosopher? -

Perhaps you will think this self same fiend is grinning over my shoulder while I am writing - but if he be, I assure you he turns his head away

[blank]

.....

b.210/6

,,,[addressed]

Mr Godwin, /25,/ Charlton Street -/ Somers Town/London

[postmark]

Norwich 14 OC 96

,,,

[written upside down, Alderson hand]

Perhaps you do not know that M - has transmitted to his friends here a 100£^{cxli}

No 6

Thursday^{cxlii}

My dear Sir,

I consider that you are so well, & so constantly employed that I am always unwilling to interrupt your studies by writing you a letter of *badinage* merely, even tho' I have received a letter of that kind from you. - but as many weeks have elapsed since I became your debtor en fait d'épître, I can no longer contain my desires of telling saying "thy sins are forgiven thee" - you meant not to disappoint me, I am satisfied -

I have too a very still strong^{er} motive for addressing you, namely, a desire of knowing whether you were privy to Mr Merry's design of leaving England;^{cxliii} & if you were, I wish much to know, how he looked, & talk'd when he bade you adieu - whether he was most full of hope, or dejection My heart felt very heavy when I heard he was really gone, & gone too where I fear the charms of his conversation, & his talents will not be relished as they deserve to be - on Mrs Merry's account I rejoice here, from a variety of causes she could not be happy - she was in a state of anxiety concerning him - she also felt the consciousness of having great powers, which were perishing for want of being called forth in action - now, she

,,,

will be stimulated to exertion, & be rewarded for her labours by the delightful consciousness of supporting by her talent the man she loves.

But are his prospects so bright? I fear not - but did they burst on his sight before he departed so darkly as they appear to mine, or did the satisfaction of escaping creditors & their agents for some years at least imp the plumes of his imagination, & make him soar in idea to a scene of freedom, & unmixed enjoyment only? Can you answer these questions? My father is as curious, & as anxious as I am, & I think you are able to give us the satisfaction information we desire -

Well, I have been in a round of company since my return - & last week was at two balls, & a concert but notwithstanding, my play prospers, & in a fortnight I hope to have it ready, not for Richardson's, but *your*

inspection. Is this asking too much? Have you not leisure to reperuse, & re-criticize it? Sanctioned by your approbation, or again improved by your remarks, & advice, I shall feel less fearful; of

”””

[illeg.] the eyes of the managers -

Mr [illeg.] ale is the only character which has not benefitted by y^r cou[nsel] but he is l’homme le plus intraitable [illeg.] j’ai jamais vu.^{cxliv}

Early in November I hope to have finished my task, if you can favour me with your counsel, as soon as I shall be ready to ask it -

How is Miss Hayes?^{cxlv} To Mr Holcroft say I thank him & shall write soon - I sent Mrs Imlay some birds on Sunday, & mean to send you some soon as you may [?have some] friends to whom game could be accep[ta]ble.

Rigby has just been here & desires remembrances to you - O! que son esprit est imbu de l’idée de Madame Imlay! Should he visit London before I do, I shall venture to give him a letter of introduction - give my love to her;

Impatient of an answer from you I remain,

Sincerely yours

A: Alderson -

Have you seen y^r friend Mr King^{cxlvi} lately? While Thelwall was with us he received a letter from him dated Bristol, desiring him to set his name down for ten pounds to defray the expenses of the prosecution on account of y^e outrage at Yarmouth^{cxlvii} - why does he [?write] the Democrat?

....

b.210/6^{cxlviii}

”””[addressed]

Mr Godwin

”””

Norwich, Wednesday 1st of Nov 1796 -

So much for the molehills, now for
the mountains

No 7

What a sweet tempered creature I am! I declare I have already forgiven you all the anxiety which you occasioned me by yr silence, & even all the sarcasms which your letter contains - I believe there is a great deal of weakness in being so *placable*, but I have not yet got the better of the prejudices instilled into me by my *Christian* education.

Well - you will *receive* my play - cela va sans doute - But will you read it, &c - Soon? Will you deign to enter into the feelings of an impatient girlish author parent, whose whole soul is wrapt up in the babe she has brought forth, & who, unlike the owl in the fable, does not think her offspring a beauty (herself) but is very desirous *others* should think it so? Will you assist at her bantling's toilette with all possible expedition? & let the anxious Mamma know whether you do not think Miss may grow up handsome when her features are more formed? - O that I could but transport myself to Somers Town for one half an hour! then would you read in my wild looks, frantic gestures, & incoherent conversation,^{cxlix} my wishes, fears, & tormenting uncertainties about your opinion in the 1st place.

[illeg.] in the second - I have had thoughts of rewriting Egerton's character & borrowing for him Sir Hugh Tyrold's^{cl} bonhomme, & phraseology - &, if you say, such a loan would bear good interest* I will undertake the task Pray point out *unnecessaralities* both in dialogue, & scenes - & when you return my play, be so kind as to go to R.^{cli} & Twiss's & ask for my other play & enclose them both in the same box.

I hate you for always throwing *coquette* in my teeth - it is a bad habit - & you have lately acquired a worse - you called me a bitch the last time I saw you - but no matter -

You, Mrs I, & B Montague^{clii} in the same post chaise! - how I envy - the horses -

If Cleopatra thought the horse happy who bore one Antony, how much happier must the horses have been who had the honour to drag two Antonies & a Cleopatra -

I had rather Mr Tooke should praise me to my friends, than to myself - I exult in his approbation, but when he tells me I am pretty I cannot help

[inserted in MJG hand]

*does not the play of the words contradict the sense? M. J. G^{cliii}

[illeg.] laughing [illeg.], or smiling [at the] credulity of women, & their susc[eptibi]lity to flattery, however gross.^{cliv}

Poor Merry! will you not wish to box my ears when I say, that I do not think his mind at all matched in the matrimonial connection? Mrs Merry appears to me a very charming actress, but, but, but, - fill it in as you please -

Mrs Imlay is naught - my friend is brought to bed of a fine boy,^{clv} & no communication from Judd Place - Heighho!
^however^ If her novel^{clvi} progresses, I will forgive her, to set you a good example, & counteract the effect of the *royal* one you mention - I send good wishes to Miss Hayes - Fye upon her! to fly from the field,^{clvii} & run before little Towers, & some other little body, is unworthy such a heroine like another Erminia,^{clviii} I looked over

the plain of the monthly magazines; & like her I recognized & named some of the combatants marshalled on it. But I sought M: H: or *a woman* in vain - give my love to Mr Holcroft - I saw y^r letter to J: Taylor, & almost fainted with envy, & chagrin - It grows late - I must write nothing more save that I am

Respectfully yrs

A: A:

.....ends 4: *pedagogy*

*documents Amelia Alderson

b.210/6^{clix}

,,, [addressed]

Mrs Imlay, / Judd Place West, / Corner of Skinner's Street, / New Road, / London

,,,

Norwich 28th of August

I thank you for your kind postscript to Mr Godwin's letter.

I derive so much pleasure from thinking of you, that I was delighted to find that you wish to retain a place in my remembrance.

Will you help me to account for the strong desire I always feel when with you, to say affectionate things to you? Perhaps it is because you, like *Julie*,^{clx} appear so capable of feeling affection that you can not fail to excite it in return.

I remember the time when my desire of seeing you was repress'd by fear, - but as soon as I read your letters from Norway, the cold awe which the philosopher had excited, was lost in the tender sympathy call'd forth by the woman - I saw nothing but the interesting creature of feeling, & imagination, & I resolved if possible, to become acquainted with one who had alternately awakened my sensibility & gratified my judgement - I saw you, & you are one of the few objects of my curiosity who in gratifying have not disappointed it also - You & the *Lakes of Cumberland* have exceeded my expectations -

,,,

Mr Godwin disappointed them - I found him indeed, eloquent, entertaining, & luminous in argument, even beyond my conception of his abilities, but my fancy had so long delighted to picture him a man *after his own heart* that I shrank back almost displeas'd from a man after the *present state of things* - The fault was in *me* I know, & I have made ample amends since - every day pass'd with him, has endeared him to me more strongly - & made me cease to regret he was not what I expected to find him - a man of another time viz, one, whose "nay was nay, & his yea, yea" - I am reconcil'd even to *flattery*, *Horne Tookian flattery* from his lips, & in y^e words of a charming song

"I fear him less, but love him more"

(Do you know the next lines? Don't *laugh* if I transcribe them -

“When with licentious boldness fired
I dared to clasp what I admired,
Dared round thy neck my arms to twine
And *press thy balmy lips to mine*,
Then thro’ my soul sharp poison ran,
‘Twas then my keenest pangs began,
For by the dangerous bliss half slain,
I drag a life of ceaseless pain -

Apropos - I am glad the philosopher revenged my quarrel; but I hope you are not *half-slain* in consequence of it -

....

”””

A very amiable clever friend of mine who is on the point of bringing forth a first child on the delightful banks of Ulswater,^{clxi} is desirous of knowing in detail your means of inuring Fanny to a thin dress in this cold climate - I have sent her all the information on the subject which I am in possession of, with my testimony as eye witness of the success of your plan, as exhibited in the strong well-formed limbs, & florid complexion of your child - but I wish to receive from you the particulars she requests - Will you favour me with them?

I [wince] for my “maiden aunt” - y^r critique on my other play appears to me very just in all places, except on the scene between Lady Agnes & her old lover - I do not think it overdone - however it will certainly undergo with the rest, great alteration

Weaver Browne has been two or three times at our parties here - he talk’d in a very warm manner of you to a *Mr Rigby* who repeated his conversation to me - one of his expressions was “she is a very voluptuous looking woman!” I *stared!!* - not that I dispute the propriety of the epithet as applied to *you*, but that I was surprized to find him capable of applying it -

“Such thoughts are neither *new*, nor *rare*,
The wonder is, how they *got there*” - ^{clxii}

Upon my word, I can see you blush at this distance - n’importe - a blush is very becoming - What would Miss Hays say? Would you believe it the false hearted man calls her old, ugly, ill-dressed - he is no philosopher.^{clxiii} -

”””

Pray write to me soon - The fascinating society of London is still but too present to my mind - now the my *first feelings* are over, the society here seems “flat, stale & unprofitable”^{clxiv} - and civility forces me into it at present but as soon as I have gone the round, I shall try to take refuge both from the *past*, & the *present* in study & application, with a view to the future I send you a cargo of love to parcel out & make presents according to your ideas of

propriety - but be sure to keep a large piece for yourself - All my respect for Miss Hays is returned so, without
hypocrisy, I can send her my good wishes
Fare thee well!

A: A:

.....

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Duke reel 10^{clxv}

,,,,[addressed]

Mr Godwin,/No. 25/Charlton Street/Somers Town/London

,,,,

[Dear] Sir

Sunday - 13th of Novr. 1796

Miss Alderson has received the parcel which Mr Godwin sent on the 11th of Novr -

And now my kind friend for a less formal address; but to use a vulgarissimo proverb I was determined to “give you as good as you bring” -

Your opinion of my play gave me the most heartfelt pleasure [-] I expected a far less favorable judgment but the justice of your criticism critique on it [?made me] not quite despair of profiting by it -

[Alre]ady have I in idea increased Mrs Nugent’s [?un]ease & distress as thus - I have made [?Egert]on insinuate at the first interview with [illeg.] that it was supposed Mrs Nugent was ^also^ too [fond] of her husbands ward young Neville, in consequence of which after Lady Agn[es’] pat[iently] explained Mrs N’s reasons for borrowing money without naming the youth for whom she wished to borrow it, & having in some measure removed his (Egerton’s) prejudices ^against^ her friend, he relapses again, on asking ^just^ before they part the *name* of the young man & hearing it is Neville! on this, he feels all his doubts confirmed; & in a transport of indignation against Mrs N’s meeting Lady M, he tells her he is now convinced of Mrs N’s guilt, tells her what he has just discovered, & promises to make *her* his heir; & she prevails on him to walk up the stage with her, to meet Mrs N; & take no notice of her, ^in order^ to make *her* triumph more complete - while Lady Agnes surprized & confounded looks on, [?&] her

,,,,

[suspici]on is increased by hearing from Mrs Nugent that Nugent had told her he should wish on her retiring into the country immediately ere the notoriousness of her conduct made his disgrace & hers public talk -

Nor do I despair of making Lady M: a little more lively - but not very - Egerton alas! is my stumbling block and I must *indeed* I must trouble you to write me a few lines in answer to the following -

I cannot *invent* a language of bonho[mmie]^{clxvi}

Miss Burney’s is so excellent^{clxvii} so app[illeg.]. All [?I can] do is to make Egerton deal in sayings, & proverbs - aphorisms like the following - ‘We ought to be, such as we intend to appear.’ “Tho’ the speaker be a fool, the hearer should be a wise man” [-] I have a whole book of them & of proverbs, such as “He that meddles with thorns pricks his fingers There are more maies in the wood than grissel” - “There’s nothing agrees worse, than a proud mind & a beggar’s purse” “Sampson [sic] was a strong man but he could not pay money before he had it” “When an ass climbs a ladder then shall we find wisdom in women” &c &c &c

Now I have known many good old souls quakers & others, who have dealt in these

”””

sayings, & prefaced them with “my [?old] mother used to say” or “ my poor [illeg.]

I think Egerton is a good old soul [in whose] mouth some of these fruits of [illeg.] reference to his poor grandmother now & then might have a humorous effect -

If you think so I will do it *directly*, making Lady M - to gain his favour - compliment [him] on the abilities of his grandmother - [illeg.] I require *y^e answer* Should you approve, I must poach on Miss Burney’s [illeg.] Will you be so kind as to write as soon as you receive this? [?Believe] me that I am very unwilling [to] [tres]pass so much on y^f time & patience When I have heard from you, I shall shut myself up till my task is ended -

I assured you I had Esop’s fable of the bees by me when I wrote the simile & that I consulted it - Mrs Pocklington has gotten a fine girl, & is doing well -

You accuse me unjustly of misleading John Taylor - I understand Mr Malkin’s office to which he comes to transact busines is near W Morgan’s - therefore to save time I advised Mrs I:^{clxviii} to direct the parcel to W: M: to be forwarded directly to Mr B: Malkin - as I expecting the letter to you would go to y^e Post directly - nor, unless Mr M: [was] negligent, can I account for y^f ^not^ receiving it earlier

”””

Have you read in y^e anal^{clxix}: a comparison of Caleb Williams with the Iron Chest It seems to me well done - [?Templar] who wrote it?

But I believe the Post is always surer than a private hand, & one has no business to sermonize for other people -

Fare thee well!

A: Alderson

....

*

Duke reel 10

”””

18th of Nov 96 -

I think I see y^f wonder at opening the basket, & seeing what it contains - Perhaps you do not know that [?beefens] are a sort of apple cultivated almost entirely in Norfolk, & that when dried, they are reckoned a dainty & are sent in large

quantities abroad, as well as over England, from Norwich, where and where only, the process of drying them is understood - this will account for my sending you what might otherwise appear an odd gift; but now, worthy perhaps of adorning the dessert of some one or two of y^r smart friends -

I thank you for telling me I may trust *myself*, but I had much rather trust *you*; so hearken to the voice of her “who putteth her trust in thee”

I read the Tartuffe again on Sunday, & the result is the following purposed alteration - which I like so much, that I shall wail like the prophet Jeremiah if you do not like it too - If you do, you can tell me so in three lines & then I shall set to work *con amore* - ^I have given up the scheme about Neville &^ I mean to make Lady Agnes accompany Eger:^{clxx} to the library, & witness the familiarity of Lady M: with Nugent -

”””

“Dearest of men” is to be omitted - Lady A: *triumphs*, but Lady M: recovering herself desires Nug: to leave the room, & completely explains away the strangeness of the situation by attributing it to *pity* for Nugent’s long & hopeless respectful attraction for herself, & the his her feelings of his wounded honour in consequence of his wife’s conduct -

Egerton who is so prejudiced in favour of Lady M:^{clxxi} by her *cajoleries* &c that he is very desirous of believing her, hesitates, & seems destined to be convinced - Lady A: remonstrates - Lady M: artfully affects to forgive her, & even to *approve* her incredulity as a becoming jealousy of the *honour of her uncle* - & Lady A: seeing Eger: impressed by Lady M’s feigned candour &c leaves the room in mortification & anger - Nu: as before comes to talk to Egerton, who is resolved to think Lady M: innocent, but, as now, offends the pride of Nugent, & he insults him; but Egerton from N’s conversation has gained further proof of *Lady M’s innocence, & Mrs N’s guilt* -

The 5th act opens with Egerton’s entering Lady M:s drawing room, being come in consequence of a supplicating letter from her, to surprize her with a visit, &

”””

his assurance of his continued favour - and pleasing himself with the idea of her sitting mourning at the idea of his anger, & his appearing unexpectedly to bid her mourn no longer, - he resolves to hide himself behind the curtain, having told the servant not to say he was still in the house - He hears her coming, & hides himself, chuckling at the idea of bursting out, & surprizing her so agreeably -

She enters, followed by Lord M: who, as he enters is laughing at the account Lady M: has been giving him, of her having flattered Eger: till she can make him believe anything - This fixes Egerton mute with surprize behind the curtain, & they go on, till Lady M: has completely disclosed all her arts to gain E’s favour, & her *motives*, & till Mrs Nugent’s *innocence* is also made *quite apparent* - Lord M: goes out, & Eger: discovers himself -

His friends call [?for] him in a coach to go to Ranelagh & he departs - Lady M: finding all her designs baffled but that [?on] Nugent, whom she forbade to call that evening, but whom she nevertheless expects -

He comes, & she revives - but he comes to scorn her & she finds no resource but in the gratification of the revenge
Paddington offers to be instrumental to, the rest follows as before -

....

»,»,»

I think Egerton is such a silly old man that he might very well think hiding himself &c a good joke - Lady M: is to be made lively &c -

Thank you for reproving my want of perspicuity - since I wrote, I have read the whole pamphlet on Coleman's^{clxxii} preface, Caleb W: &c I am told it is written by Boaden^{clxxiii} Now to more important business -

A richish oldish bachelor who is never so well pleased as when he spares from his superfluities to the wants of persecuted patriots & distressed authors, has written to me in consequence of his having heard that Mrs Imlay is in very distressed circumstances, such circumstances as to make 5 guineas an acceptable present to her - Is this true? - If it be, I have his order to find some means of conveying that sum to her, the *giver unknown*

If she wants it surely she thinks too justly to scruple accepting it - but I wish to have y^r opinion on the subject, & then I shall think further about it -

Be so good as to [illeg.] the enclosed letter as my [illeg.] & when you write say whether the apples escaped ^being^ bruizing bruized -

Is it too much to request to hear from you directly, as I begin my task on Thursday & do not mean to stir out till it is ended - It is strange you cannot allow me to have two friends at once in the [illeg.] & Miss P.^{clxxiv} The first information was for Mrs Imlay, y^e second for yourself - I said my friend in y^e first instance; the name was of no consequence to you
your better as you are!^{clxxv}

.....

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Duke reel 10

»,»,»,**[addressed]**

Mrs Imlay,/Judd Place West - /Corner of Skinner Street/New road/London

[postmark]

20 [illeg.] 96

»,»,»

Norwich - 18th of Dec: 1796 -

My dear Madam

I should have written to you long ere this, had I not waited to receive an answer from my friend relative to your kind offer; which I communicated to her more than three weeks ago, & which she has not yet deigned to notice. - My patience is therefore exhausted, & I will no longer, by not writing to you, run the risk of appearing negligent, & ungrateful

I was most sincerely rejoiced to learn that the report concerning y^r pecuniary embarrassments was unfounded - but allow me to assure you that I did not intend my well-meaning, tho' perhaps injudicious friend's wishes, should be made known to you by Mr Godwin - all I required of him was, a confirmation, or denial of the report, & ever since I received his last letter, I have been alarm'd, lest you should have been led to think me abrupt, & indelicate in this business.

Nay, if I may judge from that most displeasing epistle, both you & he entertain a wrong opinion of the person who caused my application to him -

The parents of the gentleman in question are both living - & are, as I am told, penurious & the his only means of gratifying his benevolence, he derives from a fellowship which he holds at one of the universities - but still he is too much *used* to give, to *value* himself on his offering to you, & "hug himself for upon his generosity"[-]

He is constantly in the habit of doing what the world calls acts of great charity, but he, those of simple duty merely, & I am sure in his late application to me, he was not activated by motives less pure, than those of a wish to pay his tribute to suffering merit, tho' it provoked from Mr Godwin expressions of the most *contemptuous* kind, & from you perhaps a degree of ridicule which he is far from deserving - ^{clxxvi}

”””

Would to heaven, the opulent who inhabit this gay city, would run the risk of exciting *my* contempt, by similar offers! but alas! were I desirous at any time to promote a charitable subscription, I should not apply to the rich part of my acquaintance, but to those whom the strictest economy only, enables to relieve the distresses of others - from the former I *know* I should receive at best scanty assistance or reproaches for my *officiousness*; & perhaps it is this conviction that makes me so ready to applaud a willingness to part with money whenever I behold it - but I beg your pardon for troubling you on this subject - what more I have to say on it, shall be said to Mr Godwin - I like not to hear what I esteem to be illiberal reflections from any one; but they agonize me when I hear them from those whom my too enthusiastic feelings lead me most to *adore*. -

The reproof my d^r Madam, which at my *bidding* you promise to give me, I shall receive with grateful pleasure, not anger - I feel but too sensibly the weakness you impute to me - but I think you *miscall* it - you can't reproach me "with want of discrimination in forming my friendships", for I dare aver that I have only *one friend*, one confidante in the world; & that friend resides here, & is wholly unknown to you - It appears to me therefore that you should (rather) reproach me with a *girlish* want of proper reticence, & choice in my expressions, which makes me when hurried away by my feelings, talk the language of extreme interest & of friendship towards those, against whom my heart is in reality guarded - & by this means my manner towards the other sex is as I am *told*, dangerous, from the wrong, & deluding idea it often gives of my sentiments, & hence, I am very justly

”””

stigmatized with the name of Coquette ^{clxxvii} - But I repeat it, I have only one friend - one who has been the sharer of my thoughts from childhood to the present moment, & perhaps I love her the more, because she is the child of affliction

Many hours of my youth have been spent in endeavouring to sooth the agony I could neither wonder at, nor remove & while I soften'd the anguish of her heart, she insensibly became dearer to mine -

But sorrow has improved her character, & called forth energies in her mind, ^which were^ latent before, & I am every day more & more struck with the clearness of her judgment & the strength of her intellect -

I wish you would invent a word warmer than *acquaintance*, & less warm than friend - as the latter word owing to the poverty of language is frequently applied, where it does not belong -

Sometimes I flatter myself that you, like me, are in a degree the slave of early impressions; that those you have long [illeg.] & long loved have claims on y^f affections to which their talents in the eye of *reason*, give them no claim -

Am I mistaken? By this time I flatter myself y^f indisposition has left you ^{clxxviii} - when I shall see you again I know not, but probably not before April ^{clxxix} -

My play has now been in Richardson's hands ten days

I am delighted with Miss Hays's novel; I would give a great deal to have written it; tho', as society is now is ^{clxxx} it is something to be capable of admiring it - I hear in a letter just received from Town that you are to marry Opie, ^{clxxxi} I mean *are willing* - That he would be most happy to marry you, I firmly believe; but I doubt y^f willingness to marry *him* - I wish I did *not* for many reasons; all of which, if I explained them you would find affectionate towards you - If Mrs Clarkson ^{clxxxii} were as sensible of the kindness of y^f offer, as I am, she would have been eager to inform you thro' me, of her acceptance or refusal of it - & her silence is a mark of insensibility, which I did not expect from her - it cannot last long -

I am just returned from a visit of some days to some

....

rational country friends - part of our amusement was painting or working, while the master of the house read to us Mrs Radcliffe's Italian! Mem: when I marry to have it insisted in the marriage articles that my husband shall read to me in an evening while I work &c - God grant he may also be able to converse well on the merits of the work he has just read, for at least two hours after supper - Then my greatest idea of domestic happiness will be realized -

I hope y^f little Fanny's habitual hardihood has protected her from the effects of y^e frosts

The cold bath every morning has had a favourable effect upon me; you, I think use a warm one - so would I if I had one - Farewell!

Salut, et Fraternité

A: Alderson

.....

*

b.210/6

[postmark]

27 DE ^{clxxxiii}

”””

Norwich - 22nd of Dec: 1796

My dear Sir,

“Never till now” did I feel any reluctance to write to you, because never till now did I feel any substantial reason for being displeas’d with you, but displeas’d I am, or rather hurt, & I shall ^{^not^} be easi till I have told you the cause; but of that more hereafter -

I shall begin by thanking you for your judicious comments on my last communications concerning my play - I wish I could have been guided almost implicitly by them - then should Miss Paddington have been annihilated, & not as now, expos’d to the danger of damnation which that odd man Dr Johnson thought a more desirable fate than annihilation I believe - Poor woman! I am sorry for her but she must take her chance - & y^r advice that I should make Mrs Nugent a character for Mrs Jordan to represent gave me such a pang! for alas! I always meant it for her; & y^r suggestion was but an additional proof how ill my execution had answer’d my intention but, idiot as I was, I fancied while I wrote Mrs N’s dialogue, how Mrs Jordan would speak such, & such passages & sure ^{^of^} her power of producing an effect, I forgot that it was necessary the author should do something also; but yr letter call’d me to my recollection & I tried to make Mrs Nugent

”””

more simple, & imprudent, & Jordan like than she was before - (a very unfortunate name that, but no matter) - but *gay*, I have *not* made her because I think uneasy as she was she could not be *gay*, & to *feign* gayety was not in her nature - indeed, to preserve her character entirely pure from any *intended* impropriety, I have *omitted* her *trying* to rouse Nugent’s attention & jealousy by coquetting with Lord M: - Besides, before I received y^r letter, I had, according to y^r advice, made Lady M: *gay* - & had satirical - therefore, as I approve the necessity of contrast, mentioned in y^r last, that, I have preserv’d better by letting Mrs Nugent remain as she was - The objection to Egerton’s being able to *surprize* Lady M:; I have, I trust satisfactorily obviated - My play has now been 13 days in Richardson’s hands, & I have not yet heard from him - This evening I mean to begin rewriting my other comedy -

“Mrs Imlay has laugh’d with me over the story of y^r rich-ish, generous gentleman - for my part, I have no patience with such fellows” - Far be it from me to repine at the merriment of you, & Mrs Imlay - on the contrary, I heartily wish you “may laugh all the days of y^r lives” - but then I wish y^r laughter may always be benevolent, which in this case it was is not - a well meaning man, but no genius, heard a well meaning woman who was is a genius, was in extreme distress, so he wish’d to give her his mite, viz five guineas - ; for this he is laugh’d at - & by whom? Ah!

there's the rub! were he ridiculed by any other than yourself I should suppose his benevolence, not his want of it excited the laughter; for in these

”””

hard times I know but too many who would have said “what a great fool! to give away his money & to a person he does not know!” But you alas are angry with him on different grounds; nay more, one of the most patient men I know declares himself out of all patience on the occasion! well I protest - my silly friend however has almost rivalled one of his ci-devant master's miracles; I mean that of turning water into wine; for he put you, even *you*, into a state of fermentation! - nay, the ^second^ fermentation ^seems to have been in^ a forward state ^ie^ for I think it was advancing fast to *vinegar*!

“If Otway were alive one of them would in like manner send him five guineas” O that Otway were but alive to prove the truth of this! & O that my poor quiz^{clxxxiv} of a friend had lived in those days! & fulfilled y^r prophetic inspirations! To me this very expression& instance of youth, proves the propriety of sometimes sending& offering sums à la mode de mon pauvre ami; because sometimes a valuable life may chance to depend on such casual support. Had Otway received the sum in question the powers of his digestion would not have been ^so^ weakened by long fasting, as to have rendered him unable to profit by the scanty bounty which caused his death .

Your ideas respecting the duties of true charity are in my eyes strictly just - but surely they do not apply to this, the case in point - Would it not have been very impertinent in “my gentleman” to imagine that such a woman as Mrs Imlay wanted his voice, his purse, & that no one but himself knew how to feel her distresses or could be disposed to relieve them ? - no - I dare say he thought “Ten thousand purses would have leapt from their rings,^{clxxxv} to have removed a “writ that threatened her with bailiffs” & all he meant was to gratify his own feelings, & pay d'avance what might in time be required of him -

....

”””

I do not wonder that the doctrine of the Pope's infallibility has been so long upheld - I know by experience how pleasant it is to have a Pope of one's own - some deity infallible to look up to on all occasions & I declare that you are commonly my Pope, friend Godwin, tho' on the present occasion you are no better than a Pope Joan - indeed, & in truth, tho' my heart bleeds at being forced even for a moment to depose you from y^r papal chair, yet I do think you wrong in y^r severe judgment of my friend, & upon my word I had always rather think myself wrong than you ; - I am so often wrong that I be used to it; as the woman said when she flead^{clxxxvi} the eels alive, but to you, it must be in a great measure ^a^ new thing to be, or to be *thought* so -

Then about the beefens again - never was a man so mistaken! “Odds my life (as Bizarre says) I have a mind to kick you!” How dare you think me so *mean*, as to send you apples because you sent me criticisms - No friend - my gift was meant in simple courtesy - as a mark of attention merely - I had as usual bought several bushels to dry, & my father said, “suppose you send some to Mr Godwin, he may have friends to whom such things may be welcome” -

so said, so done - because I recollected that this same Mr Godwin about a year & three quarters ago called upon the insulted Amelia Alderson to give write him down the first line of an Italian duo & the name of the composer

”””

for Lady Sophia Butler, alias la Marchese Mariscotti - & these, being obtained, Mr G. sent one to her pretty Ladyship -

Well - what was this but *attention* - a pleasing method of shewing that Lady S: *lived* in his remembrance & I aver that without attentions, without the certainty of living in the remembrance of those we esteem, life would sometimes at least be a blank - & I send sent my present to present to give you one way, amongst others of proving to the friends you esteem, that you remember them, & wish to give them pleasure - Mrs Robinson,^{clxxxvii} in a letter to an acquaintance of mine, thanking her for some of these unhappy beefens, says, th[at] she believed if Eve was really tempted by an apple, it was by a *dried beefen* A[ll] [ve]ry rude this, for it was converting her apple giving friend into the old gentleman at once - nay all applegivers too - & I rise up a devil at y^r service - but n’importe - I am easy - Upon my word General Godwin, you have a very skilful aide de camp in Captain Mary Hayes^{clxxxviii} - I felt two or three almost irresistible impulses while reading Emma Courtney to take up my pen & send her my blessing directly - but I did not, for I thought it would seem conceited - & as if I thought my praise of consequence to her - so I breathed “blessings not loud but deep”

Be so kind as to tell me y^r opinion of Mrs Macaulay’s

”””

abilities - I am now in the second chapter of her history of England -

Pray Posterity pardon me for having so long detained Mr Godwin from benefitting you! but, to quote Mr [?Porson] alas! were this letter directed to posterity I fear it would not be delivered according to the address as Mr [?Porson] says; in all probability it will

shield y^r fair hand from the handle of the tea kettle, & Posterity will never know the extent of my crimes against her

-

Farethee well friend! I shall rejoice to hear from thee, & so, “God prosper long our noble King.”

.....

*

Duke reel 12

clxxxix
”””

[written upside down]

The direction will make you laugh, but I write it on the
presumption that you, as Mrs Godwin were not known yet forgetting the *number* would
point out y^r house

29 Pollard Street - Monday -

My dear Madam,

Mrs Hamilton, an aristocratic friend of mine, is very desirous of accompanying us to the play on
Wednesday,^{cxc} if you can spare her a place in your box - I believe I told you before that I hoped you would admit in
the beau who was to have accompanied Mrs Inchbald, & me - therefore you may think it unreasonable in me to
request a third place, but as the box holds nine, & my friend will be contented with any seat, however bad, I trust
that you will excuse

”””

this application. Mrs Philips is, I find, to join us there.

[illeg.]

Had I not been obliged to make some arrangements for the ball this evening, I should have called on you, instead of
writing, but I have desired the bearer of this to wait for an answer - & so faretheewell!

A: Alderson

.....

end *documents Amelia Alderson

For full citations see Bibliography

endnotes Thomas Abthorpe Cooper

ⁱDep. c.606/2: 122), MWS transcription of Godwin's autobiographical fragment for 1788, is given in full in 2: *politics*. Cf. 'Autobiographical fragments' from b.226/2 (MP 47-8), where Godwin writes: 'In the summer of this year I took lodgings for two months at Guilford in Surrey, I received as an intimate [sic] my kinsman Mr. Thomas Cooper, then twelve years of age'. Mark Philp's reading of Godwin's hand 'received as an intimate' differs from MWS reading in Dep. c.606/2: 122), '& received as an inmate'. In c.607/3: 137) (below), MWS cancels the phrase 'again under his roof', indicating some uncertainty as to the living arrangements made by Godwin for the boy Cooper.

ⁱⁱDep. c.607/3, MWS hand, numbered 136)-140), 142)-147), large flimsy wove paper, no watermarks. Faint over-numbering on some pages: 137) (3), 140) (6), 141) (7), 147) (12). Paul's chapter dealing with the period 1785-1788 reproduces some of these comments in MWS script c.607/3, but without his usual heading 'Mrs Shelley's Notes' (CKP i 36-7).

ⁱⁱⁱ'This year' 1788. The MWS page numbers in c.607/3 follow on from MWS script c.606/1: 125)-127), 133). See 2: *politics*. Godwin and the young Thomas Abthorpe Cooper were second cousins, through Cooper's mother (MP 48). MWS account of Cooper's stay with Godwin was published by Paul (CKP i 36-40, 142-46), who also published three letters from Tom Cooper to Godwin in 1794, when Cooper was struggling to make a career in English provincial repertory theatres.

^{iv}MWS hesitates between 'into his house' and 'under his care' as descriptions of Tom Cooper's status in Godwin's household. Cf. below, Duke reel 5, Godwin note dated 14 April 1790, cancels the phrase 'take you into my service'. In b.214/8, letter from Willis Webb to Godwin, 'I had the happiness of *passing under* your instructions' (my emphasis added).

^vCf. MWS script c.606/2: 134): 'One of the records of this year is the unfortunate death of Holcroft's son. ... The youth was of an unfortunate disposition & his conduct was very reprehensible - at the same time it is certain that Holcroft carried further than Godwin a certain unmitigated severity; an exposition of duty & truth & of the defalcation from these in the offender conceived in language to humiliate & wound a want of sympathy in the buoyant spirits of youth when inspired to heedlessness & perhaps it may be added ^reprehensible^ dissipation; all of which tended to set still wider apart the distance too usually observed between father & child. Something of this Godwin detected in himself in his conduct towards Cooper.'

^{vi}Godwin's note (below, Duke reel 5) is dated 14 April 1790; 'the one at which we are arrived' is thus 1789. Philp (MP 48) notes that MWS script c.606/2 is now the only complete entry for 1788, and there is no Godwin MS entry for 1789 in b.226/2, the 'Autobiographical fragments' resuming at 1790. MWS transcriptions of 'Autobiographical fragments' 1790 in c.606/1.

^{vii}Duke reel 5, with a heading 'Notes on Tom Cooper/ his studies and temper/ 1790-1'. Godwin hand, a small notebook, about 25 pages, unnumbered, some pages covered with geometry exercises. Material from this 'sort of journal' in Duke reel 5 omitted from MWS script in c.607/3 is given below in *documents Tom Cooper. Cf also the material about Cooper in Paul's third chapter, covering the period 1788-92. Paul cites these 'notes taken at random

from Godwin's diary', but does not specify whether he or Mary Shelley before him had made the selection from Godwin's journal entries on the subject of Cooper (CKP i 35-40 [37]).

^{viii}The date 'circa 14 April 1790' may have been added by Godwin at a later date. The fragment may picture Cooper's relationship, not with Godwin, but with George Dyson, as Godwin perceives it.

^{ix} Duke reel 5: 'not to say "these questions ask yourself" not to play piquet pas à souiller à faire de son faire ses devices

1790, Jan.

19 You spoke in the same tone.

20 "Talk no such nonsense." It is not nonsense.

We were both in the wrong. '

^xDuke reel 5: 'Will truth upon paper produce a greater effect upon you than ...'.

^{xi}Willis Webb, an earlier pupil of Godwin. See *Bodleian folder rubric Dep. b.214/8: 'Letter from Willis Webb to Godwin, a former pupil of Godwin 1787-8'. Webb was listed in 1785 among Godwin's acquaintances (C38).

^{xii}Duke reel 5: ' - praise of feeling told Dyson what did not say, Ay, just as usual'. St Clair notes Godwin's habit of writing notes to himself (C 231).

^{xiii}MWS remarks bear on strained relations between Godwin and George Dyson over the boy Cooper.

^{xiv}Cf. below, b.227/2(b), Godwin letter to Cooper, 'the general rectitude of your character'. MWS frequently echoes Godwin's words in her script.

^{xv}Cf. Paul's statement that 'George Dyson was a friend of Thomas Cooper ... a young man of promising abilities ... unfortunately ... a violent temper ruined those hopes' (CKP i 47-8).

^{xvi}Dep. c.607/3: 140), handwritten copy or draft of letter from Godwin to Tom Cooper, small single sheet, blue laid paper, written recto and verso, numbered in MWS style 140) [r] 141) [v], undated watermark. I have not positively identified the handwriting, which is irregular. I have placed this letter (pages 140-141) after MWS script page 142), as I believe this is the 'letter, which explains to the lad himself the motives of his conduct...'. And in the folder c.607/3 the sheets are placed in this order despite the numbering.

^{xvii}John Hollis, a dissenter, belonged to Godwin's first congregation. See *1: literature*.

^{xviii}Willis Webb.

^{xix}Dr Charles Burney the younger was headmaster of a preparatory school at Greenwich. Godwin's son William Godwin was a pupil there in 1810 (C286).

^{xx}MWS inserts parenthesis on William Nicholson into her transcription of Godwin's notes. Nicholson, see *1: literature, 5: women*.

^{xxi}Possibly a school textbook redacting Fénelon's pedagogical romance, *Télémaque* (1699) in Latin.

^{xxii}Duke reel 5: 'declares that I will not be acquainted with it'

^{xxiii}17th [October 1790].

^{xxiv}Duke reel 5: 'rudeness & impertinence'. Mr M. is James Marshall, also an inmate of Godwin's household in 1790.

^{xxv}Picaresque novel by Le Sage (1724-1735).

^{xxvi}Duke reel 5: 'procure'.

^{xxvii}Tom Cooper studies his ‘geometry with tears’.

^{xxviii}Duke reel 5 adds: ‘I interfere -’.

^{xxix}Double quotation marks close MWS transcription of entries in Godwin’s notebook. Duke reel 5 adds: ‘Nov. 3 Censure him for being out of humour with me without reason’.

^{xxx} Duke reel 5, original MS of Tom Cooper’s letter, addressed on outer sheet ‘Mr Marshal’, in a round childish hand, with occasional spelling mistakes (normalised in MWS otherwise literal transcription).

^{xxxi}Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, published November 1790.

^{xxxii}MWS omits numeral ‘2’ (for [Dec.] 2 [1790]), inserted into Godwin’s script in Duke reel 5.

^{xxxiii}Duke reel 5 adds: ‘i. e. a dict. consulted, & G. asserting that the word had not such an imputation’.

^{xxxiv}Duke reel 5 adds: ‘ - it is to [not] much purpose for me to express kindness for him, while I infli[ct] upon him the torments of des[pair]’.

^{xxxv}See*document Tom Cooper, Duke reel 5.

^{xxxvi}Cf. this [blank] with a letter, in Dep. b.227/2(a), quarto fold, no addressee, lacks signature, dated March 9 1791. This is from Godwin, probably to Cooper, at a time when Godwin, Tom Cooper, and Cooper’s mother were at odds on the question of church attendance, Mrs Cooper senior requiring it of her son, Godwin deploring it. The letter runs in part ‘I imagined that you did wrong in going to church. I stated it to you as hypocrisy, in hopes at least that you would yield it consideration. You defended it for a long time, in endeavouring to turn into ridicule everything that I said, [...] I was rather staggered, but I presently got over it, & began again; you repeated truly glorious expressions. [...] You were in a violent passion [...]’.

^{xxxvii}Dep. b.227/2(b), letter from Godwin to Tom Cooper, n. d., lacks signature, numbered in sequence of MWS script, faint overnumbering of pages 148) (13), 149) (14), laid bluish paper, undated watermark. Another draft of this letter is in Duke reel 5. Grouped in Bodleian folder b.227/2 with letter from Godwin to Lord Chief Justice Eyre, numbered next in MWS sequence, 151) 152). Eyre, see3: *law*.

^{xxxviii}Duke reel 5: draft inserts in parenthesis ‘(a fault incident to your age)’.

^{xxxix}Dep. c.607/3, letter from Godwin [?to George Dyson], large folded sheet, edges mended with white paper, laid paper, written recto and verso, decorative undated watermark ‘G R’. *Bodleian folder rubric Dep. c.607/3 specifies ‘not in Godwin’s hand’. Probably in James Marshall’s hand, corrected by Godwin. By the date of this letter (21 March 1792) Cooper was no longer living with Godwin.

endnotes *documents Tom Cooper

^{xi}‘H’ is possibly ‘Holcroft’. Cf. (above) c.607/3, Godwin letter of 21 Mar. 1792 [?to Dyson]: ‘Mr Holcroft has read what I have written’.

^{xli}Cf. the diary entry of 8 February 1791(above): ‘8th Goes before 1/4 before one, as he says, to engage Dyson for the play ...?’

^{xlii}Dep. c.607/3, small single sheet, unidentified hand, wove paper, watermark ‘MB 1796’.

^{xliii}Dep. c.607/3, quarto fold, unidentified hand, laid paper, watermark ‘1812’.

^{xliv}William Dunlap, *Memoirs of the Life of George F. Cooke, composed from the personal knowledge of the author, and from manuscript journals left by Mr Cooke* (2 vols; London, 1813). The occasion described was Tom Cooper’s

return from the United States in 1803 for a successful season on the London stage, at which time Holcroft and Godwin were still on friendly terms. Dunlap is described as ‘an American admirer of *Political Justice*’ in *Bodleian folder rubric Dep. b.227/2(d): ‘an admirer of Political Justice, W.Dunlap, 1 Oct. 1795.’ Dunlap wrote, ‘Political Justice, (if I may judge by my small circle of acquaintance) has been read by many in America. ... ‘I have written several Dramatic pieces, principally Tragedies ... if these could be published in London or any of them brought on the London stage, I trust, the cause of humanity would be served’ and dated it ‘New York Octo. 1, 1795. W. Dunlap’. Godwin’s letter in reply to Dunlap, in January or February 1796, published in D. B. Green, ‘Letters of William Godwin and Thomas Holcroft to William Dunlap’, *Notes and Queries*, Oct. 1956, 441-43 (C 95, n18).

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endnotes Thomas Wedgwood

^{xlv}Professor Betty T. Bennett has counted sixteen letters of Godwin-Wedgwood correspondence annotated by MWS: ‘The correspondence between William Godwin and Thomas and Josiah Wedgwood, Jr., preserved in Abinger MSS., Bodleian Library, includes seven letters from Godwin, four from Thomas Wedgwood, and five from Josiah Wedgwood, annotated for publication by Mary Shelley’ (Bennett, ii, 276, n3). Bennett’s count of seven Godwin letters may include the letter to the unidentified ‘Oxford student’ in Dep. b.227/8 (below). The numbered sequence 19 through 36 annotated by MWS (below), is given here from Duke reels 5 and 12. MS originals of some items in the sequence are to be found in Dep. c.507/11, ‘8 letters from Thomas Wedgwood to Godwin, Etruria, Co. Stafford.’ See *Bodleian folder rubric.

^{xlvi} Godwin-Wedgwood correspondence is now detached from MWS script c.606/4, which is on Joynson 1839 watermark paper throughout, and dates from the latest period of MWS work on *Life of Godwin*.

^{xlvii}The year 1793.

^{xlviii}MS originals of Wedgwood’s two undated brief letters to Godwin discussing their plan for a bachelor ménage are listed numbers 1 and 2 in Bodleian folder Dep. c.507/11. MWS placed these last (numbered 35-36) after letters of 1795 but Paul (CKP i 310-12) dates the plan to 1793. The MS letters in c.507/11, on single sheets, laid paper, decorative undated watermark, exhibit matching pinholes in top left corner, indicating where MWS pinned them to her script c.606/4.

^{xlix}See below, numbered 36, undated letter from Wedgwood at 22 Devonshire Place, Monday noon, in which Wedgwood writes of his poor health and excuses the uncertainty of his plans.

^lWedgwood gave Godwin a letterpress copier in November 1795. See Wedgwood letter of Nov. 10, 1795 (below).

^{li}MWS wrote on 9 Sep. and 11 Sep. 1836 to Josiah Wedgwood: ‘I will certainly send you copies of such letters of your Brother’s as I wish to publish -and shall be grateful to you for your remarks. From all I have heard & know nothing can be said of your late lamented Brother that is not highly to his honor’ (Bennett, ii, 276). Tom Wedgwood died ‘in the summer of 1805’ (C287). Godwin apparently wrote a letter of condolence to the head of the family, Josiah Wedgwood, and in Duke reel 12, a reply from Josiah Wedgwood to Godwin dated 25 Dec. [1805], thanks him for his sentiments. Also in Duke reel 5, a letter of 16 Jan 1806 from Josiah Wedgwood to Godwin: ‘I have received your letter of the 14th which I have not time to reply to at any length by this post. It is not in my power to make any advance beyond £50’; and in Duke reel 12 another letter of 21 Jan 1806 from Josiah Wedgwood to Godwin: ‘I have been prevented writing to you today until I have hardly time before the post goes out, to say that I

will give you the assistance you require & at as short dates as I can’.

^{lii}MWS script c.606/4 ‘commence[s] this year’ (1798) with Wedgwood letters to Godwin ‘dated at the conclusion’ of ‘that year’ (1797), the date of Mary Wollstonecraft’s death. Cf. below, Duke reel 5, letters from Thomas Wedgwood to Godwin of 7 and 25 Dec. 1797.

^{liii}St Clair introduces Basil Montagu to Godwin’s circle after the publication of *Enquiry concerning Political Justice* in 1793, and in the context of pedagogy: ‘One of his earliest pupils was Basil Montagu ... one of a number of law students who gave up their studies after reading *Political Justice*’. ‘Throughout [Godwin’s] long life’, St Clair writes, ‘there was seldom a time when he did not have protégés under his care’ (C95).

^{liv}Dr John Moore’s *Medical Sketches* (London: A Strahan and T Cadell, 1786), 253-57, states that Englishmen are particularly prone to hypochondria, ‘not a direct affliction of the stomach and bowels ... also different from what is called the hysteric disease in women’. Wedgwood letters to Godwin of 25 June and 20 Dec. 1798, and 5 Jan. and 21 June 1800, mention his low spirits and poor health. St Clair traces Godwin’s bouts of illness in 1792, 1795, and 1800, and emphasises Godwin’s role as health counsellor to Wedgwood and Basil Montagu (C191).

^{lv}Duke reel 5, copy of letter from Godwin to unidentified addressee, not from letterpress copier, not Godwin hand, no date, no signature. Numbered (166 to (169 on right top margin, but no page number 165 located in any MWS script. This is probably a transcription of what St Clair refers to (C95, n18) as Godwin’s ‘letter of advice to an Oxford student’, in b.227/8, and printed in Paul (CKP i 141). Also in Duke reel 5, another copy of this letter, unnumbered, Godwin hand.

^{lvi}Godwin’s contemporary, Dr Erasmus Darwin was the father of Dr Robert Darwin, Josiah and Thomas Wedgwood’s cousin and brother-in-law, which may have suggested ‘T. Wedgwood’ to MWS as the addressee of this letter. St Clair (C95, n18) appears to rule out Wedgwood as addressee, and (C300-01) also appears to rule out Basil Montagu (who moved house in 1795 to be near Godwin), or Tom Turner (met Godwin 1803). Two former students of Godwin whose tendency to melancholia ended in their suicides, Proctor Patrickson (met Godwin 1810), and Henry Blanch Rosser (met Godwin 1817), were both Cambridge undergraduates. A possible addressee is John Stoddart, a law student, and in 1796 ‘one of Godwin’s most eager disciples’ (C161). Stoddart is mentioned in the ‘nursery of genius’ letter from Thomas Wedgwood to Godwin, 31 July 1797, in Dep. c.507/11 (below).

^{lvii}MWS has apparently taken the three separate pages 167, 168, 169, to be three separate letters.

^{lviii}One word ‘Wedgewood’ on small card inside folder introduces series of MWS annotated letters numbered by page from 19 to 36 [22-23 is missing].

^{lix}Address on outer fold of letter from Godwin to Thomas Wedgwood, Godwin hand.

^{lx}John Kyrle, the Man of Ross, in Alexander Pope, *Moral Essays in Four Epistles*, iii, 250-274.

^{lxi}‘Of National Education’, Bk. 6, Chap. 8, *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*, 3rd. ed., 1798. Cf. Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), chapter 12, ‘A National Education’. In Feb. 1797 Godwin published new essays on education: Essays 1-6, 9, 15, in volume i of *The Enquirer: Reflections on Education, Manners and Literature. In a Series of Essays* (2 vols.; London: G G and J Robinson, 1797). Cf. (below) letter to Godwin from North Wales, July 31 1797, Thomas Wedgwood’s plan for a ‘nursery of genius’ (in Dep. c.507/11).

^{lxii}MWS note: ‘Wedgewood says in reply’, written across the top of Wedgwood’s letter of Nov. 6 1795, numbered

24-25, might be applicable to Wedgwood's letter of [1] November 1795 to Godwin, suggesting that 'Surely you could give [the Minister] some useful hints', on the price of corn. This [1] November 1795 letter may be the one numbered 22-23, missing from the series. See below, Duke reel 12 TW-WG.

^{lxiii}Josiah Wedgwood and his younger brother set up a lifetime annuity for Coleridge in 1797 (C101). Godwin wrote to Thomas Wedgwood soliciting money in 1797, 1798, 1799, continued at intervals until 1805, and after Thomas's death, applied to Josiah (C170, 287).

^{lxiv}Godwin claimed to send unpaid postage on principle, and insisted that Wedgwood's habit of prepaying was 'wrong'. See below, Godwin letters of 19 Sep. 1797 (b.227/8(a); and 10 Jan. 1798 (Duke reel 3).

^{lxv}MWS note '2 letters on presents' fits two Godwin letters (numbered 19-21, 26-27), and a 'third' letter from Wedgwood (28-31). Wedgwood's letter of 6 Nov. 1795 (24-25) cancels the word 'presents', and writes only about 'giving and receiving'. The ethics of gifts had come under public scrutiny during the trial of Warren Hastings (1788-9). See esp. Edmund Burke, 'Speech of the Rt. Hon. Edmund Burke in opening the sixth article of the charge, relating to presents, 21 April 1789', *Speeches of the Managers and Counsel in the Trial of Warren Hastings*, ii (London, 1859). Godwin's exposition of the 'political justice' of presents develops in the contexts of pedagogy (older man to younger), and literary patronage (richer to poorer).

^{lxvi}The outer sheet addressed to Wedgwood and labelled upside down '2d letter on presents' is grouped in Duke reel 5 with this letter from Wedgwood of 9 Nov. 179[5], numbered 28-31 in MWS series.

^{lxvii}Duke reel 5, two sheets both numbered 28, MWS hand. Bennett *Letters* (1983) notes: 'Mary Shelley notes in reference to Thomas Wedgwood's 9 November 1795 letter to Godwin which urges Godwin to accept Wedgwood's gift of \$100: "Wedgwood's reply is so full of good sense & ingenuous & upright feeling that I give it entire. We have here the sincere confession of a modest & generous nature such as best depicts the amiable writer"' (Bennett, ii 277, n1).

^{lxviii}C140, n19: Godwin in 1796 was depending on 'rich and powerful friends', including Wedgwood, to be willing to 'finance him into parliament if he so wished'. See 2: *politics*.

^{lxix}Final numeral of date on Duke reel 4 obscured. R. B. Litchfield, *Tom Wedgwood, The First Photographer* (London, 1903), 30, dates the letter 'November 9, 1795', citing CKP i 311.

^{lxx}MS original in Dep. c.507/11. Bodleian folder lists this letter No. 3 of eight. Written recto only on quarto fold, pinhole in top left corner fits the letters listed Nos. 1 and 2.

^{lxxi}Duke reel 12, letter of [1] Nov. 1795 from Thomas Wedgwood to Godwin. There is no numbering visible but the subject matter follows on from Godwin letter of Sep. 22 1795, numbered 19-21 (above), and numbers 22-3 are missing from that series. MS original in Dep. c.507/11. Bodleian folder lists this letter No. 4 of eight. Written recto and verso on small sheet, laid paper, pinhole on right top corner.

^{lxxii}Directions for Godwin's use of Wedgwood's gift of the copying-machine. See 1: *literature*.

^{lxxiii}'Tooke's work', *Winged Words, or, Diversions of Purley*, was published serially, in 1786, 1798, 1805. John Horne Tooke was among the twelve accused who were acquitted at the London treason trials of 1794. See 3: *law*.

endnotes *documents Thomas Wedgwood

^{lxxiv}Two letters from Godwin to Thomas Wedgwood at the time of his marriage with Wollstonecraft. Godwin's

correspondence with Wedgwood after 1797 does not show MWS annotations, with a possible exception--the letter numbered [40] from Wedgwood in Dorset on 5 July 1801. As noted above, in Dep. c.606/4 MWS writes that she has collected Wedgwood's letters of 1797 to Godwin and moved them into a section dealing with 1798; and I have not found any MWS script concerning Wedgwood's letters written after those dates. See 5: *women*. Unable to determine whether later letters were intended by MWS for inclusion, I have shown them as *documents Thomas Wedgwood.

^{lxxv}Godwin's *The Enquirer*, published London, 4 Feb. 1797. Thomas Malthus' attack on Godwin in *First Essay on the Principles of Population* (1798) singled out the essay in *Enquirer* Pt. ii, 'On Avarice and Profusion'.

^{lxxvi}Godwin published three editions of *Political Justice*, 1793, 1796 and 1798, and as late as 1832 contemplated another revision.

^{lxxvii}St Clair writes that in March 1797 Tom Wedgwood advanced money as requested by Godwin, not knowing that Godwin intended it to pay Wollstonecraft's debts (C170, n14). Paul (CKP i 234-6) quotes letter of 19 Apr. 1797 from Godwin to Thomas Wedgwood: 'You have by this time heard from B. Montague of my marriage. This was the solution of my late application to you, which I promised speedily to communicate.' On the evening of 19 April 1797 Godwin and Wollstonecraft attended the theatre together. See below *documents Amelia Alderson, Duke reel 12.

^{lxxviii}MS original in Dep. c.507/11, No. 5 on Bodleian list, quarto fold, no pinhole.

^{lxxix}Godwin in reply to Wedgwood's 26 May letter from Barnet. In 1797, 26 May was a Friday.

^{lxxx}Following this letter, on 4 June 1797, Godwin went with Basil Montagu to visit the Wedgwood family house, Etruria in Staffordshire, leaving Wollstonecraft 'heavily pregnant' in London (C174). R. M. Wardle's editorial notes to *Collected Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft* (Ithaca and London, 1979), 395, represent it as a visit to Josiah Wedgwood, whose daughter Montagu was courting. See below, Duke reel 5, Godwin letter of 5 Oct. 1798 to Thomas Wedgwood, 'I laboured under one or two disadvantages when at Etruria in 1797'.

^{lxxxix}MS original of this letter from Thomas Wedgwood to Godwin in Dep. c.507/11, numbered 6 of eight on the Bodleian list. Written on large blue fold, partly in pencil. There is no pinhole in this letter, and it may not have been known to Mary Shelley. *Bodleian folder rubric annotates it: 'his fortune a trust--grand experiments in Education'.

^{lxxxii}Wedgwood's plans for 'a nursery of Genius' coincide in date with Erasmus Darwin's *A Plan for the Conduct of Female Education in Boarding Schools* (1797). Wedgwood may have read Godwin's prospectus for a boys' academy, *Account of the Seminary to be opened at Epsom* (1784). St Clair quotes part of this letter from Dep. c.507, and comments that Wedgwood's aim was 'to improve the supply of the special types of men and women who are alone capable of significantly redirecting the chains of necessity' (C99-100). But Wedgwood does not mention female pupils in his letter.

^{lxxxiii}Dr Thomas Beddoes, a member of the Lunar Society, married to one of Richard Lovell Edgeworth's daughters, father of the poet Thomas Lovell Beddoes.

^{lxxxiv}expt [experiment]

^{lxxxv}In c.607/2, outside sheet of letter from William Wordsworth to Godwin, addressed to 'Mr Godwin' from 'Wm Wordsworth/No 15 Chalton'. '[Basil Montagu] took lodgings at No. 15 Chalton Street in order to be near Godwin at No. 25. Wordsworth ... sought out Godwin's acquaintance when he stayed with Montagu at Chalton Street on a visit to London in 1795' (C95).

^{lxxxvi}MWS script c.606/4 on Coleridge, see *1: literature*.

^{lxxxvii}St Clair gives: ‘too much a poet and religionist’ (C100).

^{lxxxviii}[preliminary]

^{lxxxix}possib [possibilities]

^{xc}philr. [philosopher]

^{xcⁱ}Dr Erasmus Darwin, grandfather of Charles Darwin.

^{xcⁱⁱ}Bala, a village in North Wales, near Blaenau-Ffestiniog.

^{xcⁱⁱⁱ*}Bodleian folder rubric Dep.b.227/8. Letter from Godwin to [?Thomas Wedgwood], 19 September 1797, Godwin hand, blurred letterpress copy. I have not located Godwin’s ‘compliments’ ‘in my last letter’ among his letters written at the time of Mary Wollstonecraft’s death.

^{xc^{iv}}Basil Montagu was one of the friends who had attended Wollstonecraft’s death bed, as Godwin acknowledges in Chap. x *Memoirs of the Author*, which he was shortly to commence writing. ‘Within a week of the funeral Godwin was again hard at work’ (C180).

^{xc^v}Godwin may have blamed the ‘female midwife’ for Wollstonecraft’s death. Another reading is possible, a reference to Montagu’s propensity for gossip.

^{xc^{vi}}Godwin’s reference to his late wife Mary Wollstonecraft as ‘this incomparable woman’ echoes the novel in progress at the time of writing, in which the protagonist St Leon names Marguerite de Damville as ‘my incomparable wife’ (Oxford 1994: 184). See *6: writing*. And Cf. MWS script c.532/8, ‘his memoirs of his incomparable wife’. The ‘pledges’ are three-year old Fanny and newborn Mary. See *5: women*.

^{xc^{vii}}The ‘error’ is possibly Wedgwood’s persistence in prepaying return postage, a bone of contention between them.

^{xc^{viii}}Duke reel 5, two letters from Thomas Wedgwood to Godwin, 7 and 25 Dec. 1797, from Penzance, may be those referred to in MWS script c.606/4, ‘dated at the conclusion of [1797]’. These she decided to displace forward to 1798, and excluded them from the account of Wollstonecraft’s death because they ‘would have interfered with the subject’.

^{xc^{ix}*}‘Tobin’ may be James Tobin. In this same letter, from Bath, Wedgwood mentions his hope that the waters will improve his health.

‘Cf. Thomas Wedgwood to Godwin on 15 Nov. 1799: ‘Our cashier will give you the satisfaction you seek’.

^{ci}Joss is elder brother and head of the family firm, Josiah Wedgwood II.

^{cⁱⁱ}Duke reel 5, letter from Godwin to Thomas Wedgwood 3 Jan. 1798. Also in Duke reel 5, letters from Godwin to Thomas Wedgwood 14 May, 22 May, 5 Oct. 1798; letters of Thomas Wedgwood to Godwin 6 Jan., 20 Dec., 25 Dec 1798, and undated (offering tickets to Mackintosh lectures [Jan. 1799]), 15 Nov. 1799 (from Bath, offering Godwin money).

^{cⁱⁱⁱ}Duke reel 5, letter of 6 Jan. 1798 from Wedgwood in reply to Godwin’s of 3 Jan.

^{c^{iv}}Duke reel 3, letter from Godwin to Thomas Wedgwood, 10 Jan. 1798. Also in Duke reel 3, letters from Godwin to Thomas Wedgwood 27 Apr., 26 May 1798, 28 Jan. 1799, and letter from Thomas Wedgwood to Godwin, 21 June 1800. No annotations by MWS identified on these letters.

^{c^v}Duke reel 3, Godwin letter of 10 Jan. 1798 in reply to letter of 6 Jan. 1798 from Thomas Wedgwood (above, Duke reel 5).

^{cv}Cf. Johnson's strictures, in *Lives of the Poets* (i, 1799), on the misanthropic bias in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, especially Bk iv.

^{cvi}Jan. 10 1798 is the publication date of Godwin's *Memoirs of the Author of a Vindication of the Rights of Woman*.

^{cvi}Cf. Godwin's requests for money in letters of 14 and 22 May 1798 to Wedgwood: 'I have at present a novel and a play ... I have no bookseller ... I propose that you should put yourself in the place of a bookseller ... I request £100'; and letter of 18 Apr. 1799: 'I wrote a letter to you last Wednesday, the 10th instant, & directed it to Stoke, ... no answer. ... the remaining £100 on note of Robinson ... the cause of my present necessity is the delay of my tragedy. I am extremely desirous of engaging in this species of composition, but being entirely a novice in it ...'. All three letters in Duke reel 5.

^{cix}In c.507/11, numbered 8 of eight letters on the Bodleian list. The faint numeral '40' may be MWS number in sequence with Duke reel 5 and Duke reel 12 letters numbered 19-36 (above).

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endnotes Amelia Alderson

^{cx}Godwin met Amelia Alderson, daughter of dissenting physician, Dr James Alderson, and granddaughter of a dissenting clergyman, at her father's house in Norwich in 1794, when she was 25 (C147). See 5: *women*.

^{cx}Dep. b.210/6 consists of letters from Amelia Alderson to Godwin and Mrs Imlay (Mary Wollstonecraft) dated between August 1795 and December 1796, some numbered, with asterisks and annotations by Mary Jane Godwin. My assumption that these letters were collated and annotated between 1836 and 1840 under MSW supervision during the preparation of the *Life of William Godwin* is strengthened by evidence in MWS script that she herself had been reading them as she wrote her account of events in Godwin's life before his marriage.

^{cx}The letter of 28 Aug. 1795, placed first in the folder, quarto fold, written recto and verso, has had the number changed from N^o 2 to N^o 1.

^{cx}Also spelt Southren and Sothren, née Godwin, Godwin's father's cousin, and his mentor in early childhood, now widowed and living in rural Norfolk. See 1: *literature*.

^{cx}Sisters Annabella and Ann Plumptre published poetry and fiction, and were associated with liberal dissenting causes. Ann's novels were published in Henry Colburn's Popular Novels series. Annabella was among the women writers satirized by William Beloe in *The sexagenarians* (1817).

^{cx}Probably Dr John Moore, MD, *Journal of a Residence in France ... 1792* (Dublin, 1793).

^{cx}Cf. (above) Thomas Wedgwood's letter to Godwin of July 5 1801, from Gunville in Dorset, on reading the biography of the Girondin reformer, Manon Roland, published by her daughter after her mother was guillotined in the Paris Terror of 1794. Amelia Alderson was reading the first volume only weeks after it was published, and characteristically displays more readerly insouciance than Wedgwood could muster six years later. Mary Shelley's brief biography of Madame Roland was published by Dionysius Lardner in the 'Eminent Men of France' series, 1837.

^{cx}On 7 Dec. 1793 Godwin visited the Rev. Thomas Fyshe Palmer and Thomas Muir while they waited for transportation in the Thames Prison Hulks (C110). See 3: *law*.

^{cx}Probably Fanny, Thomas Holcroft's daughter; 'Miss H.' is probably her elder sister, as yet unmarried.

^{cx}Dep. b.210/6, letter No 2, quarto fold, written recto and verso, postmarked '17 Aug'. Dated from 'Norwich', the

rest of the heading is illegible but must indicate August 1796, after Alderson had made Mrs Imlay's [Mary Wollstonecraft's] acquaintance in London. Godwin had called on Alderson in London when he returned from his July 1796 visit to her father in Norwich (C164, n11), and meanwhile Alderson had discussed her feelings for him with Wollstonecraft, according to Wollstonecraft's unsigned note to Godwin of presumptive date 6 August 1796 (Letter 219. Wardle 335). Alderson's reference to a missed meeting in London 'at [?Mr] Twiss's on Monday afternoon' suggests that Alderson has only just arrived back in Norwich, perhaps on the following Monday 15 August. Letters exchanged between Wollstonecraft and Godwin between 6 August and 17 August 1796 (Letters 219 to 224. Wardle 335-338), suggest reasons why Godwin failed to make the meeting. This letter No 2, as also the 11 April 1796 unnumbered letter signed (apparently) Almeyda, should rightly be placed in Mary Jane Godwin's numbered sequence between No 5 and No 6.

^{cxx}Dep. b.210/6, letter No 3, quarto fold, written recto and verso.

^{cxxi}5 February [1796].

^{cxxii}Richard Brothers, self-titled Prophet of the New Jerusalem.

^{cxxiii}Godwin's pamphlet, *Considerations on Lord Grenville's and Mr Pitt's Bills, concerning Treasonable and Seditious Practices, and Unlawful Assemblies. By A Lover of Order* (London, 1795). Published anonymously, it was not well received by his radical political associates (C135-37).

^{cxxiv}The widowed Mrs Sothren had no children; Alderson may be referring to Ann Godwin's daughter-in-law, Mrs Hull Godwin, who lived nearby in Dalling, Norfolk. However MWS script c.532/8: 121) silently amends this error by 'a correspondant', substituting 'his mother' (i. e. Ann Godwin) for 'her daughter'. See 2: *politics*.

^{cxxv}Godwin's novel, published anonymously by Robinson in 1784, *Italian Letters, or the History of Count de St Julian*. See 1: *literature*.

^{cxxvi}crimes of errors: a slip for 'crimes of others'.

^{cxxvii}'The Sorcerer' by George Dyson was adapted from the German of "Veit Weber" (apparently Georg Phillipp Ludwig Leonhard Wachter), and published by Joseph Johnson in 1795. It is possible that Godwin assisted Dyson with this translation. (These references from the unpublished PhD thesis of Dr Gerard Goggin (University of Sydney 1999).

^{cxxviii}At the time Alderson was writing, February 1796, Godwin's former pupil Tom Cooper had temporarily withdrawn from the stage and was living with Thomas Holcroft near Exeter to further his studies (CKP i 151-53). In September 1796, together with the actor Anne Brunton Merry and her husband Robert Merry, Cooper sailed to the USA to join the Wignell theatre company in Philadelphia and Baltimore, and later joined William Dunlap's company in New York.

^{cxxix}Thomas Harris, manager of Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.

^{cxxx}Fanny Kemble, wife of Francis Twiss, and sister of actor-manager John Philip Kemble. Mrs (Sarah) Siddons was another sister. When she began her acquaintance with Godwin in 1796, Mary Wollstonecraft's circle included the painter John Opie, Sarah Siddons, and Fanny and Francis Twiss (C163).

^{cxxxi}Cf. St Clair's comment that in 1804 'Godwin accused [Holcroft] of always trying to sabotage his relationships with women from the time in 1796 when Amelia Alderson had courted their friendship' (C245). Amelia Alderson knew that Tom Cooper regarded both Holcroft and Godwin as his mentors.

^{cxxxii}See above, letter No 3, Alderson's remarks about the reception of Godwin's *Considerations of ...Two Bills*.

^{cxxxiii}Letter No 5 in MJG series, single sheet, written recto and verso, signed A A, dated 1 April 1796, is unusual in that it has no heading or opening address, so it may in fact be a postscript or detached sheet from a longer letter.

^{cxxxiv}St Clair locates Godwin's verdict on Alderson's play in an undated MS letter [February 1796] in the Huntington Library (C149, n16). Godwin wrote, 'I can no longer withhold from you the information that your comedy has, in my opinion, no inconsiderable merit'.

^{cxxxv}Bracon (or Brecon) Ash, Norfolk, where Robert Merry and his wife were living in straitened circumstances since their escape from revolutionary Paris in 1794.

^{cxxxvi}Robert Merry's wife, Anne Brunton, had been the leading actress of tragic roles at Covent Garden since 1785. Merry had obliged her to retire from stage-work in 1792 to pacify his mother, who objected to a daughter-in-law on the public stage.

^{cxxxvii}*Bodleian folder rubric Dep. c.607/2, letter dated Apr. 11 1796, single sheet, written recto and verso, wove paper, no watermark, lacks signature.

^{cxxxviii}Amelia Alderson married John Opie in May 1798. Pencil (or faded ink) note in MJG hand refers to a signature 'Almeyda', now lacking. Sophia Lee's play, *Almeyda, Queen of Granada: a Tragedy*, with Mrs Siddons as Almeyda, first performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, 20 Apr. 1796, according to Thomas Campbell, *Life of Mrs Siddons* (1834), 193. But the pseudonymous signature 'Almeyda' might equally have been taken from an earlier work of the same title by Prince Hoare.

^{cxxxix}Cf. Kemble's criticism that Alderson's play was 'full of repetitions', letter No 4.

^{cxli}'*brooding spirit*' underlined in script.

^{cxli}M- is evidently Robert Merry, who has begun to repay money lent him by his friends in Norwich.

^{cxliii}Postmark 14 OC[tober], a Friday in 1796, dates this Thursday to 13 Oct. 1796

^{cxliiii}Cf. Godwin's journal entry at Norwich on 10 July 1796, 'Propose to Alderson', is Godwin proposing to Amelia's father, Dr Alderson, to ship Robert Merry to the United States and away from his creditors (C164, 256). Robert Merry, see *1: literature*; *5: women*.

^{cxliiv}'The most intractable man I have ever seen', a character in the play Alderson is writing.

^{cxliv}Mary Hays, whose novel, *Memoirs of Emma Courtney* was published Nov. 1796 by Robinson.

^{cxlv}Probably the banker John 'Jew' King, who was among those willing to finance Godwin's entry into Parliament in 1796 (C140). King was the object of anonymous libels linking him with the actress Mary 'Perdita' Robinson (see *5: women*), and her feckless husband, Tom Robinson. Godwin-King correspondence in 1796 in Dep. b.214/3.

^{cxlvii}The 'outrage at Yarmouth' was a riot provoked by 'King and Church' agitators against John Thelwall's political lecture tours through Norfolk. Thelwall's polemical pamphlets, 'The Late Outrages at Lynn and Yarmouth', and 'Kidnapping and Murder at Lynn and Wisbeach' (London, 1796), contrast with Godwin's careful negotiations with Norfolk dissenter opinion, for example, in his letter to Revd. Samuel Newton, his former tutor, on the public reception of *Enquiry concerning Political Justice* (1793). See *2: politics*.

^{cxlviii}Dep. b.210/6, No 7 and last of JG numbered series, quarto fold, written recto and verso, paper torn and some words lost on second recto page [2r], addressed on outer 'Mr Godwin' only.

^{cxlix}Alderson's picture of a female hysteric travesties William Collins' *Ode to Fear* (1746)

^{cl}The character Sir Hugh Tyrold is a paternalistic head of the family in Frances (Fanny) Burney's novel *Camilla* (1796). Cf. letter of 13 Nov. 1796 (below).

^{cli}R[ichardson]

^{clii}Godwin, Mrs Imlay, and Basil Montagu.

^{cliii}Comments initialled M.J.G. on bottom of first verso [1v] page. Mary Jane Godwin comments on the contradiction in Alderson's 'borrow' and 'bear interest', perhaps in reaction to Alderson's metaphors of pregnancy.

^{cliv}Alderson also hints at uneasiness in the company of Horne Tooke and his illegitimate daughters, the Misses Hart, in her letters of 12 Feb. and 28 Aug. 1796 .

^{clv}Alderson had sought Wollstonecraft's advice for a pregnant friend now 'brought to bed'. *documents Amelia Alderson, letter 28 August 1796 to 'Mrs Imlay'.

^{clvi}Referring to Wollstonecraft's novel-in-progress, posthumously edited by Godwin, *The Wrongs of Woman; or, Maria: a Fragment* (London: Joseph Johnson, 1798).

endnotes*documents Amelia Alderson

^{clvii}Mary Hays's *Memoirs of Emma Courtney*, was subjected on publication to hostile press coverage and to private censure from Godwin, though it is unapparent that Alderson knew this latter fact.

^{clviii}I read 'like another Erminia' as the start of a new sentence.

^{clix}Dep.b.210/6, letter from Amelia Alderson to "Mrs Imlay", dated 28 Aug. [1796], quarto fold, no annotations or numbering in MJG hand. Its date places it between her No 5 and No 6. But its exclusion from the annotated and numbered series is unsurprising.

^{clx}The protagonist of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's epistolary novel, *Julie; ou La nouvelle Heloïse*.

^{clxi}Alderson's request for Mrs Imlay's advice for a pregnant friend had remained unanswered when she wrote to Godwin on 1 November 1796 (No. 7 in MJG series). But Cf. (below)* Duke reel 10, Alderson to Mrs Imlay, 20 [Dec.] 1796: 'Mrs Clarkson ... her silence is a mark of insensibility'.

^{clxii}Alderson playing with Pope's figure of insects in amber, in *Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot* (ll. 169-172).

^{clxiii}Not clear who is the 'false-hearted man'.

^{clxiv}Alderson (mis)quoting *Hamlet*, Act I, sc.ii: 'How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable/Seem to me all the uses of this world' .

^{clxv}Duke reel 10, letter from Amelia Alderson to Godwin, 13 Nov. 1796, not numbered by MJG. The date places it in sequence after MJG No. 7.

^{clxvi}Alderson is conscious of her inexperience of the talk of men of the world, and hopes that Godwin will prompt her. Cf. her letter of 1 Nov. 1796 (above), on her desire to portray 'bonhomme'.

^{clxvii}Fanny Burney's most recently published novel was *Camilla* (1796). Alderson may however be referring to the more successful earlier novel, *Evelina: or, The History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World* (1778).

^{clxviii}Mrs I: abbreviation of Imlay.

^{clxix}Joseph Johnson's *Anal[ytical] Review* had apparently published a comparison between Godwin's novel of 1794, *Caleb Williams*, and George Colman the Younger's stage-adaptation of it, *The Iron Chest*.

^{clxx}Eger: abbreviation of Egerton.

^{clxxi}The rival characters ‘Lady A.’ and ‘Lady M’ echo the Agnes /Mathilda contrast of George Lewis, *Ambrosio; or, The Monk*, published the same year 1796. This letter symbolism was retained for Alderson’s novel *à clef* on the Godwin circle, *Adeline Mowbray* (1804).

^{clxxii}Probably George Colman the Younger. See Alderson letter of 13 Nov. 1796 (above).

^{clxxiii}James Boaden, actor, critic, playwright, later the biographer of J. P. Kemble (1824), Mrs Siddons (1827) and Mrs Inchbald (1833). In 1796 Boaden engaged in a pamphlet war concerning certain MSS attributed to Shakespeare (DNB (1922), ii 741).

^{clxxiv}‘Miss P.’, probably the poet Annabella Plumptre, see Alderson letter of 28 August 1796 to Mrs Imlay (above).

^{clxxv}Alderson plays on the title of Godwin’s novel, *Things as They Are, or Caleb Williams*. The title itself plays on the Tory Archdeacon William Paley’s dictum, that ‘Things are very well as they are’, in his 1793 pamphlet, *Reasons for Contentment: Addressed to the Labouring Part of the British Public*.

^{clxxvi}In December 1796 financial worries coincided with Wollstonecraft’s discovery that she was pregnant to Godwin (C170, n13). Alderson’s offer of £5 from an elderly admirer in Norwich may have precipitated tensions between Godwin and Wollstonecraft. St Clair records that the ‘two philosophers’ met in strained mood to discuss marriage on 1 January 1797 (C171).

^{clxxvii}Cf. Alderson letter of 1 Nov. 1796 (above) repudiating the label ‘coquette’. An anonymous two-volume novel, *The Dangers of Coquetry* is attributed to Alderson ‘before her marriage’, DNB, (1922), xiv, 1121. In Dep. b.227/8(a) letterpress copy of Godwin letter of 23 Oct. 1797 to a female correspondent, possibly Amelia Alderson: ‘If you are impressed with the difficulty of writing a letter of consolation, how much greater must be my difficulty in answering it? ... I do from my heart & soul [illeg] and detest coquetry. Coquetry ... soils & makes cheap the character of the woman that practices it. If by rivers of tears I could wash it out of your soul, I would shed them’.

^{clxxviii}Wollstonecraft letters of Nov.-Dec. 1796 complain of having caught cold, but she was also suffering from nausea of early pregnancy.

^{clxxix}April 1797, when Alderson would pay her next visit to London for the ‘season’. Cf. Alderson letter to Wollstonecraft, Monday [10 Apr. 1797], and Wollstonecraft reply signed ‘Mary Wollstonecraft/femme Godwin’, dated Tuesday night [11 April 1797] (Letter 314, Wardle 389-90). St Clair lists Amelia Alderson among the London theatregoers on Wednesday 19 Apr. 1797 when Wollstonecraft and Godwin first appeared in public as a married couple (C171-2).

^{clxxx}Mary Hays’s novel, *Memoirs of Emma Courtney* prompts another play of words on ‘Things as They Are’, shorthand for the oppressive Establishment.

^{clxxxi}John Opie was painting a portrait of Wollstonecraft in spring of 1797, and Alderson in Norfolk is behindhand with the gossip that had linked his name with Wollstonecraft’s the year before. Alderson herself was to marry him a year later.

^{clxxxii}Possibly Catherine Clarkson, wife of the Quaker abolitionist and reformer, whose only son Thomas was born in the Lake District cApril 1797. Wollstonecraft’s Letter Four, in *Letters from Sweden, Norway etc* (1796), argued for maternal breastfeeding and an end to the swaddling of newborns.

^{clxxxiii}Dep. b.210/6, quarto fold, written recto and verso, and a single sheet addressed on outer to Godwin at 25 Charlton Street. Although the letter is dated 22 Dec. 1796, the postmark is 27 DE (December). The letter may have

been kept back, for posting after Christmas Day.

^{clxxxiv}Godwin and Wollstonecraft have ‘quizzed’ or ‘smoked’ Alderson’s friend who had offered Wollstonecraft money.

^{clxxxv}Parodic allusion to Burke’s 1790 *Reflections*, ‘But the age of chivalry is gone’ when ‘ten thousand swords’ would have leapt to the defense of the Queen of France.

^{clxxxvi}‘flead’ ie ‘flayed’.

^{clxxxvii}Mrs Robinson unidentified. For Mary ‘Perdita’ Robinson, see 5: *women*.

^{clxxxviii}Alderson writes ‘Hayes’, and an unidentified hand has struck out ‘e’. MWS script spells the name both ‘Hays’ and ‘Hayes’, as do Godwin’s letters to Hays, in Duke reel 5.

^{clxxxix}Duke reel 12, letter from Amelia Alderson to Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, dated Monday [17 Apr. 1797] . Alderson is replying to a letter from Wollstonecraft dated by Wardle ‘Tuesday Night [11 Apr. 1797]’ (Letter 314. Wardle 389-90). Wollstonecraft had written , ‘My dear Girl, ... ‘I have now to tell you that I am very sorry I prevented you from engaging a box for Mrs Inchbald, whose conduct I believe has been very rude. She wrote to Mr Godwin today, saying, that, taking it for granted he had forgotten it, she had spoken to another person. “She would not do so the next time he was married.” Nonsense! I have now to request you to set the matter right.’ Wollstonecraft signs herself, ‘Mary Wollstonecraft, femme Godwin’ (Wardle 390).

^{exc}19 April 1797 was a Wednesday. The play was George Lillo’s *The Will*. In Dep. b.227/8(a), Godwin letter of 13 September 1797 to Elizabeth Inchbald after Wollstonecraft’s death on 10 Sept, 1797, rebuking Inchbald for her behaviour in the theatre box on this occasion.

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Chapter note 4: *pedagogy*

Chapter 4: *pedagogy* forms the longest chapter of *Mary Shelley, Life of William Godwin*. It is arranged in three sections under the names Tom Abthorpe Cooper, Thomas Wedgwood, and Amelia Alderson.

The section on Thomas Abthorpe Cooper is composed from Deps. b.227/2(b); c.606/2; c.607/3; Duke reel 5.

The section on Thomas Wedgwood is composed from Deps. b.227/8(a); c.507/11; c.606/4; Duke reel 3; Duke reel 5; Duke reel 12.

The section on Amelia Alderson is composed from Dep. b.210/6, labelled in the Bodleian folder : 'Letters of Amelia Alderson (later (wife of the painter John) Opie) to Wm Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft (alias Imlay) 1795-6'. One letter, annotated by Mary Jane Godwin, is given from Dep. c.607/2. As well, Duke reels 10 and 12 supply documents complementary to materials in b.210/6.

A selection of *documents from the Abinger folders is appended to each section by name: eg *document Thomas Abthorpe Cooper.

....

The correspondence between Godwin and each of these three young people, between 1788 when a thirty-two year old Godwin was making his way as a writer in London, and 1798, by which date he was the widower and memorialist of Mary Wollstonecraft, illustrates a range of his pedagogical attitudes and activities, and was brought together and annotated by Mary Shelley, with Mary Jane Godwin assisting her, expressly to show that side of Godwin. Mentoring and discipleship are in question in others of our chapters: for example, the drafts and accompanying MWS script of Godwin's fervent expostulations with Harriet Lee in chapter 6: *writing*. Throughout her commentary, and not only in this chapter, Mary Shelley herself writes within the ambit of Godwin's mentorial influence. And of course Percy Bysshe Shelley was casually referred to as Godwin's 'disciple' in the journalism of their day, as well as in standard histories of English literature ever since, 'the most famous of these [young men]--although the one who subsequently caused him the most distress--', as Mark Philp calls him (MP 19).

The proportions in this chapter of MWS script to pinned-in original letters varies, the first section on Cooper containing an extended script from c.607/3 in MWS hand, the second section on Wedgwood consisting of MWS commentary and an exchange of letters between Godwin and Wedgwood, and the third section consisting entirely of Amelia Alderson's letters, numbered and annotated by Mary Jane Godwin. Other brief

notices in MWS script about Amelia Alderson, on 1839 watermark paper, are in our chapter 5: *women*.

MWS script in this chapter 4: *pedagogy* introduces the names of another Godwin disciple, George Dyson, and others of Godwin's friends, like Thomas Holcroft and James Marshall, who engaged in pedagogical relations with the boy Cooper. Occasionally in Godwin's correspondence the names crop up of others of Godwin's male 'pupils' 'disciples' and 'admirers', such as Willis Webb, John Arnott ('Arnot' in Godwin's reformed spelling), the American playwright William Dunlap, the London barrister Basil Montagu, the Cambridge student John Stoddart, an unnamed student at Oxford who sought Godwin's advice, and the young poets William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

Mary Shelley wrote to Thomas Abthorpe Cooper in his retirement in 1837 when she was starting to prepare Godwin's papers for publication. The letter is provisionally dated by Betty T. Bennett in her edition of Mary Shelley's letters:

[?Feb. Mar. 1837]

My work has been suspended by my illness - & it is only just now that I am getting to it again. I do not think that it will be published till next winter - The profits will belong to Mrs Godwin - Could I encrease these - & could you facilitate my so doing by any arrangement made beforehand with an American bookseller, you would confer an obligation on us. ...

My father's Memoirs - consisting of a portion of autobiography regarding his early years - a great many letters from & to him - with notes by myself to connect & explain - will be in two Octavo Volumes. (Bennett ii, 283-4, letter from Mary Shelley to Thomas Abthorpe Cooper.)

At this time, Mary Shelley wrote also to Josiah Wedgwood, whose younger brother Thomas had died in 1805, and she acknowledges assistance and cooperation from Josiah in the comments she appended (in the second section of this chapter) to the Godwin-Wedgwood correspondence (Shelley spells the name Wedgewood). As to the longlived Amelia Alderson, who as the widowed Mrs Opie was a successful novelist and a close acquaintance in the 1830s of Henry Crabb Robinson whom Mary Shelley

also knew, Mary Shelley made no approach to her and no direct comment on the bundle of letters annotated, numbered and pinned together by Mary Jane Godwin (now in Dep. b.210/6). Mary Jane Godwin's tart comments were added in the margins of Alderson's letters at some time after Godwin's death in 1836. The selection of letters in a numbered sequence 1 to 7 may have been made by Mary Shelley herself before she delegated the rest of the task to her stepmother. These letters make up the third section of this chapter.

In the first section of 4: *pedagogy*, Mary Shelley confronts the magisterial thrust of Godwin's teaching style in her comments (c.607/3) framing the boy Tom Cooper. Here Godwin's enlightened views on discipline and punishment were tested in a domestic setting. The flashpoint of domestic disharmony was at those times where a third party, be it James Marshall, Thomas Holcroft or George Dyson, either clumsily intervened, or served as a pretext, for displays of temper on both sides of the divide of authority. In much of his correspondence, Godwin's trenchant severities coincide with pedagogical professions of disinterest, scouting considerations of sex, gender and class. The sequel to MWS account of Cooper's boyhood is to be read in the chapters concerning Cooper in volume ii of Hazlitt's *Memoirs of Holcroft*, in the second volume of Charles Kegan Paul's biography of Godwin, and in William Dunlap's pioneering work on the history of the American theatre stage.

The second section of 4: *pedagogy* shows the relationship between Godwin and the younger Wedgwood that began at their meeting in the Wedgwood family's London mansion in 1793. At one point the two men briefly considered setting up a joint household, and MWS script (c.606/4) dwells on this intriguing possibility, cancelling one formulation and trying out another, finally leaving the question unsettled as to how the two could have contemplated such cohabitation. In reality also the suggestion was soon dropped, its passing marked by Tom Wedgwood's gift of a wetpress copier--surely the perfect gift! Godwin's solicitations of gifts and loans of money from Wedgwood is evident in the letters that Mary Shelley transcribed and/or pinned in, labelling them '2 letters on presents' '3d letter on presents'. Shelley may possibly have familiarised herself with Edmund Burke's speeches 'On Presents' at the trial of Warren Hastings, but in any case prestation was a constant topic of Godwin's ruminations. Mary Shelley does not speculate on any conflict of interest in Godwin's mentoring letters to his benefactor. In particular, she either had not read Amelia Alderson's letters of 18 and 22 December 1796 (in Duke reel 10 and b.210/6) or did not take the hint from

them that Godwin was out to borrow money to finance Wollstonecraft's debts from that December to March the following year, when Tom Wedgwood did relieve him and the marriage took place accordingly.¹

We present (from Duke reel 5) a four page letter to an Oxford student, or at least a young man met at Oxford, which is almost certainly not to Tom Wedgwood but has been annotated by MWS with a question mark 'T. Wedgewood?', and paginated serially with three following pages of the same letter, headed (somewhat perversely) by the comment 'I do not know to whom the ^three^ following letters were [illeg.]'. This letter offers a full statement of Godwin's pedagogical aims and style, amplified to a therapeutic model of intellectual conversation. It bristles with the clues that led Mary Shelley to identify its addressee as Tom Wedgwood. ("The melancholy tenour of your mind was somewhat distressing to me, but I was not without the anticipation of benefit to yourself, and instruction to me from our further intercourse".) Tom Wedgwood's illness, despite Godwin's cursory observations on hypochondria and self-pity, proved fatal in 1805.

Godwin had paid a house visit to Etruria, the Wedgwood estate and pottery in Staffordshire, in June 1797 (C174). After Godwin's return to London, he received a fascinating letter from Tom Wedgwood, written on 31 July 1797 from the Wedgwood holiday home in north Wales, and proposing to set Godwin up as director of a school for boys, a school of a wholly new and enlightened sort, a 'nursery of genius'. The letter portrays the culmination of his and Godwin's mutual interest in pedagogy, and is given as a *document in this chapter from Duke reel 12. The June 1797 visit was recalled sixteen months later as less than happy in Godwin's letter of 5 October 1798 to Wedgwood (Duke reel 5, *document Thomas Wedgwood), and does not appear to have been repeated.

Mary Shelley omits to mention the June 1797 visit to Etruria, let alone record Wollstonecraft's reproaches to Godwin for leaving her alone in London, pregnant and ill at ease. When Shelley comes, late in the piece, to write of her mother's death, she refers obliquely to this event, that 'set a dark seal upon this year [1797]' (c.606/4, chapter 5: *women*). She then announces her decision to separate Wedgwood's letters in

¹ Cf. (above) Duke reel 3, WG-TW 4 March 1797, endnote 77 to Chapter 4: *pedagogy* .

the later part of 1797, and place them in a separate chapter dealing with 1798. I have not located a chapter in the Bodleian folders that fits this description.

The third section of 4: *pedagogy*, consists mainly of the numbered series of letters in Dep. b.210/6, Miss Amelia Alderson, signing 'AA', writing from her father's home in Norwich to the bachelor philosopher William Godwin in Somers Town, north London, from 28 August 1795 to 22 December 1796. Godwin and Alderson had first met in Norwich in summer 1794 (C147, 152). On her subsequent visits to London, in September 1794 and June 1795, Godwin urged her to develop her literary talents but his urgings, no doubt kindly meant, appear to have made insufficient allowance for the constraints placed on young unmarried women. On 28 August 1795, 'AA' has just arrived back home from her spring-into-summer social season in London. In letter No. 4, dated 12 February 1796, she tells Godwin it will only be five weeks before she sees him again in London. The 1 April 1796 letter No. 5 has no address but was evidently written while Alderson was visiting London, and sighing, so she says, 'for the leisure of my own study in Norwich'.

I have not sighted any of Godwin's letters in reply to Alderson annotated or numbered by Mary Shelley or Mary Jane Godwin for inclusion in the work-in-progress for *Life of Godwin*. In any case, it seems that Alderson wrote to Godwin more often and more effusively than he was inclined to respond to her. Godwin's occasional replies to her persistent demands for his attention are quoted by William St Clair. These are noted in the endnotes to this chapter, and we refer the reader to his *The Godwins and the Shelleys* (1989).

From Dep. c.607/2, outside the numbered series, we have presented a single page of a letter dated 11 April 1796, on undated wove paper, lacking signature or addressee, following a clue on the letter itself supplied by Mary Jane Godwin, who has pencilled across the top of the page: 'Are not these though signed Almeyda Amelia Opie'. It seems probable that this letter also was to Godwin from Alderson, in London for the first performances of Sophia Lee's verse tragedy *Almeyda: Queen of Granada*. Godwin himself attended the theatre season and wrote an unsolicited letter of praise to Sophia Lee (C201). By 28 August 1796 Amelia is once more back in Norwich, and now writes to Wollstonecraft ('Mrs Imlay'), whom she has recently met for the first time in London. This letter in b.210/6 has not been included by Mary Jane Godwin in her numbered list. Its final letter, No. 7, is dated from Norwich, 1 November 1796. In April 1797, Alderson

paid her annual social visit to London, and here we have ended our story of her in a *document attached to this chapter.

Amelia Alderson is mentioned elsewhere in MWS script (c.532/8: 121) as ‘a correspondant’, unnamed, who had written to Godwin to let him know that his mother Ann Godwin and his father’s cousin Mrs Sothren, elderly widows sharing a house in rural Norfolk, did not think as highly of his new novel (*Caleb Williams*) as of the insipid *Italian Letters* he had hastily published ten years earlier.

Amelia Alderson relates this news to Godwin in her letter of 5 February 1796 (No 3 in the series annotated by Mary Jane Godwin in b.210/6):

What your old friend Mrs Southerne thinks of the matter I know not - but I called on her [...] I also asked her opinion of *Caleb Williams*: “now pray let not thy noble courage be cast down” when I inform you, that both Mrs S: & her daughter think you speak too favourably of wicked men, & that “*Italian Letters*” (yr first novel) are vastly prettier than *Caleb Williams*. Console yourself my good friend by reflecting on ye fable of the old man & his ass -

I conclude that Mary Shelley had read this letter by the time she was composing her commentary on *Caleb Williams*. That commentary is now scattered among three Bodleian folders (c.606/1, c.606/3, c.532/8), written on papers dated from 1835 to 1839, and we have presented it in our previous chapters 1: *literature* and 2: *politics*. The chapter note and endnotes to these chapters give a more detailed picture of the defensive advocacy inspiring Mary Shelley’s biography, and *Caleb Williams* lies at the core of this advocacy. It would perhaps be too much to claim that Amelia Alderson’s high opinion, and Godwin’s mother’s low opinion, of the novel provoked Mary Shelley to its defense--but not altogether too much, surely?

Amelia Alderson introduces the names of Annabella and Ann Plumtre as aspiring writers living in provincial circumstances like her own, and refers somewhat enviously to the burgeoning reputations of Mary Hays, Fanny Burney, and especially Mary Wollstonecraft, whose success she longs to emulate. In her letter dated Norwich 28th of August [1796], and addressed to ‘Mrs Imlay, Judd Place’, the name by which Mary Wollstonecraft was known to her London acquaintances (see *documents Amelia Alderson), Alderson is candid about her “expectations” of Godwin as an intellectual

patron and cultural mentor, and confesses that these have been disappointed. There is a current of erotic excitement in her letters, reproved by Godwin (and by his 20th-century biographers) as her predilection for flirtatiousness, or coquetry. It might be interpreted rather as an amateurish variation on the literary discipleship that he and his contemporaries approved and solicited in young men. Alderson's letter (in c.607/2) of 'Monday Eve. Apr. 11 1796', that we have placed between Mary Jane Godwin's ordering (in b.210/6) of Alderson's letters No. 5 (1 April 1796) and No. 6 (Thursday [13 Oct. 1796]), shows off her rainbow colours. And Mary Jane's detective work ('Are not these though signed Almeyda Amelia Opie?'), indicates that she has recognised the mixture of facetiousness and longing that colours Alderson's efforts to network through Godwin. In April 1776 the Lee sisters were already attracting notice, as fashionable schoolmarms and published authors, and the London production of Sophia's verse tragedy crowned this success. Soon Godwin too was to notice them; he wrote an unsolicited letter to Sophia congratulating her on *Almeyda* 'as a compliment from a famous author to a promising newcomer', writes William St Clair (C201) No wonder then that Amelia picked up the stage name 'Almeyda': she signed off her letters to Godwin with a flourishing 'A A.', and patterned the names of female characters in her play in the making, 'A' for the heroines, and 'M' for the older women (a nomenclature retained in her later novel *Adeline Mowbray* (1804)).

.....

The influence of Rousseau's *Emile; ou, de l'Education* on Godwin's thinking has been recognised (especially in *Political Justice*, Bk v, xiv). But perhaps not enough attention has been paid to the defining role of the 'Governor', Rousseau's first-person narrator, who differs from 18th-century English models of the pedagogue, in that he does not simply mind an upperclass youth until he takes up the social place he was born into, but trains and equips the orphan Emile to be a leader of a reformed social order. This presupposes that the teacher himself is an initiate of elite power and, as a corollary, that he has undertaken the duties of teaching as a disinterested exercise. Godwin's situation, as a dissenter without real property or powerful connections in London of the late 18th-century, is measurably distant from these preconditions, but all the more insistent in its claims to an enhanced status for educators of youth.

In Books V and VI of *Political Justice* Godwin argues the problematic power-relationship of tutor and ephebe dialectically. Godwin knew that Plato, the first philosopher of the Governor-ephebe relationship, was tutor to Dionysus, tyrant of Syracuse, and had failed

to reform his pupil's politics. The bedrock objection to monarchical government proclaimed in *Political Justice* is that 'every king is a despot in his heart'² and surrounds himself with sycophants and flatterers. The role of the intrepid teacher is to seek the means of insertion into power of a countervailing authority. Godwin contrasts two pedagogic exemplars, Archbishop Fenélon, tutor to the Dauphin of Louis XIV, and author of *Télémaque* and of an essay on Aristotle, tutor to Alexander the Great; and Stéphanie de Genlis, governess to the sons of Philippe Egalité, Duc d'Orléans, whose charges benefited from her 'independence and firmness', yet were not, Godwin supposes, 'of the class of princes who seemed destined to a throne' (*Political Justice*, 418-20). The implication of this last observation seems to be that the cadet branch might profit from an upbringing by liberal pedagogues and found a reformist-minded constitutional monarchy.

But the task of changing princely children to agents of social change and redistributive economic justice is a hard one indeed: 'The wisest preceptor, thus circumstanced, must labour under insuperable disadvantage' (*Political Justice*, 417). Godwin turns for support to Fenélon's canonical text *Télémaque*, which Godwin had read aloud with Tom Cooper when the boy was his live-in pupil (c.607/3: 143); recorded in MWS transcript of Godwin's journal entry 12 Oct. [1790]). The often-quoted passage in *Political Justice*, Book II, 'Of Justice', where Godwin counsels the 'impartial' reader to prefer to save Fenélon from a house fire before one's mother/maidservant/ valet, is an injunction to prefer the immortal book to the mortal body.

Mark Philp [MP 19] emphasises the centrality to Godwin's work of his ideas on education, finding a practical outlet:

first, in the role of formal tutor to Willis Webb and Thomas Cooper, and later with a variety of young men and women who corresponded with him and sought him out in person for advice and philosophical discussion and to whom he acted as mentor. Maria Reveley and Mary Hays both sought his company and counsel; Coleridge, although occasionally exasperated with him, also showed him a degree of respect, sometimes amounting to deference; and the Wedgewoods (sic), George Dyson, and the young Basil Montagu did much the same. John Arnot, a young Scotsman, walked all the way from Edinburgh to see Godwin and developed a similar relationship.

² William Godwin, *Enquiry concerning Political Justice* (3rd ed. 1798; ed Isaac Kramnick (Harmondsworth, 1976), 421, 433.

A blend of intellectual patronage and emotional discipline characterises Godwin as an ideal mentor in Philp's summary. Even Mary Shelley's painstaking efforts to neutralise Godwin's sexual relationships with women fall short of Philp's description of Maria Reveley and Mary Hays as two who 'sought his company and counsel'. And Philp makes a distinction without teeth, between 'formal tutor' to youths, and 'mentor' to adults, to foster the impression of a pedagogy unconstrained by the professional marketplace for writers and teachers, and undisturbed by differences in wealth, status, and gender. Godwin's peripatetic, extramural sallies into pedagogy would seem from Philp's account to be selfless, rather than competitive.

MWS script casts a net even wider than Philp's 'variety of young men and women'. Indeed, Shelley pictures all Godwin's relationships with women, not excepting even Mary Wollstonecraft, as primarily mentorial, and 'above all' (one of her favourite phrases), intellectual. '[H]is immediate desire was to study her mind', she writes (b.288/4) of Godwin's approach to Harriet Lee in 1798. As to Godwin's male friends and associates, MWS comments on James Marshall, Thomas Holcroft, or Samuel Parr strive to adjust Godwin's presumptive intellectual superiority to the self-effacing role of teacher.

Thus, in *1: literature*, Holcroft is pictured as an uncut diamond, roughened by his years of professional acting and writing for the theatre:

the more polished education & great acquirements of Godwin led him to be of most use to his friend - but when he undertook the writing a drama Holcrofts criticisms became valuable & important (c.606/1: 123)

Again, Mary Shelley keeps a watchful eye on the competitive shifts and strains in Godwin's relationship with Samuel Parr (in chapter 2: *politics*). Parr had 'solicited' Godwin's acquaintance, but only after *Political Justice* had conferred stature on Godwin as a philosopher, and *Caleb Williams* had made him famous as a novelist.

After seeing *Caleb Williams* through the press in May 1794, Godwin went to Norfolk for a holiday:

Not long after his return he received ... [a] letter from Dr Parr entreating a visit soliciting him It is probable that his acquaintance with Parr began on the score

of Gerrald whom they both loved - but it was the doctor, who solicited for an introduction, & was eager to cultivate an intimacy with the Author of Political Justice. (c.532/8: 124)

Mention in MWS script of Joseph Gerrald reminds us that Godwin's intervention in the case that brought Gerrald to trial in Scotland for sedition, and ended in his transportation for fourteen years, and his death in distant New South Wales, was a potential irritant between Parr, his former headmaster and acknowledged mentor, and Godwin, who had met Gerrald only when the die was already cast in 1792 (see chapter 3: *law*). When the official break with Parr occurred in April 1800 (see 2: *politics*), Godwin reproached Parr in terms that we find echoed in MWS script c.532/8 (quoted above). Godwin wrote:

I should be glad if you would answer to your own satisfaction, what crime I am chargeable with, now in 1800, of which I had not been guilty in 1794, when with so much kindness & zeal you sought my acquaintance. (c.607/6, Duke reel 5)

There is no question that Godwin was entitled to demand an explanation, since Parr had publicly denounced his writings from a City of London pulpit. It is the form taken by the demand, marking the interrogative relation of pedagogue to pupil, that characterises Godwin and predicts that his protest will meet with a snub, as it surely was.

In her account of Tom Cooper, MWS script qualifies Philp's assertion that Godwin was equably inclined to the teaching role, whether or not his interlocutor was a pupil of tender years, or an adult (and professional) contemporary. MWS describes Godwin as temperamentally unsuited to sustain a tutorial relationship and a domestic parental role with the boy. It may be that some of her own childhood memories of Godwin's 'temper he put in his lectures' surface in her picture of Cooper, but it is just as possible that she drew the inference from reading the record of their domestic and schoolroom experiences. With the papers spread out before her or pinned to her script, Shelley describes the boy himself as 'proud wilful and independent' (c.607/3), a veritable mini-Godwin in fact, and head-on clashes followed. This explains why the household atmosphere was frequently turbulent.

Godwin's pedagogy had been laid down by his own schooling in the Latin classics. Mary Shelley's exclusion from this masculine culture was no doubt a factor in her judgment of Godwin. In chapter 2: *politics*, we have shown Mary Shelley's remarks on

'the very disputative air' of Godwin's letter to Alexander Jardine (c.606/3: 86). In this chapter, we find her scrutinising his tutoring of Tom Cooper:

These papers deserve to be preserved as they throw light on his views of education - & also as evidence of the conscientious & persevering nature of his endeavours. At the same time they display his faults as a teacher. He was too minute in his censures; too grave & severe in his instructions - at once divided too far from his pupil, & too little through want of sympathy, & too much on a level from the temper he put in his lectures. (c.607/3: 138)]

The usual manoeuvre in MWS script when confronted by Godwin's conflictual relationships, is to shape a comparison favourable to Godwin, as for example in comparing Godwin's sensitive kindness with Holcroft's 'unmitigated severity' when Holcroft's son suicided in 1789 (c.606/2, 2: *politics*). But this move is ruled out in the present instance, since the boy Tom Cooper occupies the rhetorical site in MWS script reserved elsewhere for Godwin himself -- imaging a stubborn independence of mind and refusal to defer to arbitrary authority. Godwin's *paedia*--his concept of the education of boys by men--is steeped in the dissenter traditions of English oppositionist discourse. Its ideological limitations emerge at the cusp of development from dependent youth into independent adult, from rebel against power to wielder of power. And this is the crisis in both boy and man that MWS script puts in evidence from the journals and letters of 1789 and 1790.

Godwin had stood *in loco parentis* with his fatherless young kinsman, Thomas Abthorpe Cooper, from 1784 when the boy was eight years old, taking him into his household as a full time resident pupil from 1788 till 1791. Before 1788 Godwin's ideas about tutoring boys had been hypothetical (his 1783 prospectus for a boy's school at Epsom)³; or fictitious (the adventures of the well-named Mr Godfrey as tutor to the well-born sons of the rich in *Damon and Delia* (1784)). He brought to the task of educating Tom Cooper his own recollections of schooldays in Norfolk, vivid and mostly painful recollections that he was yet to write up in his autobiography (see 1: *literature*). As with any first-time parent and tyro schoolmaster, most of Godwin's energy went into trying *not* to treat Cooper in their schoolroom as he had been treated by his teachers, and *not* to deal with him in the home they shared as he had been dealt with by his father, the Rev. John Godwin.

³ [Anon.] *An Account of the Seminary that will be opened on Monday the fourth Day of August at Epsom in Surrey* (London: T. Cadell, 1783) (MP 51)

For Tom Cooper, Godwin set out a conscientious program of study and discipline, reminding himself of his own miseries with flogging schoolmasters, and refraining on principle from corporal punishment. Nevertheless, the daily task of dinning classical learning into unreceptive ears wore him down. Fretting under the tight rein he kept on his emotions with his pupil, he quarrelled fiercely with the other men who interested themselves in the boy, George Dyson, Thomas Holcroft, and James Marshall. After three stormy years domesticating together, Cooper left Godwin's house to try his luck on the theatre stage. As soon as he left, Godwin broke up his household, moved to bachelor lodgings and embarked on full-time research and writing for *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793).

MWS script on Godwin as domestic pedagogue is careful to place Godwin's heart safely out of reach of his theories. By 1837 she was not prepared to defend the theories.

Godwin from the very nature of his opinions which led him to analyze ^mind^ & draw conclusions as to character, ^& to have a sanguine faith in the practicability of improvement^ entertained rigid opinions on the subject of education. Tom Cooper was a spirited boy, exceedingly independant resolute ^& true^ and probably proud wilful & indolent. Godwin conscientious to the last degree in his treatment of every one, extended his utmost care to the task of education--but many things rendered him rather unfit--his severity was confined to words --but these were pointed & humiliating--his strictness was indurating--and this was more particularly the case in early life when he considered the power of education to be unlimited in the formation of the understanding & temper. (c.607/3)

.....

The stirring times of November-December 1790, when Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution* was answered by Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Men*, find Godwin straining to jump into political controversy and Cooper pining to escape the schoolroom.

November 3. Penance him for being out of humour with me without reason-- because my not choosing to read before him Burke's pamphlet after he had pronounced it "stupid stuff" a priori

December 1 Tears for the supposed imputation of a lie. C. I will not bear it, you would not treat any body else thus. G. Every body says that I treat you too well.

Do not threaten me. Go to the Devil as soon as you please; from instruction to ignorance, from virtue to vice. (c.607/3)

According to St Clair, Godwin completed his separation from Tom Cooper in 1791 with a self-approving flourish:

The periods when he had shared lodgings with Cooper, Marshall and Holcroft had revealed the strain caused by having too many opportunities for mutual sincerity, and he also believed, with a touch of priestly dedication, that no man could be a great writer or great benefactor if distracted by domesticity. He moved to Chalton Street as soon as Cooper left. (C144).

In 1795 Godwin received the first of what was to be a longterm correspondence from a young painter and playwright in America. This was a letter dated 'New York Octo. 1, 1795' from William Dunlap, who declared himself an admirer of *Political Justice* ('Political Justice, if I may judge by my small circle of acquaintance, has been read by many in America'), and solicited Godwin's interest for his own work: 'I have written several Dramatic pieces, principally Tragedies ... if these could be published in London or any of them brought on the London stage, I trust, the cause of humanity would be served'. (b.227/2 (d))

Dunlap was to become Cooper's manager and producer in his successful career on the American stage. Their initial contact was through this overture to Godwin and accordingly the image of Godwin as mentor remained a theme in their correspondence throughout. Dunlap's diaries, unpublished until 1969,⁴ add to our view of Godwin through the double filter of Cooper's and Dunlap's separate reminiscences:

New York City, 1798. [Feb.] 12th Cooper ... son of a Surgeon ... [who] went to the East Indies and dying there left a large family of Orphans. Mr Godwin, some way connected with the family, took & educated Cooper & under the instruction of Holcroft he was destin'd for the stage. (Dunlap 1969: 220)

The *document Notes on Cooper, in this chapter 4: *pedagogy*, is from Dep. c.607/3, an unidentified hand on watermark 1796 paper. This memorandum reveals that when Tom Cooper sailed on the *Sansom* for New York and an engagement to the Wignell theatre company of Philadelphia in September 1796, he left behind a widowed mother and her

⁴ William Dunlap, *Diary of William Dunlap (1766-1839): The Memoirs of a Dramatist, Theatrical Manager, Painter, Critic, Novelist, and Historian* (New York and London, 1969)

younger children still looking for support from the East India Company. The late Mr Thomas Cooper, it says, had 'entered the service of the East India Company in the beginning of the year 1770 as Ship Surgeon' until the 'time of his decease Oct 4th 1787'. Godwin is described in the note as: 'A relation of Mrs Cooper's [who] had the goodness to take upon himself the education of her eldest son: 'The unfortunate unhappy Widow is induced to solicit the benevolent aid of any Gentleman in the service'. Godwin's goodness looks more concrete when we read how little their father's seventeen years of foreign service had secured to his children and widow.

Tom Cooper and Amelia Alderson did not meet under Godwin's auspices, as Cooper had left Godwin's London household in 1791, well before Alderson was introduced to it in the summer of 1794. But Alderson herself recognised Cooper as her precursor in Godwin's academy without walls, and in particular, she wanted to glean from Godwin the vital clues that would turn her manuscript comedy-in-progress throughout 1796, into a successful stage production. Alderson's letter of 12 February, 1796 (No. 4 in b.210/6) urges the play's merits on Godwin's attention: 'I flattered myself that all its varieties would be forcibly & admirably given by your pupil Mr Cooper'. But she has been disappointed to discover, as she believes, that 'Mr Cooper played no more'. This was a *reculer pour mieux sauter* for Tom Cooper, who at this date was receiving intensive tuition in stagecraft from Thomas Holcroft.⁵ For Alderson it was not so, she had no such springboard out of genteel provincial maidenhood. Holcroft's formidable skills in theatre arts were, as she said herself 'inaccessible'. 'But I soon found that Mr Cooper played no more & that Mr H: was *all but inaccessible*' (b.210/6).

Alderson's letter of 1 April 1796 (No. 5 in b.210/6) asks Godwin for news of Robert Merry and his actress wife, and gives him what news she has gathered in Norwich. The Merrys sailed as shipboard companions on the *Sansom* with Tom Cooper, and in the USA Thomas Abthorpe Cooper and Anne Brunton Merry had an illustrious career as 'stars' of Shakespearean tragedy. The second of the *documents Notes on Cooper comes from William Dunlap's biography of the actor Fred Cooke, commemorates the role of Godwin as Tom Cooper's teacher, and casts an oblique reflection on Amelia Alderson's ups and downs in the vicissitudes of youthful ambition.

⁵ Charles Kegan Paul, *William Godwin and His Contemporaries* (London, 1876) covers this period of Tom Cooper's life in some detail in vol. ii.

This chapter closes with Alderson, and the *documents attached include her informal note to Mary Wollstonecraft in April 1797, after the news of her marriage to Godwin had surfaced. It is, I think, within the spirit of MWS commentary on Alderson and, *a fortiori*, on Wollstonecraft, that we attach this document. It clearly contradicts the view that Alderson was among the first of Wollstonecraft's acquaintance to turn on and shun her for her marriage to Godwin. Whatever priority is due to Godwin's claims in his 1798 *Memoirs of the Author*, Alderson must at least be allowed to offer her friendly greeting, to which Wollstonecraft, signing herself 'femme Godwin' wrote in reply, 'My Dear Girl'.

.....

Mary Shelley, Life of William Godwin

5: women

c.532/8ⁱ

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[r]

Mrs G's Lettersⁱⁱ

Hollis

1 Mr. John Hollis,ⁱⁱⁱ has been dead some years at an advanced age - was only a distant sort of friend with very strict habits & manners, who had written something of an apology for unbelief. He was a bachelor living in great Queen St, & I think brother to Brand Hollis, living at the Hyde on the border of Suffolk, where we visited him twice. He left the bulk of his fortune to Dr Disney. Your father at one time owed J Hollis \$100 - I believe some delays that occurred in paying caused a coolness - yet I always thought that the name of W. G. would be found in his will

2 Fawcett^{iv} lived either at Walthamstow or Waltham Cross - I think he had latterly a sort of farm - at least his son had

3 You see Margarot was cut by them^v

»»»»

[v]

4 Fawcett files

Mrs Smith his aunt dead -left 2 sons -2 daughters the former settled in Devonshire - 1 d.^{vi} married Mr. Fowler [?& later] Mr Margaxe - 2 d.^{vii} Mr Mallett of Charlton near Greenwich. G^{viii} most intimate with Fawcett's wife's mothers family at the age of 25 - love letters passed - thought Fawcett's mother's sister the most lovely creature in the world. As the parties ages removed from Ware to London clerk at Mallets - merchants - city - went as their agent to Bahamas.

Dyson - acquaintance first of T Cooper^{ix}

6 Robert Merry^x son of a London tradesman was educated at Harrow & at Xchurch Oxford after which he became an officer in the guards & a man of fashion & gallantry - He

wrote Lorenzo a tragedy & various trifling poems in the news paper under the signature of Della Crusca - he married Miss Brunton the actress - & went to America where he died in 1798.

7 3 Wedgwoods - [? G W]-

8 Miss Cooper governess at Mr Kingston
Banker Stratford Place Oxford [illeg.]

9 - Letters to Taylor - business ones containing allusions - letters with his works

10 Arnott - the image of a tall young man^{xi}

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[r]

10 - All I recollect of Arnott is almost nothing. You will smile if I say that I cannot be sure that I ever saw him, for though when his name comes before me, an image of a tall young man, pale faced, with large blue eyes, with much meaning in them, in shabby clothes, comes before me along with it I may not have seen him but only heard his description. When ever your father spoke of him, he extolled his intellectual powers, saw infinite folly & danger in the intemperance of his impulses & his pursuits, - & in speaking of him expressed his fear that he must be mad. I forget entirely all the rest, except that at one period, his sister & her husband Mr. & Mrs. Tyler from Edinburgh, put him in confinement - & had a great dislike to your father on account of Political Justice, & ascribed their brother's conduct to the principles it contains A. & L. Jones^{xii} were I think in love with each other. A. was desperately attached afterwards to some German lady of rank. I think this is in the letters.

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[v]

11 Fell in love at Stowmarket in love at 13^{xiii}

12 - Critical Review April 1793 continued in July
Analytical June & August - 1793.^{xiv}

13 Art of War published in 4^{to} - 1795 - republished 1798 8^{vo}. The title attested to civilised war. Fawcett who wrote war elegies 4 years later^{xv}

14 G. Dyer^{xvi} says "he is very desirous to throw his humble mite into so rich a treasury." The mite is - "I have a recollection that I met Mr G. at ^parties in^ 2 or 3 gentlemen's houses

who had a great respect for him. - that he once at least drank tea with me in a large party - & that once at least Xmas time he played - & G. D. also - at Blindman's buff with some children ^at Mr Northmans^ - this was in [?Carey] St.

[written sideways]

- 1 J/B Hollis
- 2 Fawcett
- 3 Rodd bookseller Gt Newport St Long Acre
- 4 Fawet [sic]
- 5 Dyson
- 6 R. Merry
- 7 3 Wedgwoods
- 8 Miss Cooper
- 9 Letters to Taylor
- 10 Arnott
- 11 Stowmarket
- 12 Critiques
- 13 Fawcetts works ξϖϖ

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»»»^{xviii}

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1

The year 1796 was a memorable epoch in Godwin's life - I have commenced it (turn over)

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[v]

by the insertion of ^a selection of^ letters of his general correspondance that I might proceed to detail without interruption the great event^{xix} that marked it

[blank]

....

[r]^{xx}There are few traces of passion in the course of his tranquil existence, but susceptible as he was to pleasurable ^& benevolent^ feelings, he was naturally open to the sentiment of love. Mrs. G^{xxi} - tells me she recollects that he felt his mentioning a first feeling of love ^being awakened^ when he was ^a child of^ eight years of age. During his ministry at Stowmarket he fell in love. His gentleness mildness & refinement as well as his talents recommended him and his preferences usually met with a return. He was however very averse to marriage - ^In the preceding letter he sums up his objections^ Poverty in the

outset of was a strong argument against it. The duties When he concocted a code of morals^{xxii}
in

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2

Political Justice he warmly opposed the a system that exacted a promise to be kept till the
end of life in spite of every alteration of circumstance & feeling (turn over)

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[v]

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objections to marriage are usually supposed to infer an approval & even practice of illicit
intercourse. This was far from being the case with Godwin. He was in a supreme degree a
conscientious man - & though he could pardon liberti any thing like vice or libertinism was
the antipodes of his character - nor did his sense of duty permit him to indulge in the smallest
deviation from those laws of society which though he might regard as unjust, he felt could
not be infringed without disadvantage the practice of deception or fl^{xxiv}

....

^{xxv}He was too conscientious to act on this theory to put this theory into practice . The
disgrace injury to accrue to any woman who should set h^{xxvi} act in opposition to the laws of
society to them - the loss of usefulness to both parties which opp any stigma en imparts -
the natural ties of children ^entailing duties^ which necessitate the duration of any connexion
- & which if tampered with must end in misery - all these motives were imperative in
preventing [^sic] from acting on his theories which yet he did not like to act against.

Among his acquaintances there were several women to whose society he was
exceedingly partial. His favourites were all distinguished for personal attractions & talents.
The celebrated Mary Robinson^{xxvii} may be mentioned among them. He considered her ^to the
end of his life^ the most beautiful

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3

^woman^ he had ever seen - but though he admired her, so greatly their intimacy
acquaintance scarcely attained marriage intimate friendship. It was otherwise with Mrs.
Inchbald.^{xxviii} I have already mentioned his liking for her - & he saw her frequently - he

delighted in her manners her conversation - her loveliness - he yet he was not in love ^and above all he never thought of marrying her^. He was intimate (turn over)

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[v]

also with Miss Alderson afterwards Mrs. Opie^{xxix} - but this friendship was purely such as is formed every day in the world society. He admired her beauty & sprightliness, & she liked his conversation & revere respected his talents.

There was yet another favourite.^{xxx} She was married and this circumstance was a barrier to every sentiment except friendship - , but this sen was no certainly he felt towards her experienced for her more of tenderness & preference than for any other among his acquaintance

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^{xxxi}

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Last in the correspondance of this year are two letters from Mrs. Inchbald - authoress^{xxxii} of The Simple Story.^{xxxiii}

Mrs Inchbald was one of a numerous family, orphaned of their father, whose mother had to struggle with poverty. She was exceedingly beautiful. The spirit of adventure natural in youth seems to have developed itself unusual vigour ^in her^, but it was joined by a certain saving grace of self command & self possession that bore her through nearly unharmed.

She married early an actor, & went also on the stage - She was left a widow early at the age of six & twenty & from that time had to struggle alone with the world. She continued her career as an actress for some time till under many disadvantages, an impediment in her speech preventing

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all hope of excellence; till ^at length^ her success as an author enabled her to secede from the stage.

Nothing can be more singular & interesting than the picture of her life as given in her biography.^{xxxv} Living in mean lodgings - drest with an economy allied to penury - alone connectionless & alone, her beauty, her talents & her the charm of her society manners gave her entrance into a delightful circle of society. Apt to fall in love but & desirous to marry, she continued single, because the men who loved & admired her were too worldly^{xxxvi} to take an actress & a poor author however lovely & charming, for a wife. Her life was thus spent on an interchange of hardship & amusement[,] privation & luxury. Her character partook of the same contrast - fond of pleasure

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she was prudent in her conduct; penurious in her ^personal^ expenditure, she was generous to others, even to avarice towards herself Vain of her beauty & fond of it, her dress the gown she wore we are told was not worth a shilling it was so coarse & shabby - open very susceptible to ^the^ softer feelings she could yet guard herself against passion, & ^though she^ might be called a flirt, but her character was unimpeached. I have heard ^that^ a rival beauty of her day pettishly complained that when Mrs. Inchbald came into a ^drawing^ room & placing her sat in a chair in the middle of it, as was her wont, it was every man gathered round it, & it was vain for any other woman to attempt to draw attention.

In Godwin's journal there is an especial note "Mrs. Inchbald, Oct. 29 -1792 - her

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first letter is dated but a few^{xxxvii} He could not fail to admire her and she became & continued to be a favourite Her talents, her beauty, her manners were all delightful to him. He was wont to describe her as a piquante mixture between a lady & a milkmaid & said added that Sheridan declared that she was the only authoress whose society pleased him.

Mrs Inchbald's first letter is dated but a few days subsequent to Mr Godwin's introduction to her. It relates to her tragedy entitled "The Massacre" which was never acted but may be found in the appendix to Boaden's memoirs of her life.^{xxxviii} This grew into the habit of interchanging criticisms on their several works as they came out^{xxxix} - but there are few no letters from Godwin ^preserved^, till a few years after, ^when^ by means of a copying machine^{xl} he kept copies of his correspondance

....

xli

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Mary Wollstonecraft was one of those beings who appear once in a generation, perhaps to gild humanity with a ray which no difference of opinion nor chance of circumstance can cloud. Her genius was undeniable. She had been bred in the hard school of adversity & having experienced the sorrows entailed on the poor ^& oppressed^ she was kindled with an earnest desire was kindled within her to diminish these sorrows. Her sound understanding, her intrepidity - her trembling sensibility & eager sympathy - stamp all her writings with a fire & truth & endowed them with a tender charm that enchants while it convinces enlightens.

She was one whom all who had ever seen loved loved who had ever seen. Many years are past since that beating heart has been laid in the cold, still grave - but no one who has ever

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seen her speaks of her without enthusiastic veneration. Did she witness an act of injustice she boldly came forward to point it out & cause induce its atonement reparation. Was there discord among friends & relatives - she stood by the weaker party & by her earnest appeals & kindness awoke latent affection & healed all wounds. "Open as day to melting charity - " ^with^ a heart brimful to bursting with generous affection - & yearning for sympathy - she had fallen on evil days and her life had been one course of hardship, poverty - lonely struggle & bitter disappointment.

Godwin met her at the moment when she was deeply depressed by the ingratitude of one^{xliii} utterly incapable of appreciating her excellence - & who had stolen her heart, & availed himself of her excessive & thoughtless generosity & lofty independence of character to plunge her in difficulties & then desert her. Difficulties - worldly difficulties indeed she set
”””

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at nought compared with her despair of good, her confidence betrayed - and when once she could conquer the misery that clung to her heart, she struggled to meet cheerfully cheerfully to meet the poverty that was her inheritance & to bring up do her duty by her darling child. in that

At this time Godwin again met her at tea at the house of her friend Miss Hayes^{xliiii} and he thus writes of the events that followed on their meeting^{xliiv}

[blank]

”””

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before the fire & this formed the philosopher's principal report.

We find another His acquaintance this year was tolerably varied & his correspondance gathers interest though few of his own letters yet appear It may be seen from his journal that he visited Dr Parr, and there are many of the doctor's letters. I select a few to follow in this place Miss Parr was also his correspondant, a lively young lady, full of innocent frolic who often laughed at his philosophy. I select a few of Dr Parr's letters to follow in this place^{xliv}

[blank]

....

”””

[blank]

(1)^{xlvi}

Miss Sarah-Anne Parr had been married in 1797 to John eldest son of Colonel Wynne of Plasnewydd in Denbighshire. At the time of the his marriage he was one of Dr Parr's pupils; & as he was then in his minority, it was, what is termed, "a stolen match". It proved, as was generally augured at the time, an unhappy union; & in a few years a separation was the consequence^{xlvii}

The issue of the marriage was three daughters. On the birth of the third, which took place after the separation, an attempt was made, on the part of the lady, to obtain an interview, with the hope of effecting a reunion with her husband. But the attempt failed; & this & other disappointments, to which she was afterwards subjected, together with the loss of her mother & her daughter, so affected her declining health, as to hasten her dissolution. She breathed her last at Hatton July 8 1810.^{xlviii}

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A series of notes details the progress of their intimacy.^{xlix} - After her death Godwin collected & numbered them - & with a few missives these records of dead passion are now before me. It is touching to see small proof of how the slightest of these notes was valued by the receiver. The writer dated them with the usually appended only the ^name of the^ day of the week - but the date of the month & year is added to all Godwins notes are carefully dated in Mary Wollstonecraft's handwriting - & her own are again thus dated by Godwin.¹ It is strange but true how the ethereal all forgetful passion of love yet clings to the smallest minutia in that appertains to itself - a date becomes a hallowed epoch - & while lovers would often annihilate both space & time - ^the slightest change in^ these two conditions of humanity is fraught to them with the whole interest & treasure of their lives.

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the numerals of these letters are those appended by Mr Godwin

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The virulence of my poor Fanny's distemper begins to abate, & with it any^{lii} anxiety - yet this is not, I believe, a day sufficiently to be depended on, to tempt us out in search of rural felicity.

X X X

I felt hurt, I can scarcely trace why, last night, at your wishing time to roll back. The observation wounded the delicacy of my affection, as well as my tenderness. Call me not fastidious; I want to have such a *firm throne*^{liii} in your heart, that even your imagination shall not be able to hurl me from it, be it ever so active,

Mary

.....

c.607/6^{liv}

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18)

I have no answer to make to your fable, which I acknowledge to be unnecessarily ingenious & well composed. I see not however its application.

x x x

Your fable of today puts an end to all my hopes. I needed nothing,^{lv} & you threaten me. Oppressed with diffidence & uncertainty, which I hate, you join the oppressors & annihilate me. Use your pleasure. For every pain I have undesignedly given you, I am most sincerley [sic] grieved; for the good qualities I see discern in you, you will shall live for ever embalmed in my memory.

August 19th

Friday

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c.532/8

^{lvi}
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of milk & honey, I would fain make every body else so.

x x x

The return of the fine weather has led me to form a vague wish that we might *vagabondize* in the country, before the summer is clear gone. I love the country, & like to leave certain associations in my memory, which seem, as it were, the landmarks of affection. Am I very obscure?

Now I will go & write. I am in a humour to write - at least to you. Send me one line, if but Bo! to a goose. Opie^{lvii} left a card last night

Saturday morning
Sep. 10 1796

.....

lviii
”””

52

Sep. 30 - 1796

x x x

If you go out at two you will perhaps call to tell me ^{^that^} you thought kindly of me last night, as I did of you; for I am glad to discover great powers of mind in you even at my own expence. One reason I beleive why I wish you to have a good opinion of me is a conviction that ^{^though^} the strongest affection is the most involuntary, yet I should not like you to love you could not tell what, though it be a French compliment of the first class, without my explanation of it: the being enamoured of some fugitive charm that seeking some where, you find every where. Yes; I would fain live in your heart & employ your imagination - am I not very reasonable?

You do not know how much I admired your self government last night, when your voice betrayed the struggle it cost you. I am glad that you force me to love you sure & sure, in spite of my fear of being pierced to the heart by every one on whom I rest my mighty stock of affection. Your tenderness was considerate as well as kind.

Miss H.^{lix} - entering in the midst of the last sentence, I hastily laid my letter aside, without finishing - & have lost the remainder. Is it lost in the quick sand of love?

I have now only to say that I wished you to call by two, because I go into the city round by Finsbury Square.

If you send me no answer I shall expect you.

Friday
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c.606/4^{lx}

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At the beginning of this year Mr. Godwin married Mary Wollstonecraft. The precise date is not known - he does not mention it in his journal^{lxi} and it took the ceremony had taken place some time before the marriage was declared. This secrecy partly arose from a ^slight^ shrinking on Mr. Godwin's part to avow that he had acted in contradiction to his theories. Such ^contradictions occur^ things are indeed done every day & are applauded. But the fervour & unbending uncompromising tone of the assumed by the Author of Political Justice in promulgating his opinions made his followers demand a rigid adherence of them in action - &

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to marry comply with the ordinance of marriage was in the eyes of many among them absolute apostacy. Strangely enough Yet in fact all Mr. Godwin's inner & more private feelings were opposed to ^the supposed gist of^ his doctrines; no one respected the virtue of women more or demanded that when he & this during life occasioned him some mortification the former were all strongly enlisted on the side of female virtue - & he would readily have answered if questioned that it was only misapprehension of the former that could lead any one to suppose that it was they were opposed to it.

Another cause for the secrecy at first maintained was the stern law of poverty & necessity. It has been seen how narrowly my father circumscribed both his receipts & disbursements - the maintenance of a family had never been contemplated & could not at once be provided for. My mother, accustomed to a life of struggle & poverty, was so beloved by her friends that several, & Mr. Johnson^{lxii} in particular, had stood between her & any of the [?arrogances] & mortifications of debt.^{lxiii} But this must

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cease when she married. Mr Go[dwin] They both however looked on this sort of struggle, in which they had been born, & had always lived, as a very secondary matter, and after a short period of deliberation they declared their marriage. The following letters detail the anxieties & struggles of this period:

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As time proceeds a considerable change is appears to have been operated in Mr. Godwin's mind; more in manner than in substance certainly - but there was a softening^{lxv} attendant on his having quitted his independant position & making one of the family of mankind. His cares encreased on him at the same time, & there is more of pecuniary struggle hereafter to be traced in his correspondance. Other changes are hereafter to be noted.

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The letters that follow ensued upon^{lxvii} Godwin marriage which had taken place previously but was not declared till the beginning of April.

In the beginning of the month of April Godwin ^declared his^ marriage which had taken place some time previously The celebrity of the both parties rendered this event of importance in their own circle. It is too usual that when a man marries, he commences new habits under such a totally new influence that he is lost to all his former friends. Mr. Godwin spent a portion of every day in society, & was much beloved; his more intimate friends feared that they should suffer from the change. Two ladies, he said, shed tears when he announced his marriage. Mrs. Inch

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[v]

bald & Mrs. Reveley. The former lady was free, perhaps disappointed, at any rate she seceded from his circle on this occasion making worldly motives her excuse.^{lxviii} Mrs. Reveley feared to lose a kind & constant friend, but becoming intimate with Mary Wollstonecraft, becam soon learnt to appreciate her virtues & to love her. She found ^soon found, she told me in after days^λξιξ that instead of losing one, she had secured two friends - unequalled perhaps in the world for genius, single-heartedness, & devotion disinterestedness nobleness of nature disposition. A cordial intercourse subsisted between the parties. The following letters were written at this period

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c.532/8^{lxx}

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The following letter is the only one I find from a lady who held the very highest place in my father's friendship & esteem. His acquaintance with her had begun the previous year ^only^{lxxi}, but it ^had^ speedily ripened into ^an^ intimacy, cherished on both sides, with a deep sense of each others merits.^{lxxii}

Mrs Maria Reveley was the daughter of an English merchant at Constantinople.^{lxxiii} Her early girlish years were spent in that picturesque capital of the East - her education had been wild & singular & had early developed that the peculiar & deep seated sensibility which through life formed her characteristic. At When she was fifteen her father left Constantinople & repaired to Rome. (turn over)

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Her father, Mr James, had left her in infancy with her mother in England - they he might be said to have deserted them for & they lived in great penury - She remembered she related ^once^ asking her Mother for a farthing to buy some cake which was given her with such lamentation ^on the score of poverty^ that with a passion of tears she returned it. - Mrs James at length took a desperate resolution & sailed to Constantinople with her child then eight years old. Mr James saw his lovely daughter had no inclination to renew his conjugal duties. - He had in the house Mrs Newman (the wife of one of his skippers) as housekeeper - whether & it was generally believed that she filled a wife's place. He was delighted however with his ^little^ daughter, & had her stolen from her Mother & secreted in the house of a Turk till he had persuaded Mrs James by the promise of an annuity to go back to England alone. The little Maria was then taken home & brought up with sedulous care. Many accomplishments were taught her & with on one of the first sidesaddles that appeared in the East she accompanied her father in his rides in the environs of Constantinople. At a very early age While still a mere child she looked womanly & formed & she entered into the society of ^European^ merchants & diplomatists. Not having any proper chaperon she was left to run wild as she might and at a very early age she had gone through the substance romance of life.

....

^{lxxiv} She had shown great talent for painting, & it was his desire that she should cultivate this art under the guidance tuition of Angelica Kauffman - Her studies were however interrupted by her early marriage - her beauty attracted the admiration of a young English architect, travelling for improvement. They married & came to England.

Mr Reveley's means were small, his father being still alive - & his marriage imprudent - for

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for Mr James, who appears to have acted ill in all the relations of life refused to consent to the match, apparently as an excuse of giving his daughter no fortune & the marriage took place against his consent^{lxxv} From

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the luxuries, the genial climate & facile intercourse gay refined society of the East then to be found among the foreign merchants of Constantinople, Mrs Reveley found herself transported to a situation almost resembling penury & demanding an economy & self denial in expenditure of the most painful kind. She found herself among the middling class of English people - then very different from what they are now, ignorant narrow minded & bigotted - she felt fallen on evil days; the fairy lights had disappeared from life - all was labor hardship privation, sedulous occupation bestowed on the necessities of life - society, without varied only by society which did not profess a ray of intellect & little refinement, to gild her cheer her laborious days.

She was very young & very beautiful & possessed a peculiar charm of character in her deep sensibility, & an ingeniousness ingenious modesty that knew no guile, & this added to an ardour in the pursuit of knowledge, a liberal but unquenchable curiosity, which Dr Johnson has praised so warmly in an intimate (friend) of his own. Parties ran high in those days. Her husband joined the liberal side, & entered with ardour enthusiasm into the disquisitions hopes & expectations of political freedom which then filled every heart to bursting. The consequence of his adherence to these principles was to lead to his acquaintance with many of its popular advocates. Godwin & Holcroft were among

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these. There was a gentleness & yet an ardour a fervour in the mind of both Mrs Reveley & Godwin that led to sympathy. He was ready to gratify her desire for knowledge, & she gladly eagerly drank of the phy philosophy & which he offered. It was pure but warm friendship, which might have grown into another feeling had they been differently situated - but Godwin's calm & philosophic mind was not to be roused from its tranquillity by As it was, Godwin saw only in her a favourite pupil, a charming friend, a woman whose conversation & society were fascinating & delightful, but his calm & philosophic heart was undisturbed by any of those feelings which in natures less happily moulded tempered, would too readily have crept in to disturb & injure

I find the first mention a record of his meeting Mary Wollstonecraft (for the first time after several years) in the January of this year.^{lxxxvi} “Jan^y 8th. Friday. Tea Miss Hayes's with Holcroft & Wollstonecraft”. They As I have said they had met once before, and Godwin relates the history of their interview in his Memoirs of his incomparable wife^{lxxxvii}

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c.532/8^{lxxxviii}

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Mrs. Reveley

An event happened in June during this year which gave a new turn to Mr Godwin's feelings; this was the death of Mr. Reveley, which occurred suddenly on from the breaking of a blood vessel on the brain on the 8th June 1799.

Mrs. His widow has often described to me her horror at this event.^{lxxix} He did not die on the instant, ^of breaking the vessel^ he became gradually stupified & his senses one by one, first his taste, then his sight, failed him. Unaware of his danger in the first instance, his as the thought that he was really dying flashed across his wife's mind her terror became ungovernable. Mrs. Fenwick the ever kind

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[v]

cordial-hearted, friend had called ea on her in the morning, & finding Mr. Reveley indisposed remained with her to assist in waiting on him. At this moment of horror she looked out of window & saw Marshall passing up the street on horseback - she called to him, & he in an instant he was with them the frightened women, ready to devote his whole time to their assistance; a physician was called in but it was a case from the moment the vessel broke past all medical aid. He died in a few hours.

From the chamber of death his widow rushed to the most a remote & desolate room at the top of the house in a state bordering on frenzy - for a week she remained in the same place

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[v]

in the same state. She & her husband had at times disagreed & beleived themselves unsuited to each other. But he was the husband of her early youth, the father of her adored son, the friend & companion of nearly fifteen years - Endowed with the keenest sensibility her heart received a shock from which she could with difficulty recover.

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Q[n] Mr. Godwin heard of Mr. Reveley's death at the house where he dined on the same day - he became thoughtful & entirely silent - already he revolved the future in his mind. Maria Reveley had been a favourite pupil, a dear friend a woman whose beauty & manners he ardently admired. After his wife's death his visits & attentions had excited Mr. Reveley's jealousy & they became to a great degree discontinued. His sense of M uprightness & cando candour of character prevented disdained made him disdain the suspicion, but he was unwilling to be ^the^ cause of domestic feud & withdrew. It was his plan however to yield little to form & etiquette and when Mr. Reveley had been dead a month he did not scruple to ask to see his widowed friend & to make her understand the feelings ^& prospects^

with which his visits would be paid. She at first refused to see him & ^several^ letters passed between them^{lxxx}; I find none of the lady's but several of my father's as preserved by the copying machine

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c.532/8^{lxxxix}

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Skinner St.

June 1818

My dear Mary,

I received last Friday a delightful letter from you; I was extremely gratified by your account of Mrs. Gisborne. I have not seen her, I believe, these twenty years; I think, not since she was Mrs. Gisborne. And yet by your description she is still a delightful woman. How inexpressibly pleasing it is to call back the recollection of years long past, & especially when the recollection belongs to a person in whom one deeply interested one's self, as I did in Mrs. Revely.

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I can hardly hope for so great a pleasure as it would be to me to see her again.

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In my last letter I gave you some account of my health; &, as I have been for the whole of this year in the hands of medical men ^a medical man^, I have not yet resumed the answer to Malthus,^{lxxxii} which was so fatally interrupted by the events of February last.

I unfortunately had my hair cut the day before your letter arrived. It is therefore hardly possible for me to comply with your kind request on that subject.

William^{lxxxiii} is going on extremely well & rapidly improving. I hope he will never have any wild oats to sow.

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Believe me
Your ever affectionate father
William Godwin

.....

The death of Mary Wollstonecraft

c.606/4

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[number illeg.]

I commence this year^{lxxxv} with a few letters dated at the conclusion of the last, but which would have interfered with the subject that set its dark seal on that year. The letters from Thomas Wedgewood besides being almost necessary to the understanding those of his correspondant, are so full of noble & generous feeling of intelligence & interesting display of character that they cannot be considered superfluous.

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c.532/8

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This was the first real sorrow that Godwin ever experienced.^{lxxxvii} To all who love to mark the operations of the soul in one gifted beyond his fellows with understanding & more single hearted & true than any man who ever lived the following series of letters on ^called forth by^ this af misfortune must be deeply interesting. The first is from William Nicholson, a distinguished natural philosopher whom as I have already mentioned as a favourite friend of Godwin & a man of singular benevolence of heart.

.....

Duke reel 5

^{lxxxviii}
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Dear Sir

I very truly sympathise with the Emotions you cannot but feel on this trying occasion. Mrs Nicholson whose thoughts coincide perfectly with mine, had formed expectations of pleasure & improvement from friendly intercourse & esteem, which this unhappy event has destroyed. This is not the time to say any thing

about the prejudices we are apt to form, respecting minds in the process of Improvement; - if any period might ask it hereafter, three words would do it. I am sure you will see the Duty to yourself & yours at this moment & have strength to perform it. [?This] consists merely in overcoming habits cherished [illeg.] endearment, instead of indulging the natural & gratifying endeavor to review past Scenes by meditation. You must not do this: - you must even continue expedients to counteract it. - I am more inclined to weep with you than philosophize: But you will see that it is the part of a friend to endeavor to communicate effort, instead of condolence What can we do to alleviate your Regrets? Will you trust us with the task of making Fanny happy with our children till your thoughts become more calm and regulated, as they soon will ? Or is there any thing

”””

we may not think of? I depend & so does Mrs Nicholson, with the same interest & regard, that you will be assured we should be happy to assist in the performance of any of your wishes.

We will send a maid servant with our little Mary in the afternoon to accompany Fanny

from your true friend

W^m Nicholson

....

Duke reel 5/b.227/8(a)^{lxxxix}

”””

Nicholson

Your letter gave me all the pleasure I am at this moment capable of receiving. Professions of attachment & kindness from a man I have known so long, & value so highly, are consolatory & soothing beyond imagination. For the rest, Fanny (I thank you) is well disposed of, & every thing is managed for me by considerate friends. I will endeavour to take your advice; I have need of it.

yours, with the truest regard,

W Godwin

Thank Mrs Nicholson on my part.

Sunday Sept. 10.

....

”””

Barry

I thank you extremely for your anxiety about my wife. You know perhaps that she had the best assistance from persons of the highest talents; & you must be aware that it is impossible to interdict the plan of a practitioner in whom one has less confidence with out counteracting the plans of those in whom one has more. You do not yet know, I suppose, that she died at eight this morning.

The goodness of your heart might perhaps lead you to call on me. I earnestly desire to see nobody for the present, but those I have been daily in the habit of seeing.

W Godwin

Sunday Sept. 10.

....

”””

[H]olcroft

My dear friend

The passage in your last kind letter, that related to the subject of self-reproach, was rather out of season. It has dwelt upon my mind ever since. My wife is now dead. She died this morning eight o'clock. She grew worse before your letter [illeg.]. Nobody has a greater call to reproach himself, except for want of kindness & attention, in which I hope I have not been very deficient, than I have, but reproach will answer no good purpose, so I will not harbour it.

I firmly believe there does not exist her equal in the world. I know from experience we were formed to make each other happy. I have not the least expectation that I can [?ever] know happiness again.

When you come to town, [?look at] me, & talk to me, but do not (if you can help it) exhort or console me.

W Godwin

Sunday Sept. 10. 1797.

....

”””

Inchbald

My wife died at eight this morning. I always thought you used her ill,^{xc} but I forgive you. You told me you did not know her. You lose a thousand [illeg.] good & great qualities. She had a very deep-seated admiration for you.

yours, with real honour & esteem

Sunday, Sep. 10.

W Godwin

....

^{xc}
”””

I think the last respect due to the best of human beings ought not to be deserted by their friends. There is not perhaps an individual in my list, whose opinions ought are not as adverse to religious ceremonies as your own, & who might not with equal propriety shrink from & desert the remains of the first of women. I honour your character; I respect your scruples but I should have thought more highly of you, if, at such a moment, it had been impossible for so cold a reflection to cross your mind. Think of the subject again. Consult Holcroft. Act finally upon the genuine decision of your own judgment.

yours, in sincere friendship,

Sep. 12. 1797

W Godwin

....

xcii
”””

Dear Madam

I cannot write. I have half destroyed myself by writing. It does me more mischief than any thing else. I must preserve myself, if for no other reason, for the two children.^{xciii}

I had desired a friend to write to you. I suppose he is has forgotten it. He is not in the way for me to enquire.

She expressed a wish to have had you for a nurse.^{xciv} I wrote a letter to you for that purpose last Wednesday.^{xcv} But the medical attendant told me it was useless to send it. She died Sunday morning eight o'clock. She lasted longer than any one expected. She had Dr Chas. Fordyce, Dr Clarke & Mr Carlisle, the last of whom, who is one of the best & greatest of men, sat with her the las four last nights & days of her life. Mrs Fenwick, author of Secrecy, a novel,^{xcvi} was her principal nurse, &, Mr Carlisle said, the best nurse he ever saw. Four of my male friends staid night & day in the house,

”””

to be sent at a moment's wanting any where that should be necessary. I spent the principal part of my time in the chamber.

I will desire Mrs Fenwick to write to you. If you have any enquiries to make, address them to me at my house.

Believe me to be,
with a deep sense of the affection my wife entertained for you,
Your sincere friend

Sept. 14. 1797

W Godwin

I find that the address I gave to my friend Mr Basil Montagu to write to you , was, Mrs Cotton, near Henley upon Thames. He has dispatched a letter with that address.

....

xcvii
”””

Dear Sir

I have just received from you a very admirable letter. I wish it spoke in more flattering terms of your tranquillity & happiness.

Before you receive this, you will doubtless have heard of the death of the person you so truly style my *most accomplished wife*; but whose accomplishments certainly no one knew as perfectly as I did. I knew her to be inexpressibly the first of women. Never was a happiness so pure, so refined & so perfect, as we found in each other. I wrote several letters on the day succeeding this dreadful, incurable calamity, till I felt myself called upon by every principle of justice & reason to lay down the pen, & write no more. The effects that employment produced in me alarmed me. Since that time I have carefully abstained from writing on the subject. I could not however refrain from putting down these few lines to you; but I did not trust myself to discuss or dwell upon my feelings.

The child is in the most perfect health.

Believe me, with every feeling of friendship

[blank]

.....

b.227/2(b)^{xcviii}

”””

Dear Sir

I shall be much obliged to you to favour me with your opinion as to where my wifes remains are to be finally deposited. You have known of her connections long & may by possibility be acquainted with circumstances of which I am ignorant that ought to influence me in that

[written upside down]

Mr Godwin desires me to add that he cannot dismiss that this letter without expressing the indelible sentiment he has of the anxious attendance you paid to the dear sufferer during her illness, & still more of the esteem & friendship with which you ^{^had^} always honoured her.

.....

c.532/8^{xcix}

”””

from page 93)^c

“It was in the month of November in the same year 1791, that the writer of this narrative was first in company with the person to whom it relates. He dined with her at a friend’s^{ci} together with Mr Thomas Payne^{cii} Paine and one or two other persons. The invitation was of his own seeking, his object being to see the author of the Rights of Man, with whom he had never before conversed.

“The interview was not fortunate, Mary and myself parted, mutually displeased with each other. I had not read her Rights of Woman.^{ciii} I had barely looked into her answer to Burke^{civ} and been displeased, as literary men are apt to be, with a few offences against grammar and other minute points of composition. I had therefore little curiosity to see Mrs. Wollstonecraft,^{cv} and a very great curiosity to see Thomas Paine. Paine in his general

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his general habits is no great talker; and though he threw in occasionally some shrewd and striking remarks; the conversation lay principally between me and Mary. I of consequence heard her, very frequently when I wished to hear Paine.

“We touched on a variety of topics, and particularly on the characters & habits of certain eminent men. Mary, as has already been observed, had acquired, in a very blameable degree, the practice of seeing everything on the gloomy side, and bestowing censure with a plentiful hand where circumstances were in any respect doubtful. I, on the contrary, had a strong propensity to favourable construction, and particularly where I found unequivocal marks of genius, strongly to incline to the supposition of every generous and manly virtue. We ventilated in this way the characters of Voltaire and others who have obtained from some individuals

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ardent admiration, while the greater number treated them with extreme moral severity. Mary was at last provoked to tell me, that praise, lavished in the way that I lavished it, could do no credit either to the commended or to the commender. We discussed some questions on the subject of religion, in which her opinions approached much nearer to the received ones than mine. As the conversation proceeded, I became dissatisfied with the tone of my own share in it. We touched upon all topics, without treating forcibly and connectedly upon any. Meanwhile I did her the justice, in giving an account of the conversation to a party in which I supped, though I was not sparing of any blame, to yield her the praise of a person of active and independent thinking. On her side, she did me no part of what perhaps I considered as justice.

“We met two or three times in the course of the following year, but made a very small degree of progress towards a cordial acquaintance.”

”””

149 page)

“We renewed our acquaintance in January 1796, but with no particular effect, except so far as sympathy in her anguish, added in my mind to the respect I had always entertained for her talents. It was in the close of that month that I read her Letters from Norway; & the impression that book produced on me has been already related.

It was on the fourteenth of April that that I first saw her after her excursion into Berkshire. On that day she called upon me in Somers Town, she having, since her return taken a lodging in Cumming Street, Pentonville, at no great distance from the place of my habitation. From that time our intimacy increased by regular, but almost imperceptible degrees.

“The partiality we conceived for each other was in that mode, which I have always regarded as the purest & most refined style of love. It grew with equal advances in the mind of each. It would have been impossible for the most minute observer to have said who was before and who was after.

One sex

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One sex did not take the priority which long established custom has awarded it, nor the other overstep that delicacy which is so severely imposed. I am not conscious that either party can assume to have been the agent or the patient, the toil-spreader or the prey, in the affair. When, in the course of things, the disclosure came, there was nothing, in a manner, for either party to disclose to the other.

“In July 1796 I made an excursion into the County of Norfolk, which occupied nearly the whole of that month. During this period Mary removed from Cumming Street, Pentonville, to Judd Place West, which may be considered as the extremity of Somers Town. In the former situation, she had occupied a furnished lodging. She had meditated a tour to Italy or Switzerland and knew not how soon she should set out with that view. Now however she felt reconciled to a longer abode in England probably without exactly knowing why this change had taken place in her mind.

She

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She had a quantity of furniture locked up at a broker’s ever since her residence in Store Street, and she now found it advisable to bring it into use. This circumstance occasioned her removal.

“The temporary separation attendant on my little journey, had its effect on the mind of both parties. It gave a space for the maturing of inclinations. I believe that, during this

interval, each furnished to the other the principal topic of solitary and daily contemplation. Absence bestows a refined and aërial delicacy upon affection, which it with difficulty acquires in any other way. It seems to resemble the communication of spirits, without the medium, or the impediment of this earthly frame. when we met again, we met with new pleasure, and I may add, with a more decisive preference for each other. It was however three weeks longer before the sentiment which trembled upon the tongue burst from the lips of either. There was, as I have already said, no period of throes and resolute explanation attendant on the tale. It was friendship melting into love. Previously to our mutual declaration each felt half assured, yet each felt

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a certain trembling anxiety to have assurance complete:

“Mary rested her head upon the shoulder of her lover, hoping to find a heart with which she might safely treasure her world of affection: fearing to commit a mistake, yet, in spite of her melancholy experience, fraught with that generous confidence, which, in a great soul, is never extinguished. I had never loved till now; or, at least, had never nourished a passion to the same growth, or with an object so consummately worthy.”

[blank]^{cvi}

....

”””

page 165)

8)

[MWS hand]

Godwin himself describes their married life & mutual happiness. The schemes of usefulness which they had in view, & the hopes they formed for of a life of love

[MJG hand resumes]

“I think I may venture to say, that no two persons ever found in each other’s society, a satisfaction more pure and refined. What it was in itself, can now only be known, in its full extent, to the survivor.

But I believe the serenity of her countenance, the increasing sweetness of her manners, and that consciousness of enjoyment that seemed ambitious that every one she saw

should be happy as well as herself, were matters of general observation to all her acquaintance. She had always possessed in an unparalleled degree that art of communicating happiness, and she was now in the constant and unlimited exercise of it. She seemed to have attained that situation, which her disposition and character imperiously demanded, but
which

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which she had never before attained; and her understanding and her heart felt the benefit of it.

While we lived as near neighbours only, and before our last removal, her mind had attained considerable tranquillity, and was visited but seldom with those emotions of anguish, which had been but too familiar with to her. But the improvement in this respect, which accrued upon our removal and establishment, was extremely obvious. She was a worshipper of domestic life. She loved to observe the growth of affection between me and her daughter then three years of age, as well as my anxiety respecting the child not yet born. Pregnancy itself, unequal as the decree of Nature seems to be in this respect, is the source of a thousand endearments. No one knew better than Mary how to extract sentiments of exquisite delight, from trifles, which a suspicious and formal wisdom would scarcely deign to remark. A little ride into the country with myself and the child

has

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has sometimes produced a sort of opening of the heart, a general expression of confidence and affectionate soul, a sort of infantine, yet dignified endearment which those who have felt may understand, but which I should in vain attempt to pourtray.

In addition to our domestic pleasures, I was fortunate enough to introduce her to some of my acquaintance of both sexes, to whom she attached herself with all the ardour and approbation of friendship.

Ours was not an idle happiness, a paradise of selfish and transitory pleasures. It is perhaps scarcely necessary to mention, that influenced by the ideas I had long entertained upon the subject of cohabitation I engaged an apartment, about twenty doors from our house in the Polygon, Somers Town, which I designed for the purpose of my study and literary occupations. Trifles however will be interesting to some readers when they relate to the last period of the life of such

a person

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a person as Mary. I will therefore add, that we were both of opinion, that it was possible for two persons to be too uniformly in each others society. Influenced by that opinion, it was my practice to repair to the apartment I have mentioned as soon as I rose, and frequently not to make an appearance in the Polygon, till the hour of dinner. We agreed in condemning the notions prevalent in many situations in life, that a man and his wife cannot visit in mixed society, but in company with each other; and we rather sought occasions of deviating from, rather than complying with, this rule. By these means, though, for the most part, we spent the latter half of each day in each other's society, yet we were in no danger of satiety. We seemed to combine, in a considerable degree, the novelty and lively sensation of a visit, with the more delicious and heartfelt pleasures of domestic life.

Whatever may be thought, in other respects of the plan we laid down to ourselves,

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we probably derived a real advantage from it as to the constancy and uninterruptedness of our literary pursuits. Mary had a variety of projects of this sort, for the exercise of her talents, and the benefit of society; and if she had lived, I believe the world would have had very little reason to complain of any remission of her industry. One of her projects, which has been already mentioned, was of a series of Letters on the Management of Infants. Though she had been some time digesting her ideas on this subject with a view to the press, I have found comparatively nothing that she had committed to paper respecting it. Another project, of longer standing, was of a series of books for the instruction of children. A fragment she left in execution of this project, is inserted in her Posthumous Works.

But the principal work, in which she was engaged for more than twelve-months before her decease, was a novel, entitled, the Wrongs of Woman. I shall not

stop

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stop here to explain the nature of the work, as so much of it as was already written, is now given to the public.^{cvi} I shall only observe that, impressed, as she could not fail to be, with the consciousness of her talents, she was desirous, in this instance, that they should effect

what they were capable of effecting. She was sensible how arduous a task it is to produce a truly excellent novel; and she roused her faculties to grapple with it. All her other works were produced with a rapidity, that did not give her powers time fully to expand. But this was written slowly and with mature consideration. She began it in several forms, which she successively rejected, after they were considerably advanced. She wrote many parts of the work again and again,^{cviii} and, when she had finished what she intended for the first part, she felt herself more urgently stimulated to revise and improve what she had written, than to proceed with

constancy^{cix}

of application, in the parts that were to follow.

”””

page 173^{cx}

18) 15)^{cx}

[Three lines in MWS hand]

The history of the catastrophe that brought to an untimely end the life of one so beloved & admirable I give in her husband’s own words.

[MJG hand resumes]

“I am now led, by the course of my narrative, to the last fatal scene of her life. She was taken in labour on Wednesday, the thirtieth of August. She had been somewhat indisposed on the preceding Friday, the consequence, I believe, of a sudden alarm. But from that time she was in perfect health. She was so far from being under any apprehension as to the difficulties of child-birth, as frequently to ridicule the fashion of ladies in England, who keep their chambers for a full month after delivery.^{cxii} For herself she proposed coming down to dinner on the day immediately

following^{cxiii}

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19)

“She had already some experience on the subject in the case of Fanny; and I cheerfully submitted in every point to her judgment and her wisdom. She hired no nurse. Influenced by ideas of decorum, which certainly ought to have no place, at least in cases of danger, she determined to have a woman to attend her in the capacity of midwife. She was sensible that the proper business of a midwife, in the instance of a natural labour, is to sit by and wait for the operations of nature, which seldom, in these affairs, demand the interposition of art.”

At five o’clock in the morning of the day of delivery she felt what she conceived to be some notices of the approaching labour. Mrs Blenkinsop, matron and midwife to the

Westminster Lying in hospital, who had seen Mary several times previous to her delivery, was soon after sent for, and arrived about nine. During the whole day Mary was perfectly cheerful. Her pains came on slowly; and in the morning, she made several notes, three addressed

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addressed to me, who had gone, as usual to my apartments for the purpose of study. About two o'clock in the afternoon, she went up to her chamber, - never more to descend.

The child was born at twenty minutes after eleven at night. Mary had requested that I would not come into the chamber till all was over, and signified her intention of then performing the interesting office of presenting the new-born child to its father. I was sitting in a parlour; and it was not till after two o'clock on Thursday morning, that I received the alarming^{cxiv} intelligence, that the placenta was not yet removed, and that the midwife dared not proceed any further, and gave her opinion for calling in a male practitioner. I accordingly went for Dr Poignand, physician and man midwife to the same hospital, who arrived between three and four hours after the birth of the child. He immediately proceeded to the extraction of the placenta which he brought away in pieces, till he was satisfied that the whole was removed. In that point however it afterwards appeared that he was mistaken.

The period from the birth of the child till about eight o'clock the next morning, was a period full of peril and alarm. The loss of blood was considerable

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considerable, and produced an almost uninterrupted series of fainting fits. I went to the chamber soon after four in the morning, and found her in this state. She told me some time on Thursday, “that she should have died the preceding night but that she was determined not to leave me”. She added, with one of those smiles which so eminently illuminated her countenance “that I should not be like Porson” alluding to the circumstance of that great man having lost his wife, after being only a few months married. Speaking of what she had already passed through, she declared, “that she had never known what bodily pain was before.”

On Thursday morning Dr Poignand repeated his visit. Mary had just before expressed some inclination to see Dr George Fordyce, a man probably of more science than any other medical man professor in England, and between whom and herself there had long subsisted a mutual friendship. I mentioned this to Dr Poignand, but he rather discountenanced the idea, observing that he

saw

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saw no necessity for it, and that he supposed Dr Fordyce was not particularly conversant with obstetrical cases, but that I would do as I pleased. After Dr Poignand was gone, I determined to send for Dr Fordyce. He accordingly saw the patient at about three o'clock on Thursday afternoon. He however perceived no particular cause of alarm and, on that day or the next day, quoted, as I am told, Mary's case, in a mixed company, as a corroboration of a favourite idea of his, of the propriety of employing females in the capacity of midwives. Mary "had had a woman and was doing extremely well."

What had passed however in the night between Wednesday and Thursday, had so far alarmed me, that I did not quit the house, and scarcely the chamber, during the following day. But my alarm wore off, as time advanced. Appearances were more favourable, than the exhausted state of the patient would almost have permitted me to expect. Friday morning therefore I devoted to a business of some urgency, which called me to different parts of the town, and which, before dinner, I happily completed. On my return, and during the evening,

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evening, I received the most pleasurable sensations from the promising state of the patient. I was now perfectly satisfied that everything was safe, and that if she did not take cold, or suffer from any external accident, her recovery was certain.

Saturday was a day less auspicious than Friday, but not absolutely alarming. Sunday, the third of September, I now regard as the day, that finally decided on the fate of the object dearest to my heart that the universe contained. Encouraged by what I considered as the progress of her recovery, I accompanied a friend in the morning in several calls, one of them as far as Kensington, and did not return till dinner time. On my return I found a degree of anxiety in every face and was told she had had a sort of shivering fit, and had expressed some anxiety at the length of my absence. My sister and a friend of hers, had been engaged to dine below stairs, but a message was sent to put them off, and Mary ordered that the cloth should not be laid, as usual, in the room immediately under her on the first floor, but in the ground floor parlour. I felt a pang at having been so long and so unseasonably absent, and determined

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determined that I should not repeat the fault.

In the evening she had a second shivering fit, the symptoms of which were in the highest degree alarming. Every muscle of the body trembled, the teeth chattered, and the bed shook under her. This continued probably for five minutes. She told me, after it was over,

that it had been a struggle between life and death, and that she had been more than once in the course of it, on the point of expiring. I now apprehended, these to have been the symptoms of a decided mortification, occasioned by the part of^{cxv} the placenta that remained in the womb. At the time however I was far from considering it in that light. When I went for Dr Poignand between two and three o'clock on the morning of Thursday, despair was in my heart. The fact of the adhesion of the placenta was stated to me; and, ignorant as I was of obstetrical science, I felt as if the death of Mary was in a manner decided. But hope had revisited my bosom; and her cheerings were so delightful, that I hugged her obstinately to my heart. I was only mortified at what appeared to be a new delay in the recovery I so earnestly longed for, I immediately sent

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sent for Dr Fordyce, who had been with her in the morning, as well as on the preceding days. Dr Poignand had also called this morning, but declined paying any further visits, as we had thought proper to call in Dr Fordyce.

The progress of the disease was now uninterrupted. On Tuesday I found it necessary again to call in Dr Fordyce in the afternoon, who brought with him Dr Clarke of New Burlington Street, under the idea that some operation might be necessary. I have already said, that I pertinaciously persisted in viewing the fair side of things; and therefore the interval between Sunday and Tuesday evening, did not [pass] without some mixture of cheerfulness. On Monday, Dr Fordyce forbade the child's having the breast, and we therefore procured puppies to draw off the milk. This occasioned some pleasantries of Mary with me and the other attendants. Nothing could exceed the equanimity, the patience and affectionateness of the poor sufferer. I intreated her to recover; I dwelt with trembling fondness on every favourable circumstance and, as far as it was possible in so dreadful a

situation

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26)

situation, she, by her smiles and kind speeches, rewarded my affection.

Wednesday was to me the day of greatest torture in the melancholy series. It was now decided that the only chance of supporting her through what she had to suffer, was by supplying her rather freely with wine. This task was devolved upon me. I began about four o'clock in the afternoon. But for me, totally ignorant of the nature of diseases and of the human frame thus to play with a life that now seemed all that was dear to me in the universe, was too dreadful a task. I knew neither what was too much, nor what was too little. Having begun, I felt compelled under every disadvantage to go on. This lasted for three hours. Towards the end of that time, I happened foolishly to ask the servant who came out of the room, "What she thought of her mistress? She replied, "That, in her judgment, she was going

as fast as possible". There are moments, when any creature that lives, has power to drive one into madness. I seemed to know the absurdity of this reply, but that

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27)

was of no consequence. It added to the measure of my distraction. A little after seven I intreated a friend to go for Mr Carlisle and bring him instantly wherever he was to be found. He had voluntarily called on the patient on the preceding Saturday, and two or three times since[.] He had seen her that morning, and had been earnest in recommending the wine-diet. That day he dined four miles out of town, on the side of the metropolis which was furthest from us. Notwithstanding this, my friend returned with him after three-quarters of an hour's absence. No one who knows my friend, will wonder either at his eagerness or success, when I name Mr Basil Montague^{cxvi} Montagu. The sight of Mr Carlyle^{cxvii} Carlisle thus unexpectedly, gave me a stronger alleviating sensation, than I thought it possible to experience.

Mr Carlisle left us no more from Wednesday evening, to the hour of her death. It was impossible to exceed his kindness and affectionate attention. It excited in every spectator a sentiment like adoration. His conduct was uniformly tender and anxious

ever^{cxviii}

.....

ends 5: women

document *Mandeville

c.607/2^{cxix}

»»»

[r]

[...] *afternoon*

Dear Sir

I have this moment received your [illeg.] & thank you. I cannot return [...] other copy, I am told, till Monday. . I shall [...] it without revising over of my notes, for though they may be false conceptions, yet as they were the effect of ^the^ first reading I think as such, they are more valuable than any which study may produce. . [?Some] observations beyond them, I will make ^here^, because I had not room or patience to make them in the margin. These, in my conceptions, stopt me in the career of my feelings towards the conclusion - when the lady who accompanied Henrietta shriekd from the carriage, I was in agony to know where Clifford was - he was not in the carriage - I turned back a leaf, & found, the Montagus were mentioned riding away at the separation but no Clifford - I found *afterwards* that he was with them but surely I ought to have known it before - known the exact spot on which he was when this eventful surrounding of the carriage took place.

»»»

[v]

[...] just befo[re] [...] [...eville] speaks of "steps" [...] look or in some ^way^ so expressions, [...] conceived ^& wondered at it^ that her [...] on foot - and presently I had reason to suppose, by some such [?wood], that all [...] troopers were dismounted - I found [?after] that I had been mistaken; but all this should be made clear - for in reading a novel I always *see* as well as *hear* the story, & am enraged when my eyes fail me.

I have read all the paragraphs in the ^Morning^ Chronicle since I read the work - they are quite right as to the vigor & grandeur of the Language which my notes have confest. Some times ^you have^ too much of reasonings - curtail when you *can* - the brain forced will enervate - once or twice I called the book in spite, Lectures on the Brain - never so little welcome as to those hours women dedicate to novel reading.

I never liked the conclusion of a novel before - you have been most happy in making so good an End. You have given your readers all the Pleasure of Murder without any of the Pain - But you have described Madness so truly some will say you have been Mad.

.....

***document Godwin marriage**

Duke reel 5^{cxx}

”””

Sir

As your letter consists of little more than a dry question respecting my private conduct it may seem a little more than reasonable that I should [illeg.] to answer this & similar questions, to every [illeg.] man who happens to be a reader of my publications. To another view however, the question may be considered as a testimony of some degree of esteem on the part of the proposer, & as such entitled to an answer.

The first thing that I have to say, is that you have [^]somewhat[^] mistaken my character, which I conceive to be that of an enquirer, & not a dogmatical deliverer of principles. I certainly desire that my conduct should be found consistent with my general sentiments; but I do not consider myself bound by my sentiments to-day, not to see the a subject in a very different light to-morrow; & I should be very sorry to be that oracle to another, which I am very far from being to myself.

But let me examine the amount of the difference.

Your reference, I perceive, is to the first edition of Political Justice, published in 1793. When that edition appeared, my mind was decided against the European system of marriage, but it was in a state of some doubt as to the question, whether the intercourse of the sexes, in a reasonable state of society, would be wholly promiscuous, or whether each man should select for himself a partner, to whom he should adhere, as long as that adherence should continue to be “the choice of both parties.” In the second edition [illeg.] published in 1795, I gave my reasons for determining in favour

”””

of the latter part of this alternative.

There then was a new pledge of principles, varying in some degree from the former, if the publication of speculations upon any question of conduct is to be considered as a pledge. But in reality, I claim for myself, after [illeg.] certain hints before the public, as great a right as an other man, to alter my mind upon the subject to which this relates.

I find however little in my recent conduct more than a practical conformity to speculations explicitly developed in my second edition.

Yes, you will say, I have conformed to the European institution [^]of marriage[^] an institution which I have long thought of with abhorrence, & probably shall always continue to abhor.

I find no inconsistency in this. Every day of my life, I comply with institutions & customs which I should wish to see abolished. Morality, so far as I understand it, is nothing

but a balance between opposite evils. I have to [?steer] between the evils of compliance & non-compliance.

I find the prejudices of the world in arms against the woman who practically opposes herself to the European institution of marriage. I found that the comfort & peace of a woman, for whose comfort & peace I interest myself, would be much injured, if I could have prevailed on her to defy those prejudices. I found no evils, in conforming to the institution I condemn, that would [?be commensurate with] this.

That she might not be ^risk being^ the victim of prejudice, I was willing to pass through a certain ceremony. Clear in my own conceptions of the subject I found little difference in the effect of the ceremony. I shall not, I believe, live with her a day longer, or [illeg.] different

””

way than I should have done, if we had entered into the intercourse without the ceremony.

I am still as ardent an advocate as ever for the abolition of the institution. I should still, for the most part, dissuade a young man of my for whom I had a regard, from complying with it. I should fear that he would not be able to comply, with so much impunity, as I hope I shall have done; & I continue ^to think^ that marriages, in a great number of instances, are among the most fertile causes of misery to mankind.

These are my genuine ideas upon the subject. I hope they will prove as satisfactory to your mind, as they are to mine.

Somers Town,
May 9. 1797.

W Godwin

.....

***document Maria Reveley**

c.607/5^{cxxi}

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[r]

I do not remember precisely how long Mr Bentham^{cxxii} remained at Constantinople. I think certainly not more than two months. He was a very constant visitor at my father's house, but he resided, I think, with a Mr Humphries an english resident merchant. There were no Inns, or lodging houses in the city at that time. He was particularly fond of music & used to take great delight in accompanying me on the Violin - I well remember that he used to say, that I was the only female he had ever met with who could keep time in playing, & that music without time, was to him unbearable - We went through together some pieces of Schubert Schroeter, Sterkel, Eichner & other composers most in vogue at that time, all of which he played at sight & with ease - He seemed to take great pleasure in my society, though I certainly never received from him any particular mark of attention, which might not have been equally shown to one of his own sex - Indeed, not the slightest idea of any particular partiality, on his part, ever came across my mind. He was then about 37 years of age, but he did not look so old. I have also impressed on my memory, that I obtained his commendation for my preference of works in prose to those in poetry, the reading of which he asserted to be a great misapplication of time - I imagine that at that period he was seldom excited to bring forward or discuss any of those subjects to which he so wholly & so successfully devoted himself - Had any conversation of that nature taken place in my presence, all traces of the purport of them would - most assuredly, even at this time, not have been obliterated from my memory -

I cannot positively assert that he brought a letter of recommendation to my father; but I know that he performed the voyage (from Smyrna at least) in company with a Mr Henderson, who presented himself to us with a letter from a Mr Lee, an english resident merchant at Smyrna, & a particular friend of my father's.

Two young girls, under twenty years of age, accompanied this Mr Henderson who was a very serious man & very plausible in his manners. They were introduced as sisters, & his nieces. These ladies however were not mentioned in Mr Lee's letter, a circumstance not noticed at the time.

The elder had to a certain degree, the manners of a lady: but those of the younger - & her appearance coincided - were by no means superior to what might be expected of a poor farmer's daughter. Mr Bentham, as I have before said, was our constant visitor, & at our house he frequently met with the Hendersons.

I soon perceived a strong dislike, on the part of these females towards Mr Bentham. They took every opportunity of making unpleasant observations, both on his character & manners. They did their utmost to disparage him in every aspect - I was certainly in no way

prejudiced against him by these insidious attacks - on the contrary, they occasioned me considerable displeasure.

The object of his detractors was obviously to make him appear absurd - illnatured - mean.

(They even threw out the base insinuation that he was a woman hater - this abominable accusation was uttered with peculiar bitterness, & though firmly disbelieved by me, fixed from that time an indelible impression on my mind. I remember also that this most unfounded charge was repeated to him, & that it seemed to give him great pain. He tried to defend himself & ^to^ shake it off.)^{cxiii}

How far he succeeded in neutralizing the unfavourable impression made against him by these slanderous tongues, I cannot tell - in that respect, my memory fails me - but I know, that to the last, he continued to stand high, both in the opinion of my father, & in that of all our common friends.

”””
[v]

It was not long before that period that the Turkish Sultan Abdul Hamid & his inefficient & shortsighted ministers, had been wheedled out of their possession of the Crimea by the “finesse” & eloquence of the able Russian minister at the Porte - Monsr de Bulgakow. - The Empress Catharine, most eager to promote the successful colonization of her newly acquired territory, had invited a horde of adventurers of all nations, but chiefly Italians, to transfer themselves thither - among others, Henderson was also enlisted in the service. He had engaged, together, with his nieces, to establish a dairy in the English style. - It occurs to me now for the first time, that it might have been brought forward on that occasion, under the auspices of Mr Bentham’s brother who was then I believe, in the Russian military service. But this is only conjecture. - When I last saw Mr Bentham however he told me that the undertaking had turned out badly, & that Henderson had behaved very ill.

When the time arrived for the departure of these people for the Crimea, the Vessel in which they were to embark happened to lie at a considerable distance from the spot where they were dwelling, the suburb of Pera.

It was determined they should transfer themselves to it by a short land, rather than by the more circuitous trip by sea, along the Bosphorus.

A carriage was hired (a most uncouth vehicle, but the only one which the city afforded) - In this they proceeded to the place of embarkation, escorted by my father & myself, with a servant on horseback.

The wife of the owner of a trading Vessel, who had formerly been in my father’s service, had been living, for some years, under our roof - ostensibly, to supply towards me the care & attention of a mother.

At the period of Mr Bentham's presence in Constantinople the husband of this person, having returned from one of his voyages, was also an inmate.

On the day of our absence with the Hendersons, Mr Bentham paid his usual visit at our house; & was received by the Captain & Mrs Newman. In the course of the conversation, Mr Bentham (who considered that the Hendersons had now taken their final departure from Constantinople & felt himself in consequence no longer bound to keep their secrets) divulged, that the elder niece was no other than Henderson's mistress, & that the younger was an ignorant country girl merely hired as a servant. Their surprise was naturally very great - much greater than mine would have been - for I had already detected a want of concordance in what they separately told me at different times, which I could not account for but which I by no means liked.

We did not return home till late in the evening - We were received at the door by the Captain, who could not contain his laughter, & was in a hurry to attack my father about his extraordinary civility, & as it now appeared, his ludicrous knight-errantry. My father felt ashamed at having been so easily taken in by these ignorant impostors: but he consoled himself by thinking with the idea that he had not been their only dupe, since Sir Robert Ainslie, our British ambassador (following my father's example, I fear) had formally invited them to a dinner party. Their awkwardness & want of ease, which they could not modify to this sudden emergency, was sufficiently manifest; but it was attributed to english timidity & bashfulness.

But the "nodo" of this comic drama is still to be developed - poor Bentham had made his disclosures most prematurely - our friends were not gone - they had in fact returned with us (some impediment had occurred with regard to the sailing of the Vessel, which appeared likely to occasion a long delay) - & we had to increase the Captain's mirth by declaring that they were, even at that moment, again safely housed in their former lodging.

The situation of these people during the remainder of their stay at Constantinople after this little *éclaircissement*, was, of course, a very mortifying one. - My father had to endure his share also, in the laughter of Mr Humphries, & that of his other friends, who would not lose so fair an opportunity of amusing themselves at his expense. We did not see Mr Bentham till the following day, when he seemed rather confounded by the unlucky *dénouement* of the affair.

I have said that there were no lodging houses at Constantinople; but I remember that the Hendersons were put in possession of an empty house, in which a few articles of furniture had been put, just sufficient to serve their immediate necessities.

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[r]

I am now come to the renewal of my acquaintance with Mr Bentham in the year 1790. It happened through his application to Mr Reveley to assist him in the architectural developement of his plan for a “Panopticon”^{xxxiv} - At first he paid us short visits, merely furnishing Mr Reveley from time to time, with the necessary instructions for making out his plans - but the ingenuity of the latter enabling him to raise objections, & to suggest various improvements in the details, Mr Bentham gradually found it necessary to devote more & more time to the affair, so that, at length, he frequently passed the entire morning at our house, & not to lose time, he brought his papers with him, & occupied himself in writing. It was on this occasion that, observing how much time he lost, through the confusion resulting from a want of order in the management of his papers, I offered my services, in classing & numbering them, which he willingly accepted, & I had thereby the pleasure of supplying him with any part of his writings at a moment’s notice. Judging from the manner in which he appreciated my assistance, I am inclined to think that this kind of facilitation had never before been afforded him.

I then proposed to him that in order to gain still more time for the despatch of his business, he should take his breakfast with us. He readily consented to my proposal, but upon the condition, that I would allow him a separate teapot, that he might prepare his tea, he said, in his own way.

He chose such a teapot as would contain all the water that was necessary, w^{ch} was poured in upon the tea at once. He said, that he could not endure the usual mode of proceeding which produced the first cup of tea strong & the others gradually decreasing in strength, till the last cup became little better than hot water. - Tea making, like many other things (particularly the dimensions of the cups) is perhaps greatly improved since that time. - I was, even then, so well convinced of the advantage of his method, that I have pursued it ever since, more or less modified according to circumstances.

During this intercourse Mr Reveley once received a note from Mr Bentham written in an angry tone - this was owing to the former having used some incautious or perhaps improper expression in writing to some one concerned in the affair of the Panopticon, - it might have been the engraver - though I can scarcely admit the possibility of that surmise - Mr Reveley knew himself to be perfectly innocent of any intentional rudeness or impropriety - he therefore felt himself much hurt at the severity of Mr Bentham’s reproof. I can recollect but these very few words of Mr Bentham’s note - “I suppose you have left your orders too with Mr” (naming a lawyer or barrister employed by Mr Bentham who was residing in Red Lion Square). - In fact Mr Reveley though a young man of superior talent, was at that time little accustomed to writing; he was also perhaps not sufficiently attentive to the established forms of society. It is therefore by no means improbable that he might have committed some mistake in the use of language.

It occurs to me also that there might have been previously some slight degree of dormant displeasure in the mind of Mr Bentham against Mr Reveley, excited perhaps, by a habitual though very innocent levity on the part of the latter who was too apt to make jokes, in order to excite a laugh even on subjects which demanded serious attention. When we were alone Mr Bentham's Panopticon did not altogether escape; & I can easily imagine that his penetrating glance may have caught a glimpse of this misplaced mirth. But of this if it was so, he never took the slightest notice - I think that this little misunderstanding took place when the business between them was nearly brought to a conclusion; & it is most pleasing to observe that it did not prevent Mr Bentham from doing justice to Mr Reveley's ability in his printed report or description of his Panopticon. - I can also recollect that the sum which the latter received, as a remuneration for his trouble was ten pounds. - Mr Reveley's first professional emolument.

After this event I never saw Mr Bentham again till my interview with him in April last.^{cxxv} His views with regard to the Panopticon were baffled, & he had no longer occasion for architectural assistance.

My situation was also changed - I was no longer in the enjoyment

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[v]

of that state of ease & quiet in which he found me five ^and twenty^{cxxvi} years before, when he first visited my father's house.

Still under twenty years of age, I was already the mother of two children & was called upon to bear my part in a very severe struggle. Our income was but \$140- p. ann, & the increase brought in by Mr Reveley's business was, for several years, very slender & uncertain. With these inadequate resources, from the necessity of maintaining, if possible, our useful connections, we had to make a genteel appearance - this we effected, not without considerable difficulty, & by means of constant exertion. A person in such a situation must make great sacrifices, & submit to much self denial - My mind was concentrated in the continual efforts, which my new situation required.

I lost sight of the inestimable Bentham - at least, I lost sight of him personally - but still the sentiment - that strong perception of the superior worth, which I had imbibed in my first acquaintance with him, was continually strengthened by my own spontaneous reflections & by the accounts which were given to me, from time to time, of his steady & heroic devotion to the great cause of truth - humanity - & justice. - It was delightful to me to hear his praises from the mouths of all whom I most looked up to as philanthropists and philosophers.

***document Elizabeth Inchbald^{cxxvii}**

b.227/8(a)

>>>

I must endeavour to be understood as to the unworthy behaviour with which I charge you towards my wife. I think your shuffling behaviour about the taking places to the comedy of the Will, dishonourable to you. I think your conversation with her that night at the play, base, cruel & insolent ^{^insulting^}. There were persons in the box^{cxxviii} that heard it, & they thought as I do. I think you knew more of my wife than you were willing to acknowledge to yourself, & that you have an understanding capable of doing some small degree of justice to her merits. I think you should have had magnanimity & self respect enough to have showed this. I think that, while the Twisses & others were sacrificing to what they were silly enough to think a proper etiquette, a person so out of all comparison their superior as you are, should have placed her pride in acting upon better principles, & in courting & distinguishing insulted greatness & worth. I think that you chose a mode of political conduct, when you might ^{^have^} chosen a conduct that would have done you immortal honour. You had not even their excuse. They could not ^{^they professed^}

>>>

receive her in to their ^{^precious^{cxxix}} circle. You had ^{^kept^} no circle to debase & enslave you.

I have now been [?frank &] explicit on this subject, & have done with it, I hope, for ever.

I thank you for your attempt at consolation in your letter of yesterday. It was considerate & well intended, though its connotations are utterly alien to my heart.

Sep. 13. 1797

W Godwin.

I wish not to be misunderstood as to the circles above alluded to. I mean not to apply my idea to the sacrificers, for one or two of whom I feel more kindness than I can easily express - but to the idols.

.....

b.227/2(b)^{cxxx}

>>>

Madam

Mr Curran immediately after a visit he paid you in Leicester Square, knowing how much I regretted the breach that has taken place between us, wrote me a note, advising me by all means to wait upon you, & assuring me that the difference between us, whatever it was, has at present ceased to exist. I frankly confess I had not the courage to take his advice. I

could not presume, after what has passed, to intrude upon you unexpectedly; & I consider that he was not ^{^fully^} master of the particulars merits of the case. I therefore at that time resolved to do what I am now doing. I determined to request your acceptance of a copy of my novel, & to ask you whether ^{^you did not think^} two years' banishment was not expiation sufficient, for any hastiness of expression, short a reproach to which you, slowly & reluctantly on my part, goaded wrung from me, at a period the most painful & agonising in human life. I allow you ten days from the date of this to say ^{^if you please^} that you admire respect or despise my talents in the present book as the case may happen; but that you feel an in-

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vincible repugnance, if you can be so severe, to this renewal of our acquaintance. If I do not hear from you by that time, I shall then venture to come to your habitation.

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***document The death of Mary Wollstonecraft**

Duke reel 13

^{cxxxix}
”””

Sir,

Myself & Mrs Fenwick were the only two females that were with Mrs Godwin during her last illness. Mrs Fenwick attended her from the beginning of her confinement with scarcely any interruption. I was with her for the four last days of her life, & though I have but little experience in scenes of this sort,^{cxxxix} yet I can confidently affirm that my imagination could never have pictured to me a mind so tranquil under affliction so great. She was all kindness & attention, & cheerfully complied with every thing that was recommended to her by her friends. In many instances she employed her mind with more sagacity upon the subject of her illness than any of the persons about her. Her whole soul seemed to dwell with anxious fondness on her friends, & her affections, which were at all times more alive than perhaps those of any other human being, seemed to gather new disinterestedness upon this trying occasion. The attachment & regret of those who surrounded her appeared to increase

”””

every hour, & if her principles can be judged by what I saw of her death, I should say, that no principles could be more fruitful conducive to calmness & consolation.

.....

***document Memoirs (1798)**

Duke reel 5

cxxxiii
>>>

I received your letter of the 11th instant. [...] the generous way in which you undertake to furnish me with information respecting my wife's history, is particularly grateful to me. [...]

I am, sir

Somers Town

W Godwin

Oct. 17. 1797.

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b.227/8(a)

cxxxiv
>>>

Dear Sir,

[...] Your pencil alterations in page 9 bear harder upon Mary's father [...]

Severities, if it does mean *blows*, means *whipping*. [...]

Mr Fuseli [...] As to his cynical cast, his impatience of contradiction, & his propensity to satire, I have carefully observed them [...]

I have left your pencil marks on page 9 [...] They should be rubbed out before the proof is returned to the printer.

Sat. Jan. 11. 1798 W Godwin

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cxxxv
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Dear sir

[...] I told you, if I remember, in my first letter, that my principal source of materials for what I was writing was a variety of conversations that had passed between me & my wife.

[...] You may regard my spirit of frankness in this respect, as savouring of romantic.

I particularly think that you carry your delicacy too far when you object to another being so much as named, in any circumstances relating to your first wife.

[...]

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[...] I however immediately took this up, to reconsider every passage that could have any relation to the subject of it. I have softened & altered every thing that I considered could possibly displease you. To gratify your wishes I have even struck out the name of Curtis as

the employer of Fanny. I have some confidence at present that you will have no room to complain of my communications.

You enquired with respect to Mr Marshall. He is my very particular friend; you will find his name in these Memoirs. You are probably aware that I am poor; I am left with the children to maintain; &, that I may do them such justice as is in my power, I endeavour to keep them with me. Some of Mrs Godwin's friends have, in consideration of these circumstances, agreed to make a contribution to raise a plain monument to her memory over the spot where she lies buried. None, I believe, have entered into the business, but such as felt an unequivocal pleasure in this question. Mr Marshall mentioned writing to you. I stated to him that I strongly doubted of the propriety of his doing so, after the generous assistance you had already been at the trouble of lending to the Memoirs. This, sir, is all I know of this affair. I am

with real esteem,
yours

Nov. 1797

W Godwin.

.....

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Duke reel 13

^{cxxxvi}
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When Louisa^{cxxxvii} told me you had sent the memoirs to my mother^{cxxxviii} I was at first alarmed for the shock her prejudices will receive in reading some parts of them, though the virtue and excellence the disinterested and ever amiable conduct which cannot fail to create her admiration esteem and love are sufficient to overturn all her prejudices. Be that as it may I have since thought it is better that you sent her a copy.

I thank you for my copy of the whole other letters. [M]y dear brother, they break my heart. What must they have done yours? Such an angel! to have been haunted by a fate so cruel! to have suffered in such various ways and so long before she met with the happiness she deserved! that I should not repeat *to you* the reflections which naturally recur when I think of her past life, the wounds her sensibility was so long exposed to, and then her connection with you so untimely terminated! but great as must be your^{cxxxix}

.....

^For full citations see Bibliography.

^{i*}Bodleian folder rubric Dep. c.532/8, MWS hand, quarto fold, written recto and verso, handtrimmed wove paper, watermark Joynson 1839.

ⁱⁱcMrs G': Mary Shelley had picked up Godwin's habit of referring to Mary Jane Godwin as 'Mrs G' and it appears occasionally in her letters to female friends during the 1830s. .

ⁱⁱⁱCf. Godwin's autobiographical fragments '[In 1783] ... for the acquaintance of Mr Timothy Hollis I was indebted to his nephew, Mr John Hollis, who was one of my hearers at Beaconsfield' (MP 45). In 1783 Godwin lists 'Timothy Hollis', and in 1784 'Disney' and 'B. Hollis' among his acquaintances (C37). See 2: *politics*.

^{iv}Joseph Fawcett. See 1: *literature*.

^vMaurice Margarot's conduct on board the convict transport *Surprise*, and later in the English colony of NSW led former associates in England to 'cut' him on his return in 1810 (C304). See 3: *law*.

^{vi}1 d.: 'one d[ughter]' (or perhaps 'firstborn/ eldest daughter').

^{vii}2 d.: 'second daughter'.

^{viii}G[odwin].

^{ix}George Dyson and Thomas Abthorpe Cooper. See 4: *pedagogy*. This unnumbered item should be 5 in the list.

^xRobert Merry. See 1: *literature* and 4: *pedagogy*.

^{xi}Dep. b.227/8(a) holds Godwin's letters to John Arnott and a letter to John Arnott's brother, dated Somers Town, Dec. 30.1799, defending 'the propriety of Mr John Arnot's conduct in acting for himself without the priority of his family'.

^{xii}Possibly Arnott and Louisa Jones, Godwin's young housekeeper after Mary Wollstonecraft's death. George Dyson and James Marshall were also said to be suitors (MP 19)

^{xiii}MWS script gives Godwin's age as '13', a slip of the pen. Cf. 'During his ministry at Stowmarket he fell in love' (below). Godwin, aged twenty three, arrived as dissenting minister at Stowmarket in Suffolk at the end of 1779 (C11).

^{xiv}Reviews of 1st ed., 1793, *An Enquiry concerning Political Justice*, appeared in *Critical Review*, 7 (Jan.-Apr. 1793), 361-372; 8 (May-Aug. 1793), 290-96; 9 (Sept.-Dec. 1793), 149-154; and in *Analytical Review*, 16 (May-Aug. 1793). See 2: *politics*.

^{xv}Titles and dates of Joseph Fawcett's publications. See 1: *literature*.

^{xvi}George Dyer, an associate of Godwin's early radical years, and friend of Charles Lamb, who lived till 1841. See 3: *law*.

ξϞϠ See 1: *literature* for what I take to be Items 14 and 15 on this summary list.

^{xviii}Dep.c.532/8, MWS hand, three single quarto sheets, written recto and verso, numbered mid-line 1 2 3 on recto, wove paper, watermark Joynson 1839. Pinholes on these three sheets of MWS script match pinholes in Wollstonecraft letter numbered 40, and dated Sep. 15 - 1796 (below).

^{xix}Courtship leading to marriage is the 'great event' of 1796. Godwin and Wollstonecraft did not marry until 29 March 1797.

^{xx}MWS script resumes on recto, after insertion of material on verso following MWS instruction '(turn over)'.

^{xxi}cMrs G': Mary Jane Godwin.

^{xxii}c'Concoction' is Godwin's own term for the lengthy gestation of *Political Justice*. Cf. Godwin's critique of

marriage in *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*, 3rd ed. (1798), Bk. viii, 499-512: ‘Of Property: Appendix Of Co-operation, Cohabitation and Marriage’.

^{xxiii}MWS script continues on verso of sheet.

^{xxiv}Cancelled: fl[irtation].

^{xxv}MWS script resumes on recto of sheet numbered 2, after insertion of material on verso following MWS instruction ‘(turn over)’.

^{xxvi}Cancelled: ‘set h[erself]’.

^{xxvii}Mary Darby Robinson, actress and poet, celebrated for her Royal Command performance in December 1779 as Perdita in Garrick’s version of Shakespeare’s *The Winter’s Tale*.

^{xxviii}Elizabeth Simpson made a stage-career respectable by marrying an older actor and portrait painter, Joseph Inchbald, and after leaving the stage succeeded as a novelist and playwright. See *1: literature*.

^{xxix}Amelia Alderson, daughter of Godwin’s friend Dr James Alderson of Norwich, later married to the painter John Opie. See *4: pedagogy*.

^{xxx}‘Yet another favourite’, Maria Reveley, later Gisborne.

^{xxxi}Dep. c.532/8, MWS hand, single sheets, recto only, wove paper, watermark Joynson 1839. Numbers in ink in margin, and pencil numbers on verso of sheets, probably MWS keeping count of letters.

^{xxxii}MWS cancels the feminine suffix. Cf. St Clair’s statement that Mary Wollstonecraft was known as ‘author of the *Vindication* (she disdained the prissy overtones of ‘authoress’)’ (C162-3).

^{xxxiii}Elizabeth Inchbald’s novel, *A Simple Story*, first published February 1791 (C149). See *1: literature*.

^{xxxiv}Empty bracket suggests that MWS intended to number these sheets later.

^{xxxv}Inchbald’s posthumous biography by James Boaden *Memoir of Mrs Inchbald* (2 vols.; London, Richard Bentley, 1833).

^{xxxvi}Inchbald’s motives for dropping Godwin on his marriage are also judged to be worldly in MWS script Dep. c.606/4 (below).

^{xxxvii}Inchbald’s ‘first letter’ to Godwin is now missing from Bodleian folder c.532/8. Paul quotes a letter from ‘Mrs Inchbald to William Godwin’, dated 3 Nov. 1792’ (CKP i 73-75), with the comment: ‘The first apparently written by her to Godwin’ (CKP i 74). MWS script c. 606/1 ‘recollects’ that Godwin wrote a prepublication critique of *A Simple Story* in 1790, but concludes that he did not meet Inchbald in person until October 1792. See *1: literature*.

^{xxxviii}Cf. (above) Boaden, *Memoir of Mrs Inchbald* (1833).

^{xxxix}*Things as They Are; or, Caleb Williams*, by William Godwin, was published by Crosby 26 May 1794 (C118, 122), and Godwin sent a copy to Inchbald for comment. St Clair gives an account of Inchbald’s and Godwin’s exchanges over *Caleb Williams* (C149, n17, citing CKP i 139, and n18 citing CKP i 73). Godwin’s angry letters to Inchbald on 10 September and 13 September 1797 after Wollstonecraft’s death (in Dep. b.227/8) temporarily deprived him of her audience, but he sent her an advance copy of his novel *St Leon* on 28 Nov. 1798 (C216-17). In 1817 Godwin posted the now reclusive Inchbald a copy of his new novel, *Mandeville: a Tale of the Seventeenth Century in England*. St Clair notes this, but believes she did not reply (C441).
*document *Mandeville*

^{xl}The copier given to Godwin in 1795 by Tom Wedgwood. See *4: pedagogy*.

^{xli}MWS script c.532/8 is extensively quoted by Paul (CKP, i, 231-2, who writes that Mary Shelley ‘formed her estimate’ of the mother she never knew from conversations with Maria Gisborne after they had become friends

in Italy in 1818.

^{xlii}An allusion to Gilbert Imlay (not named in MWS script).

^{xliii}MWS perpetuates Godwin's practice of spelling the surname 'Hayes'.

^{xliv}See below, Dep. c. 532/8, transcription in MJG hand from Godwin's *Memoirs of the Author of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, 1st ed. 1798: 'We renewed our acquaintance in January 1796, but with no particular effect, except so far as sympathy in her anguish, added in my mind to the respect I had always entertained for her talents.'

^{xlv}MWS evidently intended to include letters of Samuel Parr at this point, but they are missing from the Bodleian folder c.532/8.

^{xlvi}Dep. c. 532/8, MWS hand, watermark Joynson 1839. Number (1) indicates MWS footnote.

^{xlvii}Edge of hand-trimmed wove paper torn: 'consequ[ence]'

^{xlviii}For this summary of Sarah-Anne Parr's later history, MWS draws on the Field and Johnstone biographies of Parr. See 2: *politics*.

^{xlix}MWS script c. 532/8 resumes after footnote (1), and 'their intimacy' refers back to Wollstonecraft and Godwin.

^lSt Clair notes the problematic dating and numbering of Wollstonecraft's letters in Godwin edition of her *Posthumous Works* (1798) (C536).

^{li}Dep. c. 532/8, MWS hand, abridged transcription of letter from Wollstonecraft to Godwin, wove paper, Joynson 1839 watermark. Cf. Letter 243, in R. M. Wardle ed., *Collected Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft*, (Ithaca and London, 1979)[Wardle]. The row of X's in MWs script marks the excision of a sentence and a paragraph.

^{lii}Wardle 351: 'my anxiety'.

^{liii}Two words '*firm throne*' underlined in MWS script. Cf. Wardle 352: '*firm throne*'.

^{liv}Dep. c.607/6, MWS hand, copy of portion of letter from Godwin to Wollstonecraft, dated August 19th/ Friday, wove paper, watermark Joynson 1839. This letter is in response to 'fable of the budding Sycamore' in Wollstonecraft's unsigned letter of the same date Cf. Letter 225. To William Godwin [London, August 19. 1796] (Wardle 339-40).

^{lv}I read MWS script in c.607/6 as 'nothing'; but St Clair (C168) reports that 'Godwin crushed with fear could only repeat plaintively that he wanted soothing'.

^{lvi}Dep. c.532/8, MWS hand, copy of portion of letter from Wollstonecraft to Godwin, wove paper, watermark Joynson 1839. Cf. Letter 238. To William Godwin [London, September 10, 1796] (Wardle 347-8). The preceding page of MWS script, with a Godwin number at the head of the letter, is missing from the Bodleian folder, so I have placed the item chronologically. In Letter 238, the preceding sentence runs: 'I am almost afraid on reflection that an indistinct intuition of our affection produced the effect on Miss H- that distresses me - She has owned to me that she cannot endure to see others enjoy the mutual affection from which she is debarred - I will write a kind note to her to day to ease my conscience, for when I am happy myself, I am made up// of milk and honey, I would fain make every body else so -'. The next paragraph, excised with a row of X's in MWS script, begins, 'I shall come to you tonight, probably before nine - May I ask you to be at home - I may be tired and not like to ramble further--'. The paragraph beginning, 'The return of the fine weather' follows (Wardle 347). 'Miss H-' is Mary Hays, a frequent topic of the letters, but not of MWS script.

^{lvii}The painter John Opie, whose portrait of a pregnant Wollstonecraft in 1797 hung in Godwin's study during Mary Shelley's childhood.

^{lviii}Dep. c.532/8, MWS hand, copy of portions of unsigned letter from Wollstonecraft to Godwin, wove paper, written recto and verso, watermark Joynson 1839. MWS hand smaller than usual, faint rust mark right top. Cf. Wardle Letter 250. To William Godwin (Wardle 355-6). The number 52 and the date Sep. 30 - 1796 were evidently transcribed by MWS using Godwin's notes, as Wollstonecraft simply dates the letter 'Friday'.

^{lix}Wardle identifies the suddenly entering 'Miss H.' as 'Miss Hays' (Wardle 356). But possible that it was Wollstonecraft's landlady or some other resident of the Judd Place apartment building.

^{lx*}Bodleian folder rubric Dep. c.606/4, MWS hand, unnumbered quarto fold, wove paper, written recto and verso, watermark Joynson 1839. All 14 sheets in this folder are MWS script, on wove paper with watermark Joynson 1839.

^{lxi}Godwin's journal entry for 29 Mar. 1797, 'Panc', records his visit to St Pancras Church to be married' (C530).

^{lxii}Joseph Johnson, radical publisher of the *Analytical Review*, who had supported Wollstonecraft financially and professionally since 1788.

^{lxiii}Wollstonecraft wrote on 22 March [1797] to her youngest sister Everina, who had recently taken up a post as governess to Josiah Wedgood's children at Etruria, 'The scarcity of money makes all the tradesmen send in their bills. ... I must get some in a day or two, Johnson teazes me, and I will then send you a guinea' (Wardle 384).

^{lxiv}Dep. c.606/4, MWS hand, unnumbered single sheet.

^{lxv}Cf. Godwin's account of Wollstonecraft's 'softening' and 'increasing sweetness' with marriage and maternity, in Chapter 9, *Memoirs of the Author* (1798).

^{lxvi}Dep. c.606/4, MWS hand, unnumbered quarto fold, wove paper, written recto and verso, watermark Joynson 1839.

^{lxvii}No letters now remain in the Bodleian folder c.606/4. See Duke reel 5, *document Godwin marriage.

^{lxviii}By Inchbald's 'worldly motives' MWS probably means her fear of scandal (following Godwin's lead in Chapter 9, *Memoirs of the Author*). But MWS script also floats the idea of sexual rivalry, which reflects on the ambiguity of Godwin's account.

λξιξ Conversations with Maria Gisborne, in Italy, were Mary Shelley's source of stories about the mother she never knew. Cf. Emily W. Sunstein, *Mary Shelley: Romance and Reality* (London and Boston, 1989), 153-55.

^{lxx}Dep. c.532/8, MWS hand, unnumbered, three sheets of bluish wove paper, no watermark. Quoted CKP i, 81-83; ii, 320.

^{lxxi}Godwin first met Maria Reveley on 21 Sep. 1793 (C155). Maria Gisborne visited the Godwin household at Skinner Street while visiting London in July-Aug. 1820 and afterwards reported her impressions to Mary Shelley in Italy. See Frederick L Jones, ed., *Maria Gisborne & Edward E Williams: Their Journals and Letters* (Norman, 1951) [Jones 1951], 35-48.

^{lxxii}See above, c.532/8, 'there was yet another favourite'.

^{lxxiii}See *document Maria Reveley.

^{lxxiv}MWS script resumes on unnumbered recto, after insertion of material on verso following MWS instruction '(turn over)'.

^{lxxv}Cancelled, possibly because MWS has no data on the marriage before Willey and Maria Reveley's return to London in 1790. St Clair notes Godwin 'two... scraps of memoranda' in Godwin's hand, dating the Reveleys' Rome wedding 'Married April 1788' and a second English ceremony 'ditto Nov. -' (C154).

^{lxxvi}Godwin's second meeting with Wollstonecraft, at Mary Hays's, 8 Jan. 1796. Their first meeting, at Joseph Johnson's, 13 Nov. 1791, noted in Godwin's journal. See *I: literature*.

^{lxxvii}Chapter 6, Godwin's *Memoirs of the Author of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1798) narrates this meeting at 'a friend's', i.e. Joseph Johnson. See below c.532/8, MJG hand, wove paper, watermark Joynson 1839, transcription from 1st ed. *Memoirs of the Author* .

^{lxxviii}Dep. c.532/8, MWS hand, unnumbered, two quarto folds, wove paper, watermark Joynson 1839. St Clair gives an account of Willey Reveley's death, Godwin's proposal to his widow in 1799, followed shortly after by her marriage to John Gisborne, and in 1800 their departure for Italy (C 200-01).

^{lxxix}The married Shelleys returned to Italy in 1818 with a letter of introduction from Godwin to Mrs Gisborne; and subsequently Mary Shelley learned Maria Reveley Gisborne's life story from her own lips (C451).

^{lxxx}Godwin letters of July 1799 and later, to the widowed Maria Reveley, in b.227/8, letterpress copies in c.513 (C200, n9, n10, n11). St Clair quotes from Godwin's letter of July 1799, to Reveley after she rejected his proposals, citing CKP i 133: 'How my whole soul disdains and tramples upon these cowardly ceremonies!' he wrote bitterly. 'Is woman always to be a slave?'. See my chapter note 6: *writing*, for details of Godwin's proposals to Reveley in November 1797 and July 1799, and to Harriet Lee in March-August 1798.

^{lxxxi}Dep. c.532/8, copy of letter dated June 1818 from Godwin to MWS, numbered 5) mid-top page, unidentified hand, single small wove sheet, written recto and verso, no watermark. In top left corner of verso, a semicircle but no numeral, possibly MWS numbering left incomplete. Godwin is apparently writing in reply to a letter from Mary Shelley, newly arrived in Italy, and making friends with Maria Gisborne.

^{lxxxii}Godwin's *Of Population: Being an answer to Mr Malthus 's essay on that subject*, was published in 1820. The fatal interruption of Feb. 1817 was the notice of eviction from the residence and shop in Skinner Street, where the Godwins ran a children's book business, M. J. Godwin & Co. (C446-7).

^{lxxxiii}William Godwin, junior, son of Godwin and Mary Jane, born in 1803, and died in the cholera epidemic of 1832 (C483).

^{lxxxiv}Dep. c.606/4, MWS hand, wove paper, watermark Joynson 1839, illegible number in round bracket.

^{lxxxv}MWS begins account of the year 1798 with letters dated at the close of 1797. No letters remain in Bodleian folder c.606/4. For Godwin-Wedgwood correspondence, 1797, see 4: *pedagogy*

^{lxxxvi}Dep. c.532/8, MWS hand, recto only, watermark Joynson 1839.

^{lxxxvii}The sorrow caused by the death of Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, on Sunday, 10 Sep. 1797.

^{lxxxviii}Duke reel 5, letter from William Nicholson to Godwin [10 Sep. 1797].

^{lxxxix}My transcriptions of Godwin's correspondence in September 1797 are taken from Duke reel 5, corrected from the letterpress copies in Dep. b.227/8(a), Godwin hand, single page, written on recto only. A quotient of '[illeg.]' readings remains, as both the letterpress copies and the microfilm are blurred. St Clair cites many of these brief letters in his Chapter 14 'The Memoirs' (C537). The names in bold print at the head of each page are presumably in Godwin's hand.

^{xc}Cf. Dep. b.227/8, Godwin letter to Mrs Inchbald, dated Sep. 13 1797. *document Elizabeth Inchbald

^{xci}Duke reel 5, no heading, letter from Godwin to [?George Tuthill], 12 Sep. 1797, to persuade him to attend Mary Wollstonecraft's burial service in St Pancras Churchyard, 15 Sep. 1797. St Clair notes that Tuthill 'ostentatiously' refused to attend the Church of England ceremony, and that 'another of Mary's oldest friends, the Reverend John Hewlett, pleaded an alternative engagement perhaps as a result of similar scruples' (C179, n1, n2, citing CKP i 284 and Dep. b.214/3). Hewlett had written to James Marshall from Shacklewell on 13 September 'Sir/ A particular engagement, in the way of my profession, renders it impossible for me to fulfil the melancholy duty of attending the late Mrs Godwin's funeral on Friday night' (b.214/3). Joseph Johnson's

response, written the same day. is a welcome contrast: “‘Sir/ will certainly be ready in time to do the last office to our deceased friend’ (b.214/3).

^{xcii}Duke reel 5, copy of a letter from Godwin, dated 14 September 1797, to Mrs M. Cotton, of Berkshire, a friend with whom Wollstonecraft had resided in January 1796 while convalescing from her second unsuccessful suicide attempt (C160, 210). Godwin acknowledges Mrs Cotton’s ‘strong and sincere...partiality’ for Wollstonecraft in Chapter 8 of his *Memoirs of the Author* (1798). In Dep. b.214/3, a letter postmarked 19 MAR [18]00, signed M. Cotton, thanks Godwin for sending a copy of *St Leon*, with its ‘soul inspiring account’ of the marriage of St Leon and Marguerite.

^{xciii}Mentions of newborn Mary (never by name) in Godwin letters of Sep.-Nov. 1797 include ‘the infant is well’, ‘the child has been ill’, ‘the child is in perfect health’, ‘The poor children!’, ‘I am poor, must maintain two children’.

^{xciv}Cf. Claire Tomalin, *The Life and Death of Mary Wollstonecraft* (Harmondsworth, 1985), 273: ‘On Sunday [3 Sept. 1797] Mrs Blenkinsop returned and Eliza Fenwick volunteered to act as nurse. ... Mary expressed a wish to have Mrs Cotton sent for, but this was not done’. *document The death of Mary Wollstonecraft

^{xcv}‘last Wednesday’, 6 Sep. 1797.

^{xcvi}Eliza, wife of John, and author of *Secresy: a novel*. Godwin’s letters to John and Eliza Fenwick in Dep. b.214/8.

^{xcvii}Duke reel 5, letter from Godwin to unidentified addressee, blurred letterpress copy, n.d., lacks signature. I believe the addressee is Tom Wedgwood. See 4: *pedagogy*.

^{xcviii}*Bodleian folder rubric Dep.b.227/2(b), Godwin hand, letter from Godwin to an unidentified correspondent, footnote added upside down in another hand, single sheet, recto only, undated watermark.

^{xcix}Dep. c.532/8, Mary Jane Godwin hand, marginal annotations in MWS hand, wove paper, watermark Joynson 1839, except for pages 20, 22, 23, 25, 26 on other papers. No commentary, corrections, or numbering in MWS hand on these latter five pages. Most pages numbered in right top corner. MJG transcription of passages selected from Chaps vi, ix, x of 1st ed., William Godwin, *Memoirs of the Author of A Vindication of The Rights of Woman* (London: Johnson, 1798). For 2nd ed. (Robinson, 1798), variants listed in Appendix to Philp’s 1992 edition, *Memoirs of the Author* (MP 147-47). *document *Memoirs* (1798)

^cPage 93 of 1st ed. *Memoirs of the Author* is Chapter vi.

^{ci}‘a friend’, Joseph Johnson.

^{cii}Mary Jane Godwin was acquainted with John Howard Payne, and had never met Thomas Paine.

^{ciii}*A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, not published until 23 Apr. 1792. Paine published *The Rights of Man*, Pt. i, Feb. 1791, and Pt. ii, Feb. 1792.

^{civ}Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men; In a Letter to the Rt. Hon. Edmund Burke*, Dec. 1790, was among the first published replies to Burke’s *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, published Nov. 1790.

^{cv}‘Mrs’, honorific title for female author.

^{cvi}After page 7) ends (‘an object so consummately worthy’), MJG copy omits part of chap. ix, 1st ed. *Memoirs* (1798), pp. 154-164, from ‘We did not marry...’ to ‘Mary felt a transitory pang, when the conviction reached her of so unexpected a circumstance, that was rather exquisite. But she disdained to sink under the injustice ‘. MWS script interposes a summary on page 8), and occludes the uncompromising statement ‘We did not marry,’ as well as Godwin’s animadversions on the conduct of Mrs Siddons and Mrs Inchbald after they learned of the

marriage.

^{cvii}Wollstonecraft's unfinished MS of a novel, 'Maria', edited by Godwin and published as *The Wrongs of Woman, or Maria*, in *Posthumous Works* (4 vols.; London: Johnson, 1798).

^{cvi}Cf. Wollstonecraft's unsigned letters of [c. 15 May 1797] to George Dyson (Letter 317, Wardle 391-2) and to Godwin (Letter 318, Wardle 393]), defending her novel-in-progress against Godwin's judgment of the 'omissions and inaccuracies of the piece itself'.

^{cix}Copyist has gone back to cancel drop-word 'constancy' and cram in 'of application, in the parts that were to follow', in order to match page break of *Memoirs* (1798), 172, which ends Chap. ix at 'follow' with no drop-word.

^{cx}*Memoirs* (1798), 173, first sentence of final chapter (Chap. x).

^{cx}The page numbers 15) and 18) are superimposed. As there is no textual lacuna between *Memoirs* (1798), ix, 172 (MJG 13), and *Memoirs* x, 173 (MJG 18), the missing pages 14-17 may have consisted of commentary by MWS.

^{cxii}Cf. Wollstonecraft's cheerful notes to Godwin after labour commenced on 30 August (Letters 343, 344, 345, Wardle 409-10).

^{cxiii}'Following' incorrectly placed as drop-word in script.

^{cxiv}An unknown hand has over-inked MJG script from 'alarming' to 'charming'.

^{cxv}Cf. *Memoirs* (1798), 124: 'occasioned by the placenta that remained'.

^{cxvi}Cf. *Memoirs* (1798), 186: 'Montagu'.

^{cxvii}Mary Jane Godwin was acquainted with Thomas Carlyle, and had never met Dr Anthony Carlisle.

^{cxviii}*Memoirs* (1798), Chap x, page 187 continues: 'ever upon the watch' and the book ends at page 199. The page of script signalled with the drop-word 'ever', and any subsequent pages of script, now missing from Bodleian folder c.532/8. Subsequent pages of *Memoirs* (1798) include the controversial statement on page 190: 'On these two days her faculties were in too decayed a state, to be able to follow any train of ideas with force or any accuracy of connection. Her religion, as I have already shown, was not calculated to be the torment of a sick bed; and, in fact, during her whole illness, not a word of a religious cast fell from her lips'.

.....

endnotes*documents

^{cxix}*Bodleian folder rubric Dep. c.607/2, letter, badly damaged [from Elizabeth Inchbald to Godwin], written recto and verso, no watermark, n.d. Underlinings in original shown here in italics. Cf. St Clair: 'Another of the first copies of *Mandeville* was sent to Elizabeth Inchbald She had been sent copies of each of Godwin's previous three novels In his letter Godwin recalled how in 1794 her detailed comments on the first printing of *Caleb Williams* had turned the novel into the perfection of the second [printing]. ... He did not mention that his Preface to the second edition was already drafted. ... If [Inchbald] ever did send Godwin her comments on *Mandeville*, there is no record' (C440-1).

.....

^{cxx}Duke reel 5, Godwin hand, letter to an unidentified male correspondent. St Clair quotes the sentence 'I found that the comfort & peace of a woman, for whose comfort & peace I interest myself, would be much injured, if I could have prevailed on her to defy those prejudices', identified as 'Godwin to an unknown correspondent, 9 May 1797, b.229/1' (C173, n20).

.....

^{cxixi}*Bodleian folder rubric Dep.c.607/5, [Maria Gisborne hand], lacks signature, n.d., large fold of laid paper, written recto and verso, undated fleur-de-lys watermark. Jones's introduction to Maria Gisborne's *Journals and Letters* quotes this document extensively: 'Mrs Gisborne herself wrote in 1832, at Godwin's request, a vivid account of her life in Constantinople' (Jones 1951, 4-5). Maria Gisborne's hand writing is reproduced in a facsimile page of her journal (Jones 1951, facing page 46).

^{cxixii}The Mr Bentham of Maria Reveley's history is the utilitarian philosopher Jeremy. *Bodleian folder rubric Dep.c.607/5 erroneously names his elder brother Samuel Bentham. Cf.'Jeremy Bentham', *DNB* (1922), ii, 271:'In August 1785 Bentham quitted England in order to visit his brother Samuel, who was then labouring to carry out Prince Potemkin's projects for transplanting English industries to White Russia'.

^{cxixiii} Blue pencilled square brackets surround this paragraph reporting rumours of homosexuality surrounding Jeremy Bentham in Constantinople c1785.

^{cxixiv}Jeremy Bentham's plan was published in *Panopticon: or the Inspection -House, containing the idea of a new principle of construction applicable to any sort of establishment, in which persons of any description are to be kept under inspection* (Dublin rpr.London, 1791).

^{cxixv}Jeremy Bentham died in 1832. Writing this memoir in London cAugust 1832, Maria Gisborne's 'interview with [Bentham] in April last' might refer to April 1831, or April 1832, but she does not say where the interview took place. The news of his death may have been an additional prompt to memorial. Cf. Jones's statement that it was written in 1832 at Godwin's behest (Jones 1951, 4-5).

^{cxixvi}The words 'and twenty' inserted in pencil, and inked over. The 'five years' is correct, the years 1785 to 1790. The inserted 'and twenty' is a puzzle.

.....

^{cxixvii}Dep. b.227/8(a), Godwin hand, single page, letterpress copy, recto only. Letter from Godwin to Inchbald, 13 September 1797. Quoted CKP, i, 278. St Clair gives an account of the theatre visit on 19 April 1797 to George Lillo's *The Will* (C171-2, n17), and quotes a provocative letter from Inchbald to Godwin on 11 April 1797, a week before the theatre visit (C171, n16). St Clair (C179, n3).notes in Dep. c.509, a reply to Godwin's 13 September letter from Inchbald on 14 September. Quoted CKP, i, 279.

^{cxixviii}St Clair names these 'other friends' in the theatre box on 19 April 1797 (C172). Cf. Duke reel 12, letter from Amelia Alderson to Mary Wollstonecraft, addressed on outer 'To Mrs, or Mr Godwin'; and Wollstonecraft's reply to Alderson's letter, signed 'Mary Wollstonecraft/ femme Godwin'. Cf. Letter 314. To Amelia Alderson. [London] Tuesday Night [April 11, 1797] (Wardle 389-90). See 4: *pedagogy*.

^{cxixix}The word between carets, 'precious', has been heavily overinked by a later hand.

.....

^{cxixxx}Dep. b.227/2(b), Godwin hand, laid paper, lacks signature, n. d., no watermark. *Bodleian folder rubric correctly identifies this as 'a letter to Elizabeth Inchbald', despite a pencilled heading 'To Madam De Stael' on recto page of MS. Draft with numerous cancellations, written on verso of a sheet from a letter to Godwin from Josiah Wedgwood. This letter from Godwin to Elizabeth Inchbald on 28 November 1799, accompanying an advance copy of his novel, published on 2 December as *St Leon, a Tale of the Sixteenth Century* (4 vols.; G. G. and J. Robinson, 1799), is cited by St Clair (C210-11). St Clair describes Godwin as expressing himself in this letter with 'a certain jaunty confidence' (C216, n10). According to St Clair, Inchbald replied that she would see him only in company, and three weeks later sent him detailed comments on *St Leon* (C217, n12). At this date,

Godwin also sent presentation copies of *St Leon* to the Lee sisters of Bath, who wrote to thank him on 7 and 8 December 1799. See 6: *writing*.

....

^{cxxxix}Duke reel 13, n.d., lacks signature. St Clair provides a possible clue to the identity of the writer: ‘Godwin’s registration document [of daughter Mary’s birth] is signed by ‘Mary Holby’ as having been present at the birth’ (C537, n30).

^{cxxxix}Indicates that the writer is not Mrs Blenkinsop, who was a professional midwife.

....

^{cxxxix}Duke reel 5, Godwin hand, Godwin letter dated 17 Oct. 1797, blurred letterpress copy, no addressee. Probably to Joseph Johnson, who provided Godwin with a bundle of notes for chapter i, *Memoirs of the Author* (1798). Labelled simply ‘Facts’ in the Abinger archive, they relate to Wollstonecraft’s early life, including her confrontations with her abusive drunken father. In the 2nd edition (Robinson 1798), Godwin softened the account of Edward Wollstonecraft’s ‘cruelty’. (Cf. C182-3, n13, n15).

^{cxxxix}Dep. b.227/8 (a), Godwin hand, Godwin [to Joseph Johnson] concerning revisions (perhaps objected to by Johnson) to *Memoirs of the Author*. The 1st edition, published by Johnson 10 January 1798, was accepted by Johnson as full repayment for the considerable debts owing to him from Wollstonecraft’s estate. Cf. another letterpress copy in Dep. b.227/8 (a), Godwin to an unidentified male correspondent, dated ‘Jan. 2 1797’, manifestly in error for ‘1798’, as it says in part ‘that I have surrendered the whole property of Mrs Godwin’s posthumous works, without deriving a penny advantage from them; that I have paid or undertaken to pay her small debts, in addition to this, to the amount of about fifty pounds; that I was married to her for five months; & that I have taken upon myself the care & support of her two children’. Godwin began revising for the 2nd edition, published later in 1798 by Robinson, on 13 June 1798 (Duke reel 2, Godwin’s Journal).

^{cxxxix}Dep. b.227/8(a), letter from Godwin to unidentified male correspondent, dated Nov. 1797, while Godwin was writing *Memoirs* (1798). Godwin’s references to ‘your first wife’ and ‘Curtis as the employer of Fanny’, might point to Holcroft whose daughter Fanny was well known to Godwin. This letter may shed light on a troublesome incident after Mary Wollstonecraft’s death, that cooled relations between Godwin and Holcroft, according to St Clair(C207). A less likely addressee is Hugh Skeys, who had remarried after the death of his first wife, Fanny Blood. A letter of condolence came from Hugh Skeys in Dublin after he learnt of Wollstonecraft’s death, and letterpress copy of Godwin’s reply from Polygon, Somers Town/ near London, dated Dec. 4, 1797, is in Dep. b.227/8(a).

....

^{cxxxix}Duke reel 13, letter [to Godwin from his sister, Hannah Godwin], dated ‘Sunday morning/Feb.’, probably February 1798, lacks signature.

^{cxxxix}Louisa Jones, Godwin’s housekeeper in 1798, who superintended the care of the two little girls, Fanny and Mary.

^{cxxxix}Godwin’s widowed mother, in 1798 still living at Dalling, Norfolk. Ann Godwin’s letter thanking Godwin for the presentation copy of *Memoirs of the Author* (1798), is in Dep. c.516/1. Ann Godwin writes: ‘My dear Wm’/ ‘I’m a poor letter writer at best but now worse than ever, after thanking yo for yr genteel present of the Memoirs of yr Wife. Excuse me saying Providence certainly knows best the fountain of wisdom can^not err’. See 1: *literature*.

^{cxxxix}The rest of Hannah Godwin’s letter is missing from the microfilm Duke reel 13.

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Chapter note 5: *women*

Chapter 5: *women* groups together MWS scripts, a majority on 1839 watermark paper, and original documents from Godwin's correspondence in the 1790s. The topic of this chapter is Mary Shelley's consideration of Godwin's relationships with women, his views on sexual relations and marriage, and his major writings on the life, marriage, and death of Mary Wollstonecraft. The chapter consists of Mary Shelley holograph scripts, in two Bodleian folders, Dep. c.606/4 and Dep. c.532/8; of MWS transcriptions of letters on 1839 watermark paper, from Dep. c.607/6; of Mary Jane Godwin's transcriptions of extracts from Godwin's *Memoirs of the Author* (1798) in Dep. c.532/8; and of letters to and from Godwin located in Deps. b.227/2(b), b.227/8(a), and Duke reel 5. Endnotes cite references to b.214/3, and *documents are presented from c.607/2, Duke reel 5, c.607/5, b.227/8(a), b.227/2(b), and Duke reel 13.

All sheets in Dep. c.606/4 are MWS holograph script written on watermarked Joynson 1839 *papier satine*. The endnote to the unnumbered page with which the section on Mary Wollstonecraft opens gives: '*Bodleian folder rubric Dep. c.606/4, MWS hand, unnumbered quarto fold, wove paper, written recto and verso, watermark Joynson 1839. All 14 sheets in this folder are MWS script, on wove paper with watermark Joynson 1839'.

Mary Jane Godwin's hand is represented in the chapter, from the folder c.532/8. She was employed under Mary Shelley's supervision in transcribing long passages of the 1st edition Godwin's *Memoirs of the Author of A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, his tribute to Wollstonecraft, published 10 January 1798, four months after her death. Of the various watermarked and unmarked papers in Dep. c.532/8, those on which Mary Jane Godwin has transcribed parts of chapters 6, 9 and 10 of *Memoirs* (1798) are written on recto only, which may indicate that they have been copied by the wetpress machine owned by Godwin, though there are no visible signs on the papers in the folder that they have been put through this process.

The practice of removing original letters from the Bodleian folders labelled 'Life of William Godwin' (and in many cases, cutting off the signatures) has been extended, for the folders that compose chapter 5: *women*, to removing MWS transcriptions of those originals. These transcriptions, when they turn up in other folders, such as c.607/6, prove to be written on the same watermark Joynson 1839 paper as those in c.606/4 and c.532/8.

One document from c.606/4, a brief memorandum or draft letter on 1839 paper in MWS hand, dated from Richmond 6 May 1840, sheds light on the progress of the project of *Life of William Godwin* at this date:

These are the materials, I conceive of the first volume.

It is not complete & ready for the press. Not that there is any thing to add - but there are many letters to be reconsidered - all that is here is not to be published - though the exceptions are few - all that I at once determined to reject, have already been taken away. But some are to be reconsidered, & I think withdrawn, that I have now left.

This is the latest documentary evidence we have located of Mary Shelley at work on the Godwin biography. At the same time it signals a blockage in the path to publication. The *Bodleian rubric c.606/4 identifies this draft as 'an introduction ... [to] a biography of William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft', but the contrary is clearly the case; this is the moment to pause and 'reconsider' the whole project.

The editor of Mary Shelley's letters, Betty T. Bennett, provides clues to a likely addressee for this draft letter, if such it is. John Hobart Caunter, a co-signatory with Mary Jane to the July 1836 contract with Henry Colburn, had assisted Mary Shelley to place her stories and articles in journals during the 1830s; and Godwin had written to him as late as 18 March 1836 about negotiations for the sale of Mary Shelley's novel *Falkner* (Bennett, ii, 268, n1). Another letter from Mary Shelley to Caunter, provisionally dated by Bennett '[c26 March-c5 June, 1840]', mentions: 'the subject of my publication - which Mrs Godwin & myself both so much wish you to as you are good enough to offer arrange'. Bennett notes 'Unidentified' for 'the subject of my publication' (Bennett, ii, 383-4, and n2). It seems very probable that in May 1840 Caunter was assisting Mary Shelley to finalise the single volume she had so far composed of *Life of William Godwin*; and was asked to wait until she had reconsidered whether or not to include several problematic letters.

If this is not a letter to Caunter, it could be a private memo from an anxious Mary Shelley to herself. Pamela Clemit (1999: 95) terms it 'a note in Mary Shelley's hand', and one that confirms Clemit's own description of the 'fragmentary' and 'unfinished' 'nature of the work' on *Life of William Godwin*. This has warrant in Mary Shelley's personal circumstances at this date, including the need she felt for a propitious beginning to her son Percy Florence's adult life during his university years at Cambridge. Recuperating from a severe illness at Richmond in May 1840, Shelley is

faced with continuing work on the Godwin biography alone and unassisted by stepmother Godwin by this stage. Indeed Mary Jane's health is now so poor that her daughter Claire Clairmont is returning from Vienna to care for her domestic needs. Mary Shelley herself is suffering symptoms of the brain cancer that was to end her life eleven years later, and undecided as to how, or indeed if ever, to proceed to publication of 'my Father's Life'. Her fears about public and press reactions to the radical politics and heterodox religious views of Godwin's writings had already found expression in her private journal (Duke reel 11: 'Mary Shelley's Journal, 1826 intermittently till 1844'), and in letters to close friends. On 26 January 1837, Shelley wrote to Edward Trelawny:

With regard to my Father's life - I certainly could not answer it to my conscience to give it up ... A sense of duty towards my father, whose passion was posthumous fame makes me ready - as far as I only am concerned, to meet the misery that must be mine if I become the object of scurrility & attacks - for the rest - for my own private satisfaction all I ask is obscurity (Bennett ii, 280-1)

By 1839-1840, while composing the scripts on 1839 watermark paper, in chapters 5: *women* and 6: *writing* of this edition, Mary Shelley's fears had received all too solid confirmation in the hostile reviews of her monumental edition of Percy Bysshe Shelley's poetry and prose, published by Edward Moxon at the close of 1839.

In my chapter note to Chapter 6: *writing*, I suggest that the letters giving Mary Shelley most trouble in 1840 were those in the cache of 1798 correspondence between Godwin and Harriet Lee (now in b.228/4). The folding-in of 'Richmond 6 May 1840' with her carefully phrased account of her parents' marriage in the same folder c.606/4, might suggest that letters between Godwin and Wollstonecraft were also in question. Whatever Mary Shelley's private emotions in reading of her parents' courtship and her mother's death, and of Godwin's pursuit of Harriet Lee so soon after that, the public issues of sexual and religious orthodoxy, and Godwin's departures from such orthodoxies, were of paramount importance on the question of publication.

Mary Shelley handled the Godwin-Lee letters (in chapter 6: *writing*) differently from the Godwin-Wollstonecraft letters (in this chapter 5: *women*). She neither transcribed them nor quoted and paraphrased them into the terms of her framing narrative. Instead, after a brief preamble, she reverted to the technique of pinning them together. This lends the Godwin-Lee affair the air of an appendix, contingent to the memorial tribute to Wollstonecraft (in this chapter 5). Our presentation of the Godwin-Lee letters in a separate chapter 6: *writing*, is designed to reinforce this separation.

.....

Chapter 5: *women* opens with a document headed 'Mrs G's Letters', in c.532/8, MWS holograph script on Joynson 1839 watermark paper. This is a series of numbered jottings that Mary Shelley compiled from the papers that her stepmother Mary Jane Godwin put at her disposal. The 'letters' themselves remain opaque, MWS script selecting here and there the names of acquaintances that might be worked up into connecting passages with Godwin's extant autobiographies. This document provides the only occasion on which the phrase 'your father' indicates Mary Jane speaking to Mary Shelley and referring to Godwin ('When ever your father spoke of [Arnott], he extolled his intellectual powers').

This document is followed in c.532/8 by Mary Shelley's account of Godwin's friendships with Mary Robinson, Elizabeth Inchbald, Amelia Alderson, later Mrs Opie, and (after a brief but important entry on Mary Wollstonecraft), Mary Hays and Sarah-Anne Parr. The sequence of papers from c.532/8 ends with MWS transcriptions of excerpts from the 'notes' that travelled from early summer to December 1796 between Godwin's and Wollstonecraft's lodgings in north London. After Wollstonecraft's death, while he was editing her posthumous works, these and the rest of the notes were arranged and numbered by Godwin, not always in correct sequence, and are published in Wollstonecraft's *Collected Letters* (Wardle Letters 225, 238, 243, 250). In all likelihood, Mary Shelley would have transcribed more of these brief missives for inclusion in the Godwin biography than the paltry sample remaining in the Bodleian folders.

The midsection of this chapter 5: *women* is compiled from MWS script in Dep. c.606/4. Here is the first document:

At the beginning of this year Mr. Godwin married Mary Wollstonecraft. The precise date is not known - he does not mention it in his journal and it took the ceremony had taken place some time before the marriage was declared. This secrecy partly arose from a ^slight^ shrinking on Mr. Godwin's part to avow that he had acted in contradiction to his theories. Such ^contradictions occur^ things are indeed done every day & are applauded. But the fervour & unbending uncompromising tone of the assumed by the Author of Political Justice in promulgating his opinions made his followers demand a rigid adherence of them in action - (c.606/4: [unnumbered])

St Clair provides an endnote to MWS statement : ‘The precise date is not known - he does not mention it in his journal and it took the ceremony had taken place some time before the marriage was declared’:

Godwin’s journal entry for 29 Mar. 1797, ‘Panc’, records his visit to St Pancras Church to be married’ (C530).

After this midsection from c.606/4, we have placed a further section taken from c.532/8 . This is an account, on paper with no watermark, of Godwin’s relationship with Maria Reveley, who after she remarried, as Maria Gisborne, was the only woman friend of Mary Wollstonecraft with whom Mary Shelley was personally acquainted. Carrying a letter of introduction from Godwin, the Shelley couple met the Gisbornes in Italy in 1818, and after Mary Shelley left Italy in 1823, she sustained her friendship with them by correspondence until both husband and wife died within weeks of Godwin’s death in April 1836.

In her commentary on her parents’ marriage (in c.606/4), Mary Shelley allows a glimpse of the ‘afterlife’ to that marriage, her own life story:

Mrs. Reveley feared to lose a kind & constant friend, but becoming intimate with Mary Wollstonecraft, soon learnt to appreciate her virtues & to love her. She ^soon found, she told me in after days^ that instead of losing one, she had secured two friends.

The poetic ambiguity of ‘losing one and securing two’ points to Godwin at his marriage and to Wollstonecraft at her death, and later restoration, in the form of the married Shelleys, her daughter and son-in-law. This is the one section of MWS script that carries Godwin’s lifestory past the year 1798; and tells of his unsuccessful proposal of marriage to the newly widowed Mrs Reveley in 1799:

She at first refused to see him & ^several^ letters passed between them; I find none of the lady’s but several of my father’s as preserved by the copying machine

[blank]

The editorial mark '[blank]' covers the letters now missing from the c.532/8 folder. MWS specifies the letterpress copies, and an endnote in St Clair locates them in c.513 (C200, n9, n11).

One connection made in this section of chapter 5: *women* deserves closer attention. MWS scripting of the story of Maria Reveley, later Maria Gisborne, is followed by MWS transcription (c.532/8), of Godwin's letter to herself just after the Shelley couple and their two young children had arrived in Italy, in June 1818. Godwin reminisces fondly about Maria Gisborne, and alludes to his current work-in-progress, *Of Population: Answer to Malthus*, published two years later by Longmans. *Of Population* was translated into French by Dr Francisco Solano Constancio, who consulted Mary Shelley in 1837 before publishing a brief biography of Godwin.¹

This connection was first noted in *The Clairmont Correspondence*, ed. Marion Kingston Stocking and David Stocking (1995), 116 n11, as follows:

Francisco Solano Constancio (1777-1846), distinguished Portuguese physician ... In 1820 he had translated Godwin's *On Population* into French. On 18 December 1837 Harriet de Boinville wrote to Mary Shelley to request help for Dr Constancio in preparing a memoir of Godwin for "a very respectable biographical publication". She added that "someone will certainly write this article & we desire it should come from a lover of his fame & a just appreciator of his doctrines" (Abinger, Bodleian, dep. c516). The article appeared as by "C-o et Z", the anonymous Z being Mary Shelley.

The next section of 5: *women*, 'The death of Mary Wollstonecraft' is compiled from letters to and from Godwin in Deps. b.227/2 and b.227/8, and Duke reel 5, some of them extant only in blurred letterpress copies. These were written in the immediate aftermath of the death of Wollstonecraft and are introduced by MWS commentary on unnumbered sheets of 1839 Joynson paper in c.606/4 and c532/8. A token of her emotional involvement in the death recorded here is that she introduces the letters with

a caveat, admitting that she has moved the letters from 1797, when they were written, to the commencement of 'this year' 1798.

I commence this year with a few letters dated at the conclusion of the last, but which would have interfered with the subject that set its dark seal on that year. The letters from Thomas Wedgewood besides being almost necessary to the understanding those of his correspondent, are so full of noble & generous feeling of intelligence & interesting display of character that they cannot be considered superfluous. (c.606/4)

.....

The final section of 5: *women* is a transcription of parts of chapters 6, 9 and 10 of Godwin's *Memoirs of the Author* (1798), in Dep. c.532/8. This was the heaviest task undertaken by Mary Jane Godwin for the *Life of William Godwin*. It is also the latest documentary evidence of her collaboration on the project.

This calls for a summary of her participation over the four years of composition of *Life of William Godwin*. She contributed in 1: *writing*, the transcription from Godwin's novel *Damon and Delia* 1784 (c.606/5); in 4: *pedagogy*, the collation and annotations on eight of Amelia Alderson's letters to Godwin, 1795 to 1797 (b. 210/6); and in this chapter 5: *women*, her comments on the collection of 'Mrs G's Letters', and the transcription from *Memoirs of the Author* (1798), both in c.532/8. The drudgery of transcription and fair copying, and the custodianship of men's private lives, was considered women's work. Negatively, Mary Jane's life with Godwin from 1801 to 1836 was placed entirely out of text by her stepdaughter. Mary Jane's share of the work of memorialising Godwin is only not negligible in view of the fact that Mary Shelley shared the work with no one else.

When religious belief rears its head amongst these life and death and love affairs, it has the last word of what we have brought together as chapter 5: *women*. This 'last word' is, ironically enough, a missing word, the page of Godwin's *Memoirs of the Author*, 1st

¹ *Biographie Universelle, ancienne et moderne*, ed. Louis Gabriel Michaud (45 tom.; Paris: Desplaces, 1843-66), xvii, 40-41: 'Godwin (William), écrivain anglais'.

edition, January 1798, in which he pronounces an irreligious loving benediction on her passing: 'not a word of a religious cast fell from her lips'. The final page of many pages of Mary Jane Godwin's neat rounded script has been filched from the folder c.532/8. We perforce conclude our fifth chapter with an inconclusive dropword, 'ever', indicating the start of the next manuscript page, now missing :

Mr Carlisle left us no more from Wednesday evening, to the hour of her death. It was impossible to exceed his kindness and affectionate attention. It excited in every spectator a sentiment like adoration. His conduct was uniformly tender and anxious

ever

This unfinished paragraph ends the chapter 5: *women*, and our endnote gives the reference to the 1st edition of Godwin's *Memoirs*, at the page of the printed edition where the MJG manuscript script breaks off:

Memoirs (1798), Chap x, page 187 continues 'ever upon the watch' and so to the end of the book at page 199. The page of script signalled with the drop-word 'ever', and any subsequent pages of script, are now missing from Bodleian folder c.532/8. Subsequent pages of *Memoirs* (1798) include the controversial statement on page 190: 'On these two days her faculties were in too decayed a state, to be able to follow any train of ideas with force or any accuracy of connection. Her religion, as I have already shown, was not calculated to be the torment of a sick bed; and, in fact, during her whole illness, not a word of a religious cast fell from her lips'.

.....

Mary Shelley, *Life of William Godwin*

6: writing

b.228/4ⁱ

ii
»»»

The other alteration that had taken place in Mr Godwin, to which I alluded, was an entire change of sentiment on the subject of marriage. The happiness he had enjoyed with his wife made him eager to instilled the opinion that a m he might at least in a degree renew regain a portion of its blessings married a portion of the treasure he had lost ^ if he ^ entered into a new engage ^ment with^ a woman of sense & of an amiable disposition. Instead of as heretofore guarding himself from the feelings of love, he appears rather to have laid himself open to them. The two orphan girls left in his charge of course weighed much in the balance - he felt his deficiency as the guardian ^sole parent ^of

»»»

two children of the other sex - The Since my mother's death a ladyⁱⁱⁱ had resided in his house & kindly undertaken their care- & but this could not continue for an indefinite time.

The first

In March 1798 he made a tour such projected leaving town London as he was in the habit of making ^doing^ ^for a short interval^ every year. His destination was He visited Bath ^& spent ten days in that city.^ & There he met the fair authoresses of The Canterbury Tales, Harriet &^{iv} Sophia ^& Harriet^ Lee. The latter soon attracted his regard ^admiration^ & partiality - to the end of his life^v he always spoke of her with esteem & regard though it was not till his papers were placed in my hands that I learned the nearer tie that he sought to establish between them

....

»»»

[r]

The feeling of love was awakened on their first acquaintance, & his immediate desire was to study her mind - I find a note made of ^some of^ her opinions & remarks which shew the interest he took on the subject

Has always been afraid of cultivating emotions - is not sanguine

Professes self-complacence to be a principal source of happiness, & self-displeasure the greatest of all pains.

Immorality of Heloise &c

Believes persons of strong emotions to be most unhappy.

A sh scribbler from childhood. S. (ophia)^{vi} not

Views present circumstances with a favourable eye.

I will have her opinion of poets & poetry - of [illeg.]

Likes Richardson^{vii} - dislikes Emily Jervis^{viii} - fond of etiquettes - pleased with my preference.^{ix}

On his return to town he ventured to write to her. turn over

»»»

[v]

His feelings were so much engged engaged that he made a second visit to Bath

.....

WG-HL [n.d.]^x

»»»

When I had last the pleasure of seeing you, you said, You supposed you should hear of me. What was your meaning in this I do not think proper to set myself to guess, lest I should find that you meant nothing, or what in my estimate might amount to nothing. When you said In saying therefore, that you *supposed* you should hear *of* me, I am determined to understand ^you^, that you *expected* to hear *from* me. It is indeed a very displeasing thought to reflect, when one's ideas of a person have first been raised by their writings, & afterwards confirmed by a direct communication of sentiments & feelings, that possibly years may elapse before that communication is renewed, & that possibly it may even never be renewed.

There are so few persons in this world that have excited that degree of interest in my mind which you have excited, that I am loth to have the catalogue of such persons diminished, or that distance should place a barrier between them & me, scarcely less complete than that of death. Indulge me with the knowledge that I have some place in your recollection. Suffer me to suppose, in any future production that you may give to the world, that, whilst you are writing of it, you will sometimes remember me in the number of your intended

»»»

readers. Allow me to believe, that I have the probability of seeing you, in ^no^ long time hence, in the metropolis. You said, if I recollect right, that this was rather the less likely, as the friend at whose house with whom you used to reside in London, had lately removed to some other place. Why should not I venture to suggest the practicability of your substituting my house instead of the accommodation you have lost? I do not perceive that there could be any impropriety in it. A sister of the Miss Jones's with whom I resided at Bath, lives at my house on the footing of an acquaintance, & is so obliging as to superintend my family, & take care of the children. I am sure she would be happy to do every thing to accommodate you. I should imagine therefore that you might accept the invitation without sinning against the etiquette that you love. It is true that my

establishment is a humble one, but you could not perhaps be at the house under the roof of one who does more justice to your merits.

You told me at Bath that you found your time too much occupied with business, to allow you to devote much of it to literary engagements. If you had the opinion of your talents which I suspect to be the true one, you would be cautious of admitting this excuse. Surely there is something highly pleasing in the idea of amusing & improving more persons than we ever knew; nor can any writer be entirely indifferent

”””

to that kind of distinction with which an author of genuine merit is commonly regarded. We love to be known for what we are: an ingenuous mind would not be altogether easy to be thought better of than he deserves; but no person conscious of talents, can be satisfied to be treated & regarded as something less, & overlooked as an object of inferior value.

If I might venture upon the claim of so short an acquaintance to turn critic, I should endeavour to dissuade you from a style of levity. When you attempt to rouse our curiosity or attack our feelings, you may reasonably augur future success from the experiment you have already made. Your Canterbury Tales, which have much merit, would in my opinion have more, if the stories were told with that artlessness & simplicity, which reminded us of no effort to surprise in the writer, & required no effort of attention in the reader.

Be so good as to express to your sister my sense of the flattering politeness of attention she was so obliging as to bestow upon me.

Farewel.

yours, with much regard & esteem,

[blank]

.....

xi
”””

This letter remained unanswered^{xii} & the lover became tormented by a thousand doubts - Had he offended? He was sometimes impelled to pour out his feelings with fervour & frankness - sometimes to be as guarded as possible I find three letters written at this period only one of which I conjecture to have been sent. The first ^is little more than a concise announcement to his intention to revisit Bath. The second^ is contains an open confession of all his feelings (fearful of an offending, eager to persuade he wrote it three times over, & at last I imagine concluded not to send it) the second a concise announcement of his intention to revisit Bath - The third which certainly lead did reach Miss Lee is a mixture of both; this half measure displeased her, as will be seen. I give all thee ^three^{xiii} of these letters.

.....

WG-HL [n.d.]

xiv
”””

How wonderfully you contrive to torment me! How numerous are the conjectures I have formed respecting ^your^ silence! How many times have I considered the abstract I made of yo the letter I wrote^{xv} you, to discover, if possible, by what circumstance I have been so unfortunate as to offend you! Sometimes I have considered your silence as reproof, as contempt! Sometimes I have hoped that, if it were torture to me, it was not entirely gratification & ease to yourself. Whenever I have said to myself, this cannot be merely rebuke; indifference would dictate a conduct so less harsh; if she did not feel some kindness, she could not feel herself entitled to adopt so irregular allow herself so strong a method of expressing her displeasure. I know that, to some women, silence would be the result of an uncertainty how to express themselves; but this I cannot impute to one who has shown so singular a mastery of every department of the epistolary style in the Errors of Innocence.^{xvi} Whenever I have been sober, collected & deliberate, I have determined on this plan, - to wait till the period of the Midsummer^{xvii} vacation; to hope yet to hear from you; if not, to find if that on that occasion you came to town; or, both these occasions anticipations failing, then once more to seek you at your own habitation. I am aware that a thousand favourable circumstances offer themselves in conversation; that, when persons are present with each other together, one subject imperceptibly slides in after another, & the effect of each is remarked by the speakers; while, on paper, every thing is abrupt, unprepared & alarming. But to me prudence ^in this case^ is useless. You haunt me; I see no

”””

thing else; I think of nothing else; I can bear any thing rather than the uncertainty in which you plunge me. I recollect our conversations: there every thing was soothing; every thing spoke pleasure to my heart. I found, or thought I found, a responsive chord, the vibrations of which suggested to me emotions, too pure, too full of meaning, for mere words to explain. This perhaps was all folly & delusion. But I must seek a resolution to my doubts. If, to a letter so unambiguous as this, you return no answer, I shall conclude that you are not utterly resolved determined against the renewal of my visit. Yet I would that you would answer me by something more pleasing encouraging than silence, that you would relieve my anxiety, that you would give a determination to my reveries, which now, between hope & apprehension, deprive ^me^ of all my customary firmness & peace.

Do not conclude from the incoherence of what I write, that I am not influenced by the maturest determination deliberation. The judgment upon which I act, is one that no subsequent incidents are likely to alter. I am not a boy;^{xviii} & my proceeding, though the result of sentiment, is authorised in my mind by the conclusions of reason, & the inferences of experience. I am satiated with vague intercourse with the world, & the frigid barrenness of empty praise. I require a friend of my bosom, who shall whose approbation & sympathy shall stand me in stead of

”””

all the world. In this friend I require that cultivated mind that can give as well as receive, & that can improve my mind, while she ravishes my soul. All other love is transitory & deceitful, & can last no longer than the novelty of the object. In this friend I require unbounded, undivided intimacy, together with every advantage that nature bestows for giving to the intimacy permanence & effect. I require sentiment, delicacy, a liberal mind, a candid temper, a warm & ingenuous heart. Where can I find these properties realised but in you? In return I claim to be allowed by you possession to possess some faint portion of them myself. If you do not grant me this, you ought not to waste a thought on the subject of this letter. If you do, let me hope that you will not lightly put

a negative upon it. I will not believe that, with a man to whom you should grant this credit, you will ^{^not^}^{xxix} be happier than in any other situation. If I am not pleading your cause at the same time that I plead my own you ought not to grant me a moment's attention.

Yours, with the sincerest admiration

(I have no idea of coming to Bath sooner than July next, unless some communication from you afforded me an inducement I do not at present possess.)

^{xx}
”””

If, in what I have above written, I may seem to require too much of you, suffer me to explain it in the following manner. Silence, if you please, shall merely pass for the symbol indication of a mind not absolutely determined against me. I know that we have seen little of each other; too little perhaps to enable me to decide my choice, if I were not also acquainted with you in your writings; I have reopened the E. of I. since I saw you.^{xxi} I abhor the idea of surprising ^{^you^} into a determination for which you are ^{^not^} perfectly unprepared. I abhor the idea of entangling you in an alternative, against which you have no adequate remedy. Let me only obtain in return that, as I would not precipitate you, you will not precipitate yourself against me. I will not strictly adhere to the interpreting of your silence, if silence it is to be, into the mere supposition, that you have nothing to say that which a considerate benevolence requires should not be deferred; nor will I infer from it an atom of positive encouragement.

The aim of my former letter, in which I could have been well pleased to have been indulged, was, to have obtained from you a neutral correspondence, where we should have become familiar with each other's mind, without precipitating any thing. Is it still practicable to return to the situation in which we then stood, imagine this letter^{xxii} unwritten, and correspond as if nothing particular had proceeded from either side?

[upside down top margin]^{xxiii}

Once more, let me intreat you to recollect, that silence shall merely be interpreted to signify a mind suspended, a mind requiring more materials for judgment, more opportunity for deliberation, not a mind engaging itself for any thing.^{xxiv} Surely you may be prevailed on to deliberate, to doubt, not to regard my proposal as wholly un-

”””

worthy your consideration!

Above all things I request you to judge for yourself, not to suppose yourself incapable of forming a judgment from the result of your own reflections, not to be governed in a point of this sort by the advice ^{^of} others[^], which is perhaps always worse than inferior to the unbiased dictates of a well instructed mind.

[sideways in left margin]^{xxv}

Further I have to intreat you, if you come to an unfavourable decision, not originating in a spontaneous alienation of mind, but in the representations of others, or in inferences of reasoning, that you will be explicit with me, & suffer ^{^me^} to endeavour to correct misapprehension and remove prejudice.

[sideways in left margin]^{xxvi}

I linger yet. I will not deny what you must have perceived in the early part of my letter, that I have some dependence upon the reciprocity of our minds, & that, from what I saw of you at Bath, I anticipate not an entire indifference. But I may be deceived; &, in that case, the disappointment I am to encounter may will be so much the bitterer. I may be shutting myself out from future opportunities, & penning at this moment the last words I shall ever be allowed to address to you.

.....

[sideways in left margin]^{xxvii}

I know that to some women silence would ^{^be^} the result of an uncertainty how to express themselves; but this I cannot impute to one who has shown such a singular mastery of every department of the epistolary style in the E. of I.

[upside down top margin]^{xxviii}

I believe perceive that the established, perhaps the reasonable, maxims of ^{^worldly^} prudence, would lead you to defer any actual ^{^direct^} answer to this letter, if the state of your mind were as auspicious as my most sanguine thoughts could represent it. Wealth, I have none that first object of enquiry to the worldly wise, I have none to offer: I neither seek, nor can bestow it. I have hitherto lived creditably on the fruits of my industry, & I should hope that an over anxious retrospect on this subject is not one of the characteristics of your mind.^{xxix}

.... ..

WG-HL [late May 1798]

^{xxx}
”””

I have just heard that you have been to town. How unfortunate I am! How fortunate I might have been! All the awkwardness, all the crisis, that attends on a journey purposely taken, would have been removed; the sentiments of the mind would have taken their genuine, their unforced & most gratifying course. Cruel, cruel etiquette! I had a kind of presentiment on the subject, & sent to Robinson's six or seven weeks ago to enquire if Miss Lee^{xxxi} or yourself were in town. But then you were not. Last Sunday I heard that you had been; I hasten-

”””

ed to Mrs^{xxxii} Linley's, with whom, or near to whom I understood you had resided; but you were gone.

I will be in Bath in four or five days from the date of this, unless you say that my appearance there would be disagreeable to you. Depend on my prudence not to give it an air to excite remark; I will have business at Bristol.

.....

WG-HL 2 June 1798

^{xxxiii}
”””

Dear Madam

I took the liberty of addressing a letter to you soon after my late excursion to Bath, to which you have not been so obliging as to return favour me with an answer. The esteem & admiration I entertain for you, are

such, as to have made this a subject of considerable much uneasiness to me. I have only lately heard that you have been in London, unfortunately not till after you had some time quitted the metropolis: otherwise I should have hoped to have learned from you personally, whether I had been so unhappy as to have incurred your displeasure. The sentiment of friendship is inexpressibly dear to me, & I had ventured to believe that, though our intercourse was short, it was not altogether alien to that sentiment. I am obliged to be at Bath Bristol next week; I shall with your permission take the liberty of renewing my visit at Belvidere^{xxxiv} house; & I rejoice in the occasion, that may thus, I hope, prove the means of removing a painful feeling from my mind.

Present my best remembrance to your sisters & believe me, With the highest regard,

Yours

June 2, 1798.

[blank]

.....

WG-HL 2 June 1798

^{xxxv}
”””

[r]

I have ^been^ extremely mortified at receiving no answer from you, to the letter I wrote soon after my late excursion to Bath. I am not sure indeed whether in perfect strictness I was entitled to an answer. But silence is so ambiguous a thing, & admits of so many interpretations, that, with the admiration I had conceived for you, I could not sit down tranquilly under its discipline. It might mean simply that I had not been long enough your knight, to entitle me to such a distinction. But it might mean disapprobation, displeasure or offence, when ^my heart prompted me to demand cordiality & friendship^ I ardently wished every thing cordial & friendly to exist. My mortification has since been increased, by finding that you have been in town lately, & had left town before I knew of your presence: though, having a kind of suspicion that the Two Emilys^{xxxvi} would bring either Miss Lee or yourself to London, I had made some enquiries on the subject.

I am obliged to be at Bristol next week. I remember, as my greatest good-fortune & pleasure in my last excursion, the repeated & long conversations I enjoyed at Belvidere House. May I hope that now, having a right to call myself an acquaintance, I have not, without intention or consciousness on my part, forfeited the kindness I then experienced as a stranger! Whether next week shall be a week of pride or humiliation to my feelings, will depend on the solution it will afford to this question.

Present my best remembrances to your sis-

”””

[v]

ters, & believe me

With the highest regard & esteem

Yours

June 2, 1798,

W Godwin

Saturday.

[written in margins]^{xxxvii}

The tone of this letter appears to me [[^]sic] betray vanity disappointed by the scantiness of the homage it has received, rather than mortified by any apprehension of discouragement. If any offense was given by the former letter^{xxxviii} this is calculated to renew & encrease it: for it is equally presuming without being more explicit except in two sentences so alien to the temper or distant from the express reach of the rest that they should be made under all circumstances to leave the letter. An alternative forced imposed on her by the style second clause, presents itself to me^{xxxix} thus “This journey to Bristol has no reference to me: as far as that

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is concerned the visits are simply as an acquaintance: but his title to be received as such is lost by his forwardness to employ the privileges & claim the right of a more endeared relation: The purpose of his journey is addressed to me & it may be dictated either by humility or assurance” I doubt that the former interpretation would be given to a letter in which the same air & accent reign as in this

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Miss Lee was as she acknowledges a lover of etiquette and a provincial life had narrowed her system of the [^]ideas with regard[^] to the proper conduct of a man towards the lady of his love. We shall be The reader will probably be induced to approve of Mr Godwin’s attempt to be assured of the lady’s regard before he exposed himself to the humiliation of a refusal.

Miss Lee had more oldfashioned notions, & appended the following remarks to this letter

“The tone of this letter appears to me betray vanity disappointed by the scantiness of the homage it had received, rather than mortified by any apprehension of discouragement. If any offense was given by the former letter this is calculated to renew & encrease it; for it is equally presuming, without being more explicit, except in two sentences, so alien from to the temper & or distant from the express reach of the rest, that they should be made

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under all the circumstances to leave the letter. An alternative imposed on her by the second clause, presents itself to me thus - This journey to Bristol has no reference to me; as far as that is concerned the visits are simply as an acquaintance. But his title to be received as such is lost by his forwardness to employ the priviledges & claim the rights of a more endeared relation. The purpose of his journey is addressed to me, & it may be dictated either by humility or assurance. I doubt whether the former interpretation would be given to a letter in which the same air & accent reign as in this.”

Such are the remarks I find written on the letter itself - returned it would seem to the writer after their intercourse ceased.^{xlii} She replied to it however, in civil terms, saying that she had never received his first letter, & expressing pleasure in the name of her sisters & herself at the prospect of seeing him again.

.....

c.507/6^{xliii}

HL-WG 4 June 1798

»»»[addressed]

Mr Godwin/Polygon/ Somers Town/London/No. 5,/North Parade//Bath

[postmark]

5 Ju 98

»»»

Bath June 4th 1798

Sir,

Both my Sisters & myself will be extremely glad to have the pleasure of seeing you as you pass thro' Bath: in the interim I beg you will acquit me of the rudeness of not answering your first Letter, as I assure you I never received it.

With the Compliments of my Family I remain, Sir,

Your obliged & obedient Servant,

Harriet Lee

.....

b.228/4

»»»^{xliv}

On the fifth of June Mr Godwin set out for Bath, and did not hesitate at once to press his suit. It was not successful, as the following letter records

[blank]

....

WG-HL [n.d]

»»»^{xliv}

In the situation in which our conversation last night left the subject to which it relates, I feel it incumbent upon me to trouble you once more upon paper with some ideas that arose in the course of it, for your more full consideration.

In every deliberation that relates to our choice of life, the true & rational mode of deciding is by raising to our minds a large & comprehensive picture of that future which our choice is to decide on, that by seeing all that it presents of good or evil, we may make such a determination as the mixed scene of human sublunary affairs renders necessary. In this world there is nothing final, & it would therefore be the extreme of folly to make no choice of anything, till we ceased to see any possible objection to it. But, in the mixed & many-coloured objects we see in this moving scene, there will perhaps always be a superiority of good over ill, or of ill over good. The difference between judgment & caprice lies in this, that judgment is determined by the real overbalance of recommendation or the contrary existing in the object; while caprice, fixing on some one quality

that happens to strike, in the object, never arrives at that just & dignified estimate of the whole which is alone entitled to govern our conduct.

We got thus far, I think, in our last conversation, that the decision you shall be pleased to make will be of the greatest importance, since, though it may be easy for either of us ^{^to^} marry, supposing the present question to be decided in the negative, yet it is not probable that either of us should ^{^will^} discover meet with a fit & suitable partner, capable of being the real companion of our minds & improver of our powers. We must remain in that separate & widowed state of the heart, which is no part of the system of nature, or must, as St Paul says, be unequally yoked.

Let me, I intreat you, excite your mind to enter into that picture of the future, which, just now, is the only thing interesting. If you consent to my suit, we shall not join in devotions together, but that neither should we, if my opinions were the exact counterpart of yours. Sober & unsuperstitious religion is an affair of solitude & meditation, nor does any human creature come between the man impressed with

”””

rational sentiments in this respect & his God. In every thing that belongs to the intercourse of life, the difference of our sentiments enters for nothing.^{xlvi} You are not of that weak & bigoted^{xlvii} herd, that who believe that we ought to hold ourselves detached from the scene of things of which we make a part, to purify ourselves from passions & affections to all that is most nearly attached to us, to fix our regards exclusively on things invisible, & to consider the events around us with the cold & unmanly indifference of pilgrims & strangers. You are willing, like me, to enter with ardour & with the heart into all that is interesting to our happiness & all by which we can influence the happiness & improvement of ourselves others. You are sensible, like me, that the true way of recommending ourselves to the approbation of a just & benevolent creator, is to discharge our duty here, & engage with the full bent of our souls in the scene in which he has placed us. True religion, I think you will admit, requires that our attention & the fulness of our exertions should be engaged here. Pass over in your mind every thing which, if we were united, would employ us from day to day & from week to week. Things in which we perfectly sympathised, in which we acted in concert, in which our feelings would vibrate to each other. In the exercise of the benevolent & social affections, in the improvement of our understandings, in taste, in the admiration of natural beauty or the beauties of human productions, in the expressions, the refined, the delicious, but always evanescent expressions of mutual attachment, those expressions in which the true consciousness of life consists, that attachment which converts this terrestrial scene into a paradise, we should, I hope, fully coincide, nor should one discord intrude into the comprehensive harm[on]y.^{xlviii}

I have earnestly remonstrated against the precipitation of your judgment, because I wished you to accept or reject me upon an accurate knowledge & a full feeling of what I was. This may at first sight appear unfair, a sort of corrupting the judge to give a partial decision. But it is the reverse. I do not wish to present a garbled representation of myself, or

^{xlix}
”””

that you should form any notion respecting me, but exactly that which you would find realised in the most intimate union. That you should have a full apprehension of this is barely just. Your decision cannot be right,

except so far as you have the whole future before you, &, by dint of a warm & ardent imagination, see what would be, in the same vivid colours as if it actually was, with all its recommendations & all its disadvantages.

I do not see how between persons of liberality & intellectual refinement, in the most intimate union, any serious misapprehension & contention can possibly arise. The vulgar idea is that, between man & wife, there must be a struggle for power, & that there are concessions scruples will often arise respecting concessions to be made, lest an undue advantage should be taken by the opposite party. In such a contention a liberal mind could have no part: scarcely any thing could induce me to live with a person from whom I should apprehend such a taking of advantage. Between ingenuous minds the fear from concession could never arise: they would each be ready at all times to study the gratification of the other, nor would either be capable of ungenerous usurpation. I am sure a generous spirit will never be restrained from concession by such a fear, nor would scarcely any thing induce such a one to live with a person from whom he feared apprehended an usurpation of that sort. A generous spirit would be ready at all times to study the gratification of the partner of his life. By such mutual sacrifices only is the harmony of the union maintained; & none, but a groveling & ignoble mind soul could conceive the project of converting kindne tenderness & affection into an instrument of slavery.

Give me leave now to express, because I feel, astonishment, that your mind should be capable of treating the point in discussion between us, as calculated to turn the balance of your the whole deliberation. This, I am persuaded, is a part of that prejudice which every nation of the world entails upon its inhabitants, that even your vigilance & sagacity has not yet led you to detect. As a question of speculation, every unbeliever in revelation must ad-

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mit that it is attended with much obscurity; as a matter of taste & sentiment, in which light you are principally disposed to regard it, I grant that it is considerably eminently interesting; but would you reject a man for every defect of this sort, because he did not relish landscapes, or music, or ^plays^ painting ? You probably recollect the saying of Plutarch to prove that an atheist (which I ought not to be called) is better than a bigot. “I had rather”, said he, “it should be affirmed hereafter that there never was such a man as Plutarch, than that Plutarch was ill-natured, morose, sanguinary vindictive or tyrannical.”¹ Do you tolerate no difference of opinion in an intimate union? Must the man of your choice be absolutely perfect? Is one blemish to swallow all the multifarious branches & circumstances of which character is constituted?

You admit in some degree the force of thisⁱⁱ when you say, What will my sisters, what will the world think? I would on no account induce you to do any thing that should make your intimate connections unhappy, but I do not believe that any such consequences would arise in this case. My our approbation of a man by no means implies approbation of his errors or his faults. It does imply a general approbation, an opinion that his merits, in my our apprehension, clearly & decisively outweigh his defects.

What will the world say? In the first place, I am not sure that you do not labour under some mistake in this case. I must be permitted to say upon this occasion, that, among those who personally know ^me^, the respect & love I ^have^ obtained, is, I believe, fully equal to any reputation I may be supposed to have gained for talents. I believe no person who has so far run counter to the prejudices & sentiments of the world, has been less a subject of obloquy: I know that many whose opinions in politics & government are directly the reverse of

mine, yet honour ^me^ with their esteem. I cannot therefore be of opinion that your forming a connection with me would be regarded as by any means discreditable to you.

But indeed it is unworthy of the strength of your mind, to suffer the world to come in for any thing in a question of this

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importance. Two persons forming the most intimate of all unions, should suffice to each other, & bid the world stand aloof from the sacredness of their engagements. Do you think it is possible, if they feel strongly & ardently towards each other, that, if you put their mutual sentiments in one scale, & the whole world in the other, the world would be any thing more than the mere dust of the balance?

I have said to you once before, Do not go out of life without having ever known what life is. Celibacy contracts & palsies the mind, & shuts us out from the most valuable topics of experience. He who wastes his existence in this state, may have been a spectator of the scene of things, but has never been an actor, & is just such a spectator as a man would be who did not understand a word of the language in which the concerns of men are transacted. The sentiments of mutual & equal affection & of parental love, & these only, are competent to unlock the heart & expand its sentiments. They are the Promethean fire,^{liii} with which if we have never been touched, we have scarcely attained the semblance of what we are capable to be. When I look at you, when I converse with you, it is more, much more, the image of what you ^might be &^ are fitted to be, that charms me, than the contemplation of what you are. I regard you as possessing the materials to make that most illustrious & happiest of all characters, when its duties are faithfully discharged, a wife, a mother. But, if you are eminently ^& peculiarly^ qualified for its [illeg.] offices, it is the more to be regretted, & shall I not add, the more to ^be^ censured in you, if you preemtorily & ultimately decline them.

.....

WG-HL [n. d.]^{liv}

”””

Dear Madam

You have humbled my pride; you have given a severe blow to the self-complacency of my heart: ^but^ I cannot prevail on myself to regard what passed at our last interview of as unalterably destructive to a wish, a vision of felicity, that I have fondly cherished & obstinately pressed to my bosom. ^You have however^ But at least you have convinced me of my mistake in presumptuously imagining that, from the commencement of our acquaintance, our hearts understood each other, & were animated by a common sentiment. I have that entire conviction of & deference for your sincerity as ^to^ compel me, though without dismissing the vision & the hope so dear to me, to confess with shame my presumption in believing that you entertained for me the preference I desired.

You hinted, in the course of our interview that you supposed me too delicate & too proud to desire to form the most intimate connection with a woman who did not feel for me the distinguishing preference which on my part I avowed. My delicacy however does not dictate to me this sentiment. While you disavowed that degree of distinguishing preference, you confessed you must suffer me to repeat your words of admiration & esteem. Why should not these feelings (in the first instance)^{lv} content me? Is it necessary that the absence of

any further sentiment at so early a period of our intercourse, should carry death to my hopes? You do not feel the distinguishing preference I was eager to anticipate; but, if you feel partiality, if the feelings you professed may be interpreted into this sentiment unmixed with any thing of an opposite nature, may not this suffice? Convinced as I am of the unwearied assiduity with which I should study your happiness, & how entirely you would feel that I made

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your peace & pleasure the source of mine, I should not fear that your partiality, ^{lvi} might I but flatter myself with that, would ripen into distinguishing preference & every thing of the tenderest nature. Love at first sight, romantic & unbounded resistless passion, is the ignis fatuus of youth; but, however delicious a premeditation it may afford, the event that attends it, is not always happy permanent or enviable. The regard, which, commencing in unmingled, unalloyed esteem, is every day increasing with increasing knowledge & intimacy, affords a much more rational basis of hope. I remember to have heard a similar sentiment from your own lips. ^Give me this then, & I will welcome it as the auspicious harbinger of every thing endearing & affectionate.^{lvii}

Allow me to press one idea on your mind, which it would be my duty to state, even though it were impossible that I should ever be interested in your election. It seems to me unworthy of your talents & your wisdom to go out of the world without making experiment of the satisfaction that attends upon the intimacy of two persons of opposite sexes. Is human life so fraught with enjoyments, as to justify us in abjuring the greatest it can afford? You say that you have formed to yourself a plan of contentment, the basis of which consists in suppressing the strong passions. In ^adopting^ this plan you would be wise, were you without an alternative. But do not, I intreat you, voluntarily determine to be unacquainted with the most eligible condition of which our nature is susceptible. Do not die, without ever having lived: for that only deserves the name of life, when we feel existence as if it were at every pore, when we melt with tenderness & affections unspeakable, when we glow with a generosity & disinterestedness with which a life of celibacy must be for ever unacquainted. All else in sublunary existence, is comparative death. If it were possible for me in the present case to forget all retrospect to myself, I should say, ^yet marry^. tho’

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you should reject me, yet marry. I should ^be^ ultimately & irreversibly excluded from your choice.

Indeed I have sometimes indulged the notion It ^has indeed often occurred to me^ that persons of great intellectual refinement are the only persons perfectly formed for the marriage state. In marriage, however intimate the union, the persons will still be two, will in many cases have different inclinations & a different choice. Without intellectual refinement it is impossible for either party to be fully aware of the propriety of concession, to concede with grace, & to derive from these sacrifices, the highest & fullest purest gratification, the full & delicious consciousness how dear to him is every wish of the partner of his ^our^ heart. How discouraging, in comparison with this, is the life of him who ^that is^ disunengaged & alone, who ^that^ knows no persons of whose sensations & pleasures he is the ever wakeful guard, & who fully repays him responds to the abundance of his affection! I am fully conscious how liable a man is to be deceived in his estimate of himself; but, if there is any thing which from self examination a man can certainly know, I know that I could be this to you.

It is, I think scarcely ^ am sure un^necessary to guard you against that false shame, which would induce ^incline^ a vulgar character to feel difficulty, if induced to see an object in a different point of view, in adopting the language suitable to the alteration of mind that difference. I trust I do not place in you a confidence that shall be vain, when I believe that you will have the generosity & dignity, in reading this letter & reflecting on it, to reexamine the subject entire. If I know any thing of you, I know that you have the skill & the fortitude to retract gracefully, & not the miserable unworthy cowardice that should preclude withhold you from judging better afresh anew, because you had once delivered a judgment.

It remains for me to state that it is my purpose to visit ^Bath^ once more in the ensuing autumn. You cannot, I think, reasonably object to this; you cannot refuse to admit my

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visits upon the same footing as previously to the explanation that occurred in our last interview.^{lviii} I will not importune you on the subject of that explanation; I will introduce it, but with discretion. Believe me, I know myself well enough to know that my mind will be more tranquil after that visit, be its issue what it may, than without it. I should be ashamed, both for your sake & mine, to be officiously & hopelessly pertinacious. But do you think I can give up a cause of this sort without having done it entire justice ^endeavoured to compensate the disadvantages of abruptness & distance^? I might reasonably be charged reproached that my heart was not in my proposal, if I did not practise a certain degree of persistence. The voice of nature within me ^ constituent principles of my nature^ bid me aspire to receive & communicate happiness. Through the whole universe, I firmly believe, I cannot find another individual to whom I can rationally look up for the happiness I aim at except yourself. The fortunes of the event of my life are in your hand. I dread that solitary existence, that incommunication of silence^{lix} & torpor of the heart, to which, I fear, it depends on you to condemn me. I am satiated with vague intercourse with the world, & the frigid barrenness of empty praise.^{lx} I require a friend of my bosom, whose approbation & sympathy shall stand me in stead of all the world. In this friend I require that cultivated mind, that can give as well as receive, & that can improve my mind, while she ravishes my soul. All other love is transitory & deceitful, & can last no longer than the novelty of its object. In this friend I require unbounded, undivided intimacy, together with every advantage that nature bestows for giving to the intimacy permanence & effect. I require sentiment, delicacy, a liberal temper mind, a candid temper, a warm & ingenuous heart. Where can I find these properties realised but in you? My address, though invincible circumstances made it somewhat abrupt, was is not of that ordinary kind, which is incident to unstable & vulgar minds ^are accustomed to practise^. Believe me, Madam, I have never yet encountered a refusal from your sex; &, as my mind ^has not^ in this respect has not been made ^become^ cheap & degraded, I shall on that account have neither the insensibility of habit nor indifference to your merits to console me & will from my conception of

[sideways in left margin]

if all my efforts to obtain engage your kindness & affection ultimately fail of success. Wealth, as you reasonably conceived, it is not in my power to offer. I neither seek, nor can bestow it. I have however hitherto lived creditably on the fruits of my industry and my pre

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sent establishment is nearly that which would probably content us both. I am satisfied I do not presume too far, when I suppose, that an over anxious retrospect to this point^{lxii} is not among the characteristics of your mind. I request an acknowledgment of the receipt of this

In what I have written I hope I have removed ^the idea of^ those difficulties & scruples which you were kind enough to suggest as liable to arise on my part to the engagement proposed. I dare not say, I dare not enquire, whether I have offered any thing, that may induce you to think me not entirely unworthy of your choice. I patiently, yet anxiously, wait the award of time. - I request an acknowledgment of the receipt of this letter & am
[blank]

.....

HL-WG 16 June 1798

”””[addressed]

Mr Godwin/Polygon/ Somers Town/London

[postmark]

Bath 18 Ju 98

lxiii
”””

Bath, June 17th 16th, 1798

Saturday.

Sir,

I should suspect myself to be deficient either in understanding or right feeling were I to persist in wholly rejecting the appeal you have so forcibly made to both.^{lxiv} You must, however, permit me to repeat that throughout the whole of our last Conversation I was perfectly sincere; impelled more particularly to be so by a contempt for that art of trifling with which so many women have been reproached: an art, frivolous at the best, & in some instances ungenerous. I am persuaded you think too justly not to be well aware that during so short an interval as has since past, no other alteration can have taken

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place in my mind but that which results from reason, & a more deliberate consideration of the respect your merit entitles you to - for any other sentiment I can only refer you - as you have referr'd yourself - to time & circumstances.

The business that obliged me to be in town in May will require me to be again there some day next week. My sister Anne accompanies me & our stay will depend upon my Brothers^{lxv} plans: but on Monday s'ennight, or any day succeeding, we shall most probably be at home from [?Twelve hrs] -Mrs [?Milton's] 17 Lower Brook Street, Grosvenor Square. My elder sister^{lxvi} is returned from Wales & regrets she had not the pleasure of seeing you here - both join in Compliments with, Sir,

Your obliged & obedient servant

Harriet Lee

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WG-HL [n. d.]

lxvii
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The letter I have just received from you^{lxviii} charms me. It perfectly accords with that noble sincerity & ingenuousness which I have ever considered as a part of your character. It confirms & fixes me in the respect I wished to entertain for my own. I am indeed the creature of other people in this respect. Though I have a strong propensity to credit myself for something valuable, I have not that proud & immoveable assurance which is proof against all opposition. When I meet with the respect of persons whose respect is worthy to be sought, I then esteem myself; when I am slighted by them, I regard myself with impatience & contempt, proportional to my former elevation. In the luxuriance of boyish scepticism,^{lxix} I was not always a convert to the views of life insisted on in my former letter, but, with the predilections of ardour with which I am now impressed, your persisting in your first determination would, to say the least, have been a severe trial to me.

You go far enough; you distinguish rightly: if, upon closer acquaintance, you do not find further cause for approbation, you ought undoubtedly to return to your first judgment. I am the farthest in the world from imputing any impropriety to you in our last interview. Indeed it was because I could scarcely see how it was possible in that instance to act otherwise than you did, that I ultimately refused, upon revision, to consider what then passed as a rejection. Now however I hope you will suffer me to believe that I was not altogether mistaken, when I conceived in March that our feelings understood one another, ^&^ that you betrayed some share of that partial favour, kindness, esteem ^how shall I denominate it?^ towards me, with which on my part my whole soul was engrossed. Nothing indeed could have divested me of this sentiment, but the persuasion, which you half succeeded to create in me in the course of our conversation, that you had some partiality, either from character or manner, against me.

Indeed, madam, you will find upon reflection, that intellec

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[v]

tual qualities & cultivation, & that those only, can promise to afford a basis of mutual regard, that familiarity shall constantly increase, & that no lapse of years shall have power to destroy. Your person, your countenance, your voice, engage my approbation, but your mind only,^{lxx} combined with these, could have made me your declared admirer. And, when I consider how rarely talents, right feeling, a just & candid turn of thought, & a reflecting & well furnished understanding are to be found in your sex, I believe I hazard very little, when I affirm that, in qualities calculated to excite my partiality, I have no chance to discover your equal. Though our personal acquaintance has been slight, I cannot therefore admit myself to have been rash & immature in my decision, & I do not fear that I shall ever find reason to alter it.

If you could witness the change your letter has produced in me, your humanity at least would be gratified. Many circumstances have lately contributed to depress me; but I am naturally of a sanguine turn of mind, & easily eagerly recover my happiness & peace, when ideas of a promising an encouraging nature do not are presented to me. Do not however imagine that I shall abuse your condescension, or interpret your answer

into any thing different from its just meaning. But indeed I feel that I cannot stand alone, that I require friendship, & something more than friendship, to support me ^take me by the hand^. At the same time I hope to be found prepared to give, what I desire to receive; & that I shall not draw upon your beneficence, without some copious ample a full return ^if you will trust me so far^ of consideration, attention, affection & kindness. The more I feel myself impressed with ^your^ liberality, the more ardent & sincere will my sentiments of regard inevitably become impossible shall I find it not to be unalterably at your devotion ^unalterable will be my attachment & devotion^.

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lxxi
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Early in July Miss Lee arrived in town and Mr Godwin instantly called on her. He saw her frequently during the following week - The accompanying her & her sister to the opera & the theatre. Unfortunately fresh objections rose in the lady's mind. His attentions were doubtless observed, his oppinions [sic] discussed, her mind biassed against him. Mr Godwin was not of a nature readily to yield to this sort of difficulty - he argued the point as regarded difference of opinion again & again - hopes he had at one time for I find noted down “After my last letter but one, she gave me every encouragement, started engagements, all at once firm rejection, & without saying, well I grant you

turn over

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[v]

your reprieve & nothing more.

The fortnight was given me; she now objects only the world; is made serious; must fly me

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WG-HL [n. d.]

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”””

As to the point respecting which I am desirous of putting down a few thoughts, is purely of a rational & general nature, I will endeavour, whatever may be my feelings on the subject, to confine myself entirely to the reason of the case.

Let me first state the quantity of difference ^that exists^ between us. I say difference, because it would be unjust to say opposition. You think yourself sufficiently clear in the truth of a proposition, which I am so unfortunate as to find incumbered with doubt, & which relates to a question that I incline to think it beyond the power of human faculties to solve. You hold an affirmative, I hold neither an affirmative nor a negative. I retire with humility from the incomprehensibleness of the subject, & do not venture to rush in, where angels fear to tread. I endeavour to know a little of the constitution & course of nature, &, within that circle, that system tells ^I find by daily experience^ such uniformity apparent as to enable me in many cases to conjecture respecting

[illeg.] I do not see by analogy with what I do ^see^; But, as to the question of how things came thus But, beyond that circle, & as to the question of what went before this order & system I see ^of things^, my experience seems to me to inform me of nothing, & from this question I retire in submission & ignorance.

Having shortly explained the nature of my opinion, the thing I attempted in our last conversation, & which I am here to attempt upon paper, is to enquire into the connection between this scepticism of mine, & the sacred maxims of morality & virtue. Morality is of two kinds, first an affair of sentiment feeling, & next, an affair of principle. As to sentiment Feeling, I readily admit that this is to be the parent of virtue. The man that does not feel rightly as to the common relations of life, of the tender charities of father, son & brother, I hold, can never be a virtuous man. He may boast as he will of comprehensive philanthropy, but can never have my confidence. I hope you find nothing in me hostile to these feelings, or suspect that I am incapable of loving the partner of my life, my child or my friend, or

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of patriotism, benevolence or humanity. The sentiment I cannot feel in the same strength as you, a sentiment towards that being who, as to my understanding at least, has encircled his throne with darkness; but I hope that circumstance, instead of detracting from my other affections, will rather, if it restrict the current in one channel, rather make it flow the more copiously in those that remain.

So far as morality is an affair of principle, I daresay you will not deny A that its foundation is in a desire of the happiness of others the sentiment, & the sacred adherence to that sentiment, that ^as^ I am capable of pleasure & pain, so are other living beings, & that, as I desire pleasure, they are equally impressed with that feeling. This principle requires us to deliberate as to the sum of good or evil to result from our actions, always to rejoice in conferring pleasure & advantage, & never to inflict pain or withhold pleasure, unless in cases where we are thoroughly persuaded that a larger & more comprehensive interest requires it. A rational theist holds that the happiness of sensitive creatures is a good thing, & therefore God desires it; a bigot^{lxxxiii} only holds that the choice & plan of the creator makes that to be a good thing (for instance, happiness), which would not have been a good thing, if his^{lxxxiv} choice had been otherwise. The will of God therefore, according to every rational notion, is a sanction of morality, not its foundation, nor the reason why a thing is moral rather than otherwise. Every rational religionist & divine I ever conversed with, admits this to be the true state of the case.^{lxxxv}

The sanction of morality derived from religion consists ^principally^ in rewards & punishments. I believe, & I dare affirm that you believe, that the man who is moral, merely from a conception of rewards & punishments, is not a virtuous man at all. A

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virtuous man adopts a certain mode of action because he loves his fellow man, B because he rejoices in the welfare & prosperity of his species, & not because he expects a reward for doing right, or fears a punishment for doing wrong. Actions performed from that motive, may be called virtue, but are in reality mere selfishness & cowardice.

For myself I have devoted myself for the happiness of my species; I have published various writings in circumstances of great danger, one an attack upon the judge by whom I expected Horne Tooke, Holcroft & other of my friends to be hanged; a publication^{lxxxvi} that appeared but a few days before their trial, & which is

supposed by them to have eminently contributed to save their lives. No man, I believe, charges me with a neglect of morality. I have chosen my system of conduct; other men may have made efforts more successful for morality & public happiness; no man has made efforts more sincere; by the genuine principles of morality I am determined to live, & for them I believe I know myself well enough to say I have the resolution to die.

I feel it, my dear madam, to be a misfortune even to doubt of principles which the world has agreed to treat as too sacred even for examination. Every day I am exposed to the chance of some sort of persecution, unkindness & stigma, because I have dared to think for myself in points respecting many of which I am aware you think as I do. I feel it as an extremely painful addition to my misfortune, that it has the power to create a degree of uncertainty & contention in your mind as to one of the most serious & important choices of human life. There are few things that I can feel more poignantly ^impress me^ than that I have occasion to give you pain, or that by an opinion or rather a doubt, which is perhaps my misfortune, but which in

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reality constitutes a mere shade of difference, I should be exposed to incur the risk of losing you.

Recollect, I intreat you, the many points in which we agree. We have each exercised our thinking powers; we have each cultivated candour, liberality & ingenuousness; we each of us have a strong & lively sensibility & an active imagination. We can converse & understand each other; we have a thousand topics of communication which the world intermeddles not with; & we are capable of relieving & giving interest to these communications, by an interchange of endearments, pure from the gross^ness^ of vulgar minds, & which, while they are the the sources of undescribable pleasure, are also calculated to render us more liberal, more generous, more satisfied with ourselves, & more susceptible of the truest & best consciousness of existence. We differ only in one point, when the wisest & most exalted of men have been able to do no better than wander in D darkness. Do you imagine that you can be injured in your cast of mind by such a connection? If so, then indeed am I a despicable impostor. For myself, I feel that such a connection has the strongest possible tendency to render me like an angel or a God, to fit me for every thing trying or exalted to which I can be called in the present state or a future. Do you think that we shall want scope for our sympathies? No; if we look to each other, to the dearest relations of human life, to those within our reach to benefit, or that call for our compassion or our friendship, we shall find ourselves animated with the same desires & burning with the same wishes. We are capable, when we look abroad into society, of the same selections & the same approbations. Are we ^Let us be neither^ romantic enough to expect to

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differ in nothing, nor intolerant enough not to indulge each other in the few points in which all human beings, & particularly such as are of independent understandings, must expect to differ.

I have nothing ^further^ to add except to remind you of our contract, that the subject to which this letter relates, is not to be decided on unfavourably for the present. In our conversation^{lxxvii} you seemed to commit the mistake of supposing that morality could have no solid & immoveable foundation without religion ^it appeared that some of the ideas insisted on in this letter were in a great degree new to you;^ & it is but fair to suppose that this will require some space of reflection, before they can be absolutely decided on. Many divines have attested that religion is necessary to secure the morals of the multitude; but, I believe, no liberal divine has denied, that morality is an independent and eternal principle, to which religion & the will of god himself can

only act in the mode of a foreign support & incidental sanction. Since then your daring & active mind had never been put in the pain of reflecting on this evident & admitted truth, you must allow that it will require some ^space of reflection, before they can be absolutely decided on^ small lapse of time to enable you to judge of its tendency to diminish your objection.^{lxxviii}

All I ask is that you will not decide judge prematurely, that you will grant allow time for my character, my good & my bad qualities, to develop themselves. You will then see whether the latter promise more to interfere with, or the former to promote, your true satisfaction & happiness; & I shall have the consolation, even if rejected, of having obtained from you a fair & honourable attention, & of not being ^knowing that I was not^ rejected through prejudice, misconception, or caprice.

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[?essence] lies in a comparison between other human beings & ourselves, the perception that they are alike capable of happiness, & that their pleasures & pains, intrinsically considered, are objects of no less importance than our own. This perception obliges me, to deliberate as to the sum of good or evil to result from my actions, in all instances to seek the improvement & happiness of others, & never to give pain or withhold pleasure, except in cases when I am well assured that a larger & more comprehensive interest demanded it. It obliges me to consider myself as a member of the great family of mankind, when, all being fellow labourers, each is bound to contribute in proportion to his ability to the common good. In acts of utility, which by producing the happiness of individuals, add to the general stock, a wise & just man will place his pleasure & his pride. There is nothing else that can purchase him genuine honour, or solidly secure to him the approbation of his own heart. If I do not venture to expatiate far into the invisible world, I do not the less sensibly feel what passes, in what is to me the world of realities. Fanaticism may, & often does, harden the heart; but the spirit which leads to the exclusion of what is visionary, [illeg.]^{lxxx} that it should be carried to excess, rather tends to increase one's interest in the pleasures & pains of our brethren.

Bigots have pretended that the will of God is the foundation of morality, that what he commanded is therefore right, & what he forbids is therefore wrong. But rational theism teaches that morality is antecedent to the divine will, & is a rule that God himself delights to conform. Rational morality ^theism^ teaches that god is good; & to prove he is so; comparws his providence & works with the immutable standard of rectitude to which god & good men equally adhere. The will of God therefore is by no means the foundation of morality, but merely its sanction, an additional reason why we should conform it.

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B Many divines have asserted that religion is necessary to secure the morals of man the multitude; but, I believe no liberal divine ever denied that morality was an independent & eternal principle. A virtuous man pursues a certain system of action, because his heart demands it, because he rejoices in the happiness & good of his fellow men, & not because -

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C For myself, I must be permitted on such an occasion to say, that I have chosen my system of conduct. My

feelings prescribe it; my understanding approves it; unalterable habit makes it a part of myself. Though I do not venture to be confident in the field of conjecture, morality & virtue are the objects of my ^{^most^} rooted attachment. All my speculations have been directed to the clearing their foundations, & illustrating their principles; & all my writings, in [^{^sic^}] own apprehension at least, have been destined to increase & spread the love of rectitude & of man.

D We agree in all the spontaneous sentiments of the heart & all the real relations of life; we differ only in what is scarcely an object of human apprehension.

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WG-HL [n. d.]^{lxxxii}

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There is one consideration which, upon recollection, I feel myself extremely surprised at having omitted in my letter regarding our difference of opinion.

The most obvious way of detecting any prejudice which education may have planted in my mind is to enquire whether it is not local. This enquiry I remember to have first started doubts in my own mind respecting Calvinism & Christianity, the system in which I was bred, & I have little doubt that the same has happened to you. I am a Calvinist, said I, and am taught that whoever does not believe the doctrines of Calvin will be damned. Yet how small a handful in our modern age of the world are the followers of Calvin? What an accident that I happen to be here among them? If I had been born in any other age or quarter of the world, I should never have heard of them. The same may be observed, with a little enlargement of meaning, respecting^{lxxxiii}

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You ^{^incline to^} imagine that to believe in the belief of the existence of a God, is indispensable to the character of a worthy, accomplished & amiable man; &, in thus simplifying the articles of his creed, you think that you do enough. The time has been when you & I considered Christianity, & probably some particular system of Christian faith, ^{^as^} indispensable in the character we should admire & love. But, when we looked abroad in the world, we found that the adherents of this system were comparatively but a handful of men in a very recent period of history, & we became sensible that the sources of approbation love & admiration might exist out of the pale of our sect & country.

Now this observation is precisely applicable to the question between us. Theism is a doctrine of about

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two thousand years old & previously to that period had scarcely been heard of in any civilized nation of this world. This fact is very far from a disparagingment to the doctrine; many of the sublimest discoveries of the human mind have been made within that period, & undoubtedly pure theism is a very sublime principle. It only proves that this principle however admirable, is not indispensable.

For the first ages of history, & in all savage nations, no man ever thought of enquiring into the origin of the universe. They took things as they found them, & the only invisible beings they thought of were such as disturbed, not generated, the order of the universe. A monster, a tempest, a famine, an earthquake, any calamity that terrified them, they ascribed to an invisible being, & became religious, or rather superstitious. They supposed the same beings who disturbed the general economy, could rectify the disorders they committed; & therefore they prayed & sacrificed, to propitiate the favour of the Gods or appease their anger. The religion of the ancient Greeks & Romans taught, that Gods & men rose together out of the primeval chaos, & that the Gods were but a little superior in power to men, & were subject to human follies & vices. At length speculative men enquired into the origin of all things: Hesiod said they rose from night; Thales from water; another philosopher from fire. Anaxagoras, the master of Socrates, about 250 years before Christ, is the first philosopher upon record, who ascribed the order of the universe to the interference of a designing mind. But his philosophy was by no means more popular than that of many of his competitors.

The result is then, that we live in an age of theists. But is this a reason why we should not love the great heroes or philosophers of ancient Greece or Rome, or why we should ascribe to them an intolerable defect? The majority of them lived before theism, as we understand it, was known. ^Of those who lived at a later period^ Cicero was a sceptic, Horace was an Epicurean, & so on of the greater part of the rest. Give me leave to say that I should prefer these men with as friends, associates or models, though with the defects we ascribe to them, to infinitely prefer them, to almost any of my contemporaries. They were men, with the affections, the spirit & the energies of men, while we are sunk in a cold & levelling apathy & uniformity.

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WG-HL [n. d.]^{lxxxiv}

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I sit down now as a disinterested friend to give you an opinion, the result of what has lately passed between us. It is little likely that anything of consequence to me should result arise either way from what I am going to state. I give up the point I have hitherto sought to enforce. You have erected an insurmountable wall of separation between us. Henceforth we shall be no more to each other than persons people that had heard of each other's names, that remember there was a period when for a short time they had the habit of seeing each other, & who may now & then have the occasion to say, Dear me! no, I believe he is not dead, is he? It might have been otherwise. It ought to have [^{^sic}] otherwise. But you have made your election. I have neglected nothing that became me; I laboriously brought the whole subject before you; but you have remained pertinacious & immovable. Certainly my opinion of you is not altered; my partiality is not diminished; if it were yet possible that you should view the question between us with justice fairness & liberality, it would afford me a gratification much, much beyond the power of words to express. It would change me into a new creature; & open to me afresh the most pleasing prospects of life. I know that your heart, the bias & leaning of your heart, is on my side. But you have found the secret of suppressing the feelings of your heart, & subjecting them to the mystery & dogmas of your creed. Suppose then that you are reading the reflections of an impartial friend who has the courage to communicate to you the truth; suppose that the person whose visits you have lately had the

occasion to receive is dead. Such a supposition may easily be made; & will cause make little difference in anything to which you look forward. The friend who addresses you, as he has the courage to treat you ingenuously, so, I hope, he will not forget what is due to your sex & your merits, or utter a word which it would misbecome you to hear.^{A lxxxv}

What I have to say relates almost entirely to that creed which has been the instrument of putting an insuperable bar between us. I have not a word to say against a liberal & elevated deism; I yield it every respect, as an opinion gratifying, soothing & sublime. I have friends of all opinions, & I entertain no disrespect for any; the allowance I demand, I freely & unreservedly give. But to your creed as connected with what has lately passed between us I have much objection, & that objection I feel myself prompted to state; you will perhaps meet with no other friend who will urge what I am going to urge, & which probably merits your attention. The unworthy alloy you have mixed with your theism you owe to the retirement & peculiarity of your situa-

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tion; & if your own understanding goes on to exert itself, you will purge off this alloy, though probably too late for me to reap the benefit of the change. The exceptions I take consist of three particulars.

First, that your opinion, taken with the construction you annex to it, is the mortal foe of all moral virtues. You say, [illeg.] that, if it were not for your religion, & your ideas of a future state, you believe you should adopt a system of conduct selfish & licentious. I do not credit you when you say this; if I did, it would [^sic] impossible for me to have the smallest respect for you. I am not so unfair as to suppose that your opinion has the effect of rooting out all liberal & ingenuous virtue sentiments from your mind, but I cannot doubt that it has that tendency think it a serious misfortune that you should confess it has. Every parent & preceptor perfectly knows that a conduct adopted from the hope of reward or the fear of punishment is not has not the smallest moral virtue. If I make myself useful to my fellow men merely because I expect to be rewarded for it, it is as clear as the day, that I have no love of utility or virtue, & that, if the reward were placed on the other side, I should be the most mischievous as mischievous a creature as lives. Virtue is not a form of external conduct; it is a sentiment of the heart. I am a base & low-minded creature, whatever be my external conduct, if I do not seek to confer happiness, from a genuine principle of sympathy, & because I have a direct & heart-felt pleasure in the pleasure, the improvement & advantage of others. If Omnipotence itself were to annex eternal torments to the practice of benignity & humanity, I know not how poor a slave I might be terrified into, but I know that I should curse the tyrant, while I obeyed the command. I congratulate myself upon a creed which has no tendency to lead me by selfish & mercenary motives to a conduct, which is worthless except as it is pursued from generous motives. In reality the virtue of every good man is built upon the stable basis of what he sees & daily experiences & not upon the precarious foundation of that retribution, which he rather endeavours to credit, than certainly believes.

My second exception The second error I have noticed is that your creed, as you understand it, inculcates the worst part of bigotry. You look, as in effect you tell me, with suspicion & incredulity upon the virtue of almost all that was most illustrious in ancient times, & upon of half the most unprejudiced & exemplary men of our own day. This is the very quintessence of bigotry, to overturn the boundaries of virtue & vice, & to deny the existence of all goodness out of our pale try men not by what we see of their conduct &

know of their feelings, but by their adherence to or rejection of a speculative opinion. You have a certain Shibboleth, a God & a future state, which, if any man deny, you assert he can have no firm & stable virtue integrity. And, which is most curious, you say to him, If you have only the sentiment of virtue, if you only do good from

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a love of rectitude & benevolence, & do not feel yourself principally led to it by a foreign, an arbitrary & a mercenary motive, I can have no opinion of you. I am happy to know that these notions of yours errors have no necessary connection with either deism or Cty.^{lxxxvi}

I am happy to say that I have known many deists & many Christians. [illeg.] They perhaps think, in the language of the bible, that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; but they know that it can only be a beginning, that it may wean a man from vicious habits, but that neither fear nor hope can ever be virtue. [illeg.] I know that it has been the jargon of priests^{lxxxvii} to say that no man discards rejects religion but because he wishes to be profligate with impunity; but liberal-minded men believers despise this

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jargon shameless assertion & confess that among their opponents unbelievers are to be found many of the greatest ornaments of our nation. This liberality of construction is inconsistent neither with theism nor christianity; it is cherished by the best Christians, it reflects honour upon the name by which they are called.

The last exception I have to state, comes to the point itself, that your way of thinking in this matter has induced you to reject me. This could never have happened, if it had not been for the illiberality & bigotry into which you have unsuspectingly fallen. If you had habitually remembered, what is as clear as the sun, that religion is at best but the ally of virtue, that selfish & mercenary views are not goodness, & that multitudes of the best of men have been strangers

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to or dissenters from your creed, you would have assigned to your creed its relative importance, & never suffered it to thrust out every other consideration from your mind, or to suppress all the feelings & inclinations of your heart. If it could be told to a being of a superior nature to man, the distant spectator of our transactions, that a person of a cultivated mind & who has risen superior to many prejudices, having formed a notion of an infinite creator, a notion almost beyond the cognisance of our understanding, & which by its most enlightened adherents has been pronounced not to be an object of reason, but merely of taste, & having formed this notion, had suffered it, in a most important question, to supersede & annihilate every consideration the most substantial & unquestionable, doubtless it would appear to him incredible. Surely, if there be such a thing as reason we ought to assign to^{lxxxviii}

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But I have done.^{lxxxix} I entertain no hope of a good effect from what I now write, & merely give vent to the sentiments your determination was calculated to excite. I have made no progress with you; when you have dropped ^an objection^ it has been only afterwards to revive it; when I have begun to entertain fairer prospects,

you have convinced me I was deluding myself. My personal qualities, good or bad, are of no account in your eyes; you are concerned only with the articles of my creed. I am compelled to regard the affair as concluded, & the rational prospect of happiness to you & myself as superseded, by something you conceive better than happiness. I have now discharged my sentiments, & here ends my censure of your mistake. If ever you be prevailed on to listen to the addresses of any other man, may his success be decided on more equitable principles than mine has been.

....

HL-WG 31 July 1798

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You distress me, Sir, extremely by again agitating a question which ought to be considered as decided. I had full opportunity while in Town to hear, and attentively to weigh your opinions concerning the position [[^]sic] which we most differ: for perhaps I do not agree with you in supposing our minds in unison on many others: but that is immaterial. The matter before us is decisive. All the powers of my understanding of the better feelings of my heart concurr'd in the resolution I declared before [illeg.] we parted. Every subsequent reflection has but confirm'd it. With me our difference of opinion is not a mere theoretical question. I never did, never can feel it as such, & it is only astonishing that you should do so. It announces to me a certain difference, I had almost said a want in the Heart, of a thousand times more consequence than all the various shades of intellect or opinion. My resolution then remains exactly, & firmly, what it was: it gives me great pain to have disturb'd the quiet of your mind, but I cannot remedy

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the evil without losing the rectitude of my own's.

I have taken from my Sister the unpleasant task of telling you what you are unwilling to credit. She does justice to your understanding, she wishes you every good that you can reasonably demand; but recollect how improbable it is that I should cherish opinions she has not entertain'd long before;^{xc} and even if I did, self-dependent as I am both in mind & years, how little likely is it that I should look to another for a rule either of duty or Happiness.

You tell me that you are individually beloved^{xc} by those who know you, & I can easily believe it, but, I will tell you that even among the number of your Friends, or at least well-wishers there are to my knowledge those who much lament and even blame the lengths to which your systems of thinking have carried you and who recede insensibly from your opinions while they preserve a respect for your intentions.

If in our conversations I have appear'd in

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any moments undecided it was only at those when it seem'd to me that truth & genuine feeling were so strongly on my side that while you were collecting arguments to enlighten my mind, I felt persuaded of the possibility of a change in your own. And why should I not? - a doctrine so necessary to the heart, so [[?]consonant] to the reason, as that of a just & all powerful Deity will (I hope) one day find its way to both. My own good wishes, & those of my Siste[r], attend you. Nothing further can or ought [[^]sic] said by either of us. Farewell - but let it be a friendly Farewell!

July 31st 1798

H. L.

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WG-HL [n. d.]^{xcii}

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A What you have done is in the genuine style of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. You have put out of sight the man, & asked only what he believes. In the midst of the vast world of conjecture, you hav before the beginning of all things, that appropriate field of wild assertion, in which proud man, ignorant of the essence & character of what immediately passes under his eyes, delights to expatiate, you have chosen a creed. You have done well; it amuses the fancy; it is the parent of a thousand interesting pictures; it soothes the heart with pleasing ideas. This is the deism^{xciii} of those persons whom I have known, who, having shaken off the empire of infant prejudices, yet differ from me in the point in which you differ. They ^{^frankly^} acknowledge that it is a matter of taste, & not a matter of reason. What can you know of the origin of the universe? Wert thou present when the formations of the earth were laid? Didst thou see whereupon ^{the^y^} formations of the earth are fastened, or who laid the cornerstone thereof? Knowest thou it because thou wert then born, or because the number of thy days is great?^{xciv} Still more ^{^unsupported^} groundless in reason is the notion of a future state.

Still more groundless unsupported in reason is the notion of a future state. We see a man die; we can lock up his body in a vault; we can visit it from day to day, & observe its gradual waste; & we say that an invisible part of him is flown off, & inhabits somewhere with a consciousness that that & that only is the man. The evidence that we had of his existence was speech & motion & pulsation & breath. All this is changed into a motionless & putrid mass, & we still say, the man exists. We pretend to infer the character of infinite benevolence from what we see in a world, when despotism & slavery & misery of war continually prevail,^{xcv} & then, reasonably growing discontented with the scene, we piece out another world most miserably with hallelujahs & everlasting rest according to our own fancy, & we call this evidence. We first infer the goodness of God from what we see, & then infer that this world is not worthy of the goodness of that being whose existence we deduced formerl ^{^from it^}. I have no disrespect for these opinions; far from it. I regard them as the food of a sublime imagination & an amiable temper. But I expect the unprejudiced man that cherishes them, to know them for what they are, the creatures of taste & not of reason. I expect him to be moderate & forbearing in asertion [sic]. I know that such a man will never regard this invisible world, with which he has no acquaintance, & which is the mere creature of his conjecture, as a balance for the realities around him; will never, instead of enquiring what is a man's understanding, what is his genius, what are his morals, what is his temper, what the improvement, the pleasure, the mode of happiness he proposes to me^{xcvi} ^{^him^}, - will never, I say, instead of this, enquire, what is his creed, & judge him by that. This mode of proceeding can suit those only, who walk in a vain show, who regard themselves

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as pilgrims & strangers here, & ^contemplating^ regarding what is with frigid & ^monastic^ ungenerous indifference ^all that is^ fix their attention only upon ^all that^ what is not

You could not have come to the conclusion to which you do ^have come^ never have classed with those fanciful dogmatists, had it not been for two errors that I have noted in you, the alloy & not the essence of theism, & which you could never have imbibed but for the retirement & peculiarity of your situation.^{xcviii} If your understanding goes on to exert itself, you will shake off these errors, though perhaps probably too late for me to reap the benefit of the change.

The first of these errors lies in supposing that morality has its foundation in religion. Religion, when restrained within proper bounds, I grant to be respectable. But, when it usurps a province it ought not to invade, when its professors representing morality as incapable of existing without its aid, I then suspect it to be the grand foe of truth & of man ^cannot then bestow on it my respect^. Morality is founded in palpable & unchangeable principles, it appeals to the heart of every man capable of affections & feeling, whatever be his creed. It relates to the great realities of human life, to the improvement of the human mind, to the diffusion of human happiness, & depends upon no conjecture, however pleasing, of an invisible world & a reward hereafter. The man who, fixing his imagination upon all that is not, contemplates with frigid indifference all that is, who regards himself as a stranger & pilgrim here, &, instead of opening his heart to the best affections of his nature, abstracts himself from all around him, is to be regarded as a man who has poisoned his understanding & feelings with a delusive enthusiasm.

B Religion, as you understand it, is certainly the adversary of all improvement. The operation of the errors I have been endeavouring to detect, is in a high degree injurious to you. You embrace certain tenets upon high ^elevated^ ^incomprehensible subjects, which may be pleasing, which may even be true; & so far you [?& I agree] But, when you come to regard ^consider^ these sublime conjectures as every thing, & regard all human worth & all human happiness as unfit to be put in competition with them, you then become a visionary, & part with every thing ^all^ that is most wholsom & sound in human understandings. As to the genuine & most honourable feelings of our nature, it ^the case^ is still worse. I should be glad to know in what way you admire Voltaire's tragedy of Zayre, while you imitate the conduct error of Zayre, to suffer yourself, by ^out of^ consideration for a certain dogmatical creed, to be led contrary to the genuine dictates of your heart & your understanding. I am worthy of you, or I am not.^{xcix} Happiness, the cultivation of the best emotions of the mind, the opening ^of^ the soul by new relations, the affording a ^new^ field for the most refin valuable experience, & a new document for the understanding of human nature & society, the communication of the most refined sentiments, the awakening your soul ^heart^ from the fatal calm into which it threatens to subside, would or would not be promoted by our union. The question whether or not I entertain a theoretical opinion, really makes so

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miserable a figure by the side of these, that I am astonished it should have engaged our serious discussion for a moment.

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WG-HL [n. d.]^c

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I suppressed in the letter I wrote to you last week the principal point that it was upon my mind to state, & ^which^ had first led me to address you at that time, & I suppressed it because, writing at the same time to your sister,^{ci} I felt that I should be unjust to myself & my own feelings if I in any degree had anticipated your her answer. I should otherwise have observed that, dismissing from my mind the the subject that agitated me while you were in town, I now felt the full value of your esteem, & that few things could be more pleasing to me than that [sic] the consciousness of your favourable & friendly remembrance.

I should be unjust to that frankness, which is bound to my heart by the consideration of something more important to me than the consideration of even your esteem, I mean, by the necessity imposed on me of preserving my own, if I did not tell you that I am not pleased with the tone of your last letter.

You are very unnecessarily piqued by my appeal to your sister. It was only a further proof, if further proof had been requisite, of my regard for you. I merely supposed that you were not exempt from the universal lot of our nature, when I thought your opinions & views might be more or less affected by the representations of a person ^greatly esteemed & apparently^ necessarily impartial. I never would have owed you to any ^thing^ but your own free, individual choice. I wrote to your sister, because I had reason to know ^believe^ she would see my letters to yourself, because she must inevitably give an opinion of some sort upon the perusal of them, because I felt ^thought^ that it was is difficult for the most impartial umpire to hold the balance even between a person present & absent, & because I felt it due to the importance of the I chose upon such an occasion, to preserve to myself the unalterable consciousness that I had omitted nothing that it was in my power to do. You say, under the influence of this pique that perhaps I have only to add that I have been disappointed in your sister: not certainly in her not agreeing with me in her decision upon the subject, for in that I never was sanguine.

You say, under the influence of this pique, that perhaps you do not fully agree with me in supposing our minds in unison^{cii} upon many other points, beside the one that has been a-

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gitated. Perhaps not. Be it so; for myself, I supposed you did, because I could not ^was unable^ in any other way ^to^ account to my own satisfaction for your conduct towards me.

As to your repeated charge of a want in the heart necessarily attendant on my opinions, I cheerfully submit to the an accusation which I must share with very many, living & dead, who have been the greatest ornaments of my species. I should willingly yield to your superiority in this point as in many others, were it not built on the most mischievous & vicious of all distinctions, the inferences we make to the destruction degradation of a man's moral character, because we happen not to agree with him in his creed. My opinions are built upon a basis, against which, as I firmly believe, all the gates of hell will never prevail, &, I am willing to confess, the more injustice I suffer for them, the more they cling to my heart.^{ciii}

You say, Let our farewell be a friendly one. I am afraid this epithet, friendly, sits too light upon you. I do not understand that friendship, that which proposes that nothing further shall be said by either party to each the other, & probably that they shall never see each other again. I put down the feelings your letter excites; but, if ever I come to Bath, the first suggestion of my heart mind will be, as a friend, to see you, because I consider you as an estimable & extraordinary human being.

I sought you first for your merits. You were gratified by my good opinion. Perhaps by this time you hold that good opinion light cheap, because, ^as^ you seem to think, I have respected you too much, & sought you too perseveringly. That thought will be transient; I shall then have only the exclusiveness of your creed to oppose me as an acquaintance & a friend. How far that may ^this will^ alienate your esteem for you ^from me^ I am unable to say. My good wishes & sympathy will accompany you in all the events & successes of your life. You will have in me a friend, perhaps useless, perhaps undesired, certainly one whose heart is too fervent ever to utter a friendly farewell; without anxiously desiring that it may be the forerunner of as friendly intercourse.

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HL-WG 7 Aug. 1798^{civ}

,,,[addressed]

Mr Godwin/Polygon/Somers Town/near London

[postmark]

8 AU 98

”””

The Justice due both to you and myself induces me, Sir, to reply to some parts of your last letter. That the style of mine^{cv} did not please you is not surprising, since it did not satisfy me: it is, therefore, my turn to apologise for errors of expression, if there are any, & to request that you will consider only the tendency of what I wrote.

On the subject of my Sister's silence you appear to me to have form'd an erroneous judgment. The simple fact was that she found it difficult to reconcile delicacy with sincerity, therefore, greatly by my advice, forbore to write. You are equally mistaken, I assure you, in believing that I myself wrote under the influence of pique^{cv} on the contrary I felt that I had reason to be flatter'd by your appeal: but I also felt its inutility; and

”””

it was that only I meant to explain.

Thus much for words. On the article of conduct I am much more decided. Ingenuousness was the unvariable rule of mine. I believe it to have been so of yours: & thus far each of us has cause to be satisfied with the other.

Of the opinions you “cling to” I had no right to speak, except as circumstances sometimes gave it me. My privilege, therefore, now ends compleatly with the occasion.

Suffer me, however, to add that I cannot perceive on what you ground your idea that feeling myself gratified by good opinion in the first instance, I should hold it cheap when it arose to particular distinction. Assure yourself you are wrong; & that the friendly remembrance you desire will subsist, uncheck'd by those minuter misunderstandings to which we both have been subject.

”””

It is an ungracious, tho' a proper conclusion, to request that you will not answer my Letter: but as I do not feel quite sure that this explanation is necessary, tho' I believe it to be desirable, I consider the Letter itself as almost

superfluous. Adieu!

H. L.

August 7th 1798

....

HL-WG ['Saturday morning' n. d.]^{cvii}

”””

Pardon me if from the frame of mind your letter^{cviii} announces, I tell you we ought not to meet again. to offend, or be offended by it, would be unworthy of the terms on which we have hitherto met, but it is certainly calculated to give me a much humbler opinion of myself than I have yet been taught to entertain - that topic however does not deserve another line. If I could sooth your feelings, if I could persuade you of the propriety of mine, if I could believe it possible that by further conversation I could give pleasure I should assuredly receive your visit; but reproach I have not deserved; and while you accuse me of bigotry^{cxix} you at least convince me that I can be more indulgent to errors of opinion than you yourself are. Recollect Sir. Have you a right to say that your good qualities have weigh'd nothing with me?^{cx} Why then have I expostulated at all on the subject before us? but you will one day be more just, & tho' you should continue to censure the narrowness of my

”””

understanding you will give credit to my heart; & at least acknowledge that she who had fail'd to act up to what she thought to be right would neither have been worthy of esteem or affection.

You Sir, it appears through the whole of our intercourse have not found it necessary to re-consider even what you doubt, yet you condemn me for failing to re-consider what I do *not* doubt. I enter not the lists of Controversy, but you must permit me to say that what you call the system of rewards & punishments I call that of immutable justice of Justice which, found in the human bosom, but imperfect to answer its end, I refer to the divine. The justice that confines itself to earth teaches us to respect the rights of others as the basis of their happiness: but is not happiness our own right? and when by the exertions of unsuccessful virtue we become miserable do we not, on your principles, defeat our aim by an obstinate and idle adherence to the means of acquiring it? that virtue is not always in this world happiness we know: how then, if we look not above, shall we reconcile the duty of exercising the one with the privilege of seeking the other? We will, however, suppose if

”””

if [sic] you please, that abstract Virtue & innate morality, as you explain them, may in some pure & dignified bosoms have supplied the place alike of Happiness & religion: yours may be one of the number: but since the system cannot ^I am firmly convinced^ bind society at large, I neither can nor ought to qualify with my Conscience in favour of an individual, were he even the most perfect of human beings. Once more Sir let me repeat, tho' only as a subordinate consideration, that opinions such as yours, thus deeply-rooted, & openly avow'd, have a direct tendency to withdraw you from the circle in which I should wish to live, & to form one around you in which I probably never could delight. A mind at peace with itself, a heart free to indulge unbounded Confidence & expansion, a temper wholly exempt from the most remote distrust, these are the

Characteristics of a being calculated to bestow Happiness. I must be allow'd to say of myself that I am too proud, too delicate, too weakly conscientious as you may deem it, to be that Creature to any one existing whose opinions differ as much as yours do from my own.

The feelings you ascribe to me, however, are not mine - I shall not consider as wholly dead^{cxix}

”””

to me those whose good qualities entitle them to my esteem, whose talents excite my respect, whose kindness demanded my gratitude. I shall not suffer one error, whatever its magnitude, to obliterate the recollection of moral virtue; while I separate myself decidedly, & forever, from what is wrong in any Character, I shall still preserve my esteem for what is right.

I rest persuaded that the subject on which I have written is in all respects so delicate that my letter will never meet any eye but your own. Adieu -

Saturday morning

H. L.

....

WG-HL [n. d.]^{cxii}

”””

I can not bear, after what has passed between us, to part thus. You profess friendly sentiments, but this will always remain in my memory an image of inveterate animosity. Surely it is not too much to ask to see you, when it may possibly [^]be[^] for the last time in our lives. If there is any thing too warmly expressed in the letter I gave you,^{cxiii} surely the state of my mind may afford some palliation. Whatever you may find in it of that sort, so far from being really disrespectful, in meaning, ought to be considered as [^]it is in reality[^] a proof of the high value I entertain for you, which will not suffer me to give you up in a the style of [^]entire calmness &[^] ceremony. I however sincerely ask your pardon for any thing in which I may have unintentionally offended you. You [^]greatly mistake the form of my temper[^] you may depend upon it that not [^]if you suppose that[^] one word of reproach shall will ever escape from my lips.

You are surprised I should say [^]object to my saying[^] that my personal qualities have been of no account with you.^{cxiv} In strictness probably you are right; but, in my sense of the word, they obtain no consideration, when a mere theoretical opinion is suffered to outweigh them.

I made use of the term bigotry merely as a dictionary word.^{cxv} I think it is a practice by which we injure ourselves, when we say, such or such a term may be a proper name for a defect in my neighbour, but it is an ugly word, & I will never think of applying it to myself. By a bigot I understand, one who lessens the character of others, or denies them to be [^]their being[^] good men, merely on account of an omission in their creed. If however there be the slightest indecorum in the word, that was a sufficient reason why I ought not to have used it.

I am surprised you should think it necessary to [^]give me a[^] caution me [^]of delicacy[^] respecting the confidential nature of your letter. It shall certainly never be violated by me^{cxvi}

You say, in objection to my sentiments, that virtue will not always make me happy. In answering, vice will make me less happy; & this is enough to decide my choice.

.....

end 6: writing

***documents**

c.507/6

HL-WG [n.d.]

^{cxvii}

»»»

Miss Harriet Lee presents her compliments to Mr Godwin. She is extremely sorry she cannot have the pleasure of seeing him this evening, as she finds Mrs Symons' engagements do not admit of her leaving home.

Belvidere Friday

SL-WG 2 June 1799

»»»[addressed]

Mr Godwin Esq^r/Polygon/Somers Town/London

[postmark]

Bath 3 JU 99

^{cxviii}

»»»

Sir

I feel so unconscious of a mean personality in the phrase you have marked as applied to yourself, that your letter would have made me smile, had not the air of serious pique it discovers required another conduct - in a scene like that I have attempted ludicrously to depict there must be some opposition of character, & certainly I never supposed when terming an opinionated Valet "a philosopher of the new school", I should be suspected of an impertinence to a Man of Genius & merit, from whose conversation I had derived pleasure, & from whose lips I never heard a syllable that I had either right or reason to question. I

»»»

live so entirely out of the literary world even when in London, that I was not apprized of the designation your Friends give you, or I should from delicacy have chosen some other way to contrast my characters - among my faults neither friends nor enemies will reckon insincerity, therefore I rely on your believing my explanation, and ranking me with those entitled to your esteem - however I might shun taking any part in the nice question you once addressed me upon,^{cxix} I cannot suppose my silences would lead you to misjudge her who is with regard and admiration,

Your humble servant

Bath June 2d 1799

Sophia Lee

[HL-WG]^{cxix}

My Sister has omitted to thank you for your favourable opinion of her Story, or to add my Compt^s & thanks for your *sincere* one of mine. I cannot say that I quite agree with you - but Authors Judgments on their own works are almost proverbial. I promise myself much pleasure in reading your Novel,^{cxxi} which I am told is in the press - I remain always with much regard & respect - Yrs

H. Lee -

....

SL-WG 7 Dec. 1799

^{cxxii}
,,,,

Sir

I unite with my Sister in acknowledgments for your very obliging and acceptable present of St Leon, which it is impossible to peruse without the most animated feeling, or speak of without admiration - so naturally partial am I to the softer scenes of human life as to prefer the Madonna of Raphael to his Cartoons, of course I concur with Harriet in the judgment she gives - if you know how I hate the Supernatural in any but Eastern Tales you would be pleased with thus interesting me in spite of myself.

I could wish you had not

,,,,

to a certain degree forestalled your own masterstroke by giving us Charles^{cxxiii} in a dream - I would fain come upon him in all his military dignity without a previous idea that I might -

It was not easy for the Author of Caleb Williams to keep up his own reputation, I congratulate you on having added to it, & remain

Sir, Your obliged,
Humble Servant,

Bath Decr 7th 1799

Sophia Lee

....

HL-WG 8 Dec. 1799

^{cxxiv}
,,,,

Allow me to thank you for the Books you have been so good as to send us - not as a mere form of thanks but in acknowledgment of the lively Pleasure I have received from the work. I was impress'd in the early part with the boldness of the design & the power of the language, & I see thro' the whole an energy of thinking & feeling peculiar to you. I believe I can foresee that you have not bestow'd immortality on your Hero with the resolution of limiting our knowledge of his History to so short a span: at least if the Public take the same

interest in it numberless readers doubtless will. The sex in general I think ought to hold themselves indebted to you for the character of Margarite, who appears

»»»

a model of everything charming & correct in Woman - perhaps it is the losing her, together with some other particulars, that render the latter part of the 3rd Vol to me the least pleasing one of the whole.^{cxxxv} I am however a very bad Critic on works of great interest & ought therefore only to dwell on the general impression I received from yours. - Of the social ties & affections it seems to me hardly possible to speak with more eloquence & feeling than you have done - you seem indeed to assure the Mind that it is an eloquence of feeling, not simply of language.

My Sister Anne begs to add her thanks & good wishes to mine - & with those very sincerely offered I remain

Bath Dec 8th
1799

Yours &c
Harriet Lee

.....

For full citations see Bibliography

^{i*}Bodleian folder rubric Dep. b.228/4.

ⁱⁱMWS hand, first of four uniform single quarto sheets, wove paper, same ink throughout, written recto only except for three lines on verso of third sheet, Joynson 1839 watermark.

ⁱⁱⁱ'a lady', Louisa Jones, Godwin's housekeeper in 1798.

^{iv}MWS script corrects the order of precedence, naming eldest sister and headmistress of Belvidere House school, Sophia, Miss Lee, first. St Clair suggests that Godwin had already met Sophia Lee, perhaps as early as 1786, when she was an established playwright and novelist, and Harriet Lee's first novel, *The Errors of Innocence*, had just been published. However, he adds, 'he does not seem actually to have met Harriet until he arrived in Bath in March 1798' (C201).

^vHarriet Lee outlived Godwin, and died in 1851, aged 94 (CKP i 298).

^{vi}(ophia) has been added in brackets above upper case 'S'.

^{vii}Probably the novelist Samuel Richardson (1689-1761).

^{viii}I have been unable to identify 'Emily Jervis'. There are six characters named Emily in Sophia Lee's 'The Two Emilys', vol. ii *Canterbury Tales* (1797), but not an Emily Jervis.

^{ix}Cf. Godwin's undated letter to Harriet Lee (below), 'Believe me, I have never yet encountered a refusal from your sex'. MWS script (c.532/8) comments: '[H]is gentleness mildness & refinement as well as his talents recommended him and his preferences usually met with a return'. See 5: *women*.

^xDep. b.228/4, Godwin hand, quarto fold, laid paper, undated watermark, no heading or signature, pinhole in top left corner. Draft of letter from Godwin to Harriet Lee, offering her accommodation in his London household. Dated by Paul '[April 1798]' (CKP i 298).

^{xi}Dep. b.228/4, MWS hand, this is fourth of four uniform single sheets on 1839 watermark paper that commence MWS account.

^{xii}St Clair suggests that Harriet Lee only pretended not to have received the April letter because Godwin's offer of overnight accommodation was unconventional (C202).

^{xiii}I give all thee ^three^. Cf. Paul's comment 'Arguments to induce the lady to reconsider her determination are urged with ... pertinacity and elaboration' (CKP i 302).

^{xiv}Dep. b.228/4, Godwin hand, quarto fold, laid paper, decorative undated watermark, written recto and verso. At 4 pp. this is draft a), the longest of three drafts [a) b) c)] beginning, 'How wonderfully you contrive to torment me'. Other two drafts not shown here. Cf. (below) Godwin undated letter 'Dear Madam, You have humbled my pride', containing a number of reworked passages from all three versions of 'How wonderfully you contrive to torment me'.

^{xv}The 'abstract' of the 'offer of accommodation' letter (above). Where this draft a) gives 'letter I wrote you', draft b) gives 'letter I sent you'.

^{xvi}Harriet Lee's novel, *The Errors of Innocence* (5 vols.; London: G. G. J. and J. Robinson, 1786).

^{xvii}'Midsummer vacation' in May.

^{xviii}The avowal /disavowal 'I am not a boy' is in all three drafts a) b) c).

^{xix}Godwin's double and triple negative constructions lead to confusion; the caret has been inserted after completing the sentence.

^{xx}Draft a), 4th page of quarto fold.

-
- ^{xxi}Draft c) gives in parenthesis: '(I have reopened the Errors of Innocence since I saw you)'.
- ^{xxii}Probably 'this letter' and 'my former letter' contain the same offer of accommodation in his London house.
- ^{xxiii}Draft a), top margin of 4th page in quarto fold.
- ^{xxiv}A sentence follows in draft c): 'This is its fair & natural construction.'
- ^{xxv}Draft a), sideways in left margin of 3rd page of quarto fold.
- ^{xxvi}Draft a), sideways in left margin of 2nd page of quarto fold.
- ^{xxvii} Draft a), sideways in left margin of 1st page in quarto fold
- ^{xxviii}Draft a), top margin of 1st page in quarto fold, thinner nib, paler ink than rest of 4pp. draft a). I infer that these marginalia were written in reverse page order at later dates than the rest of the draft.
- ^{xxix} At the phrase 'characteristics of your mind' in draft b) the writing breaks off.
- ^{xxx}Dep. b.228/4, from draft c), Godwin hand, a small square of laid paper inserted between sheets of quarto fold, written recto and verso. Harriet Lee had apparently visited London in May 1798 without contacting Godwin.
- ^{xxxi}Sophia Lee.
- ^{xxxii}The Linleys were a well-known musical family of Bath, but by 1798 the famous violinist Thomas Jr and his sister the singer Elizabeth Linley (Mrs Richard Brinsley Sheridan), were both dead.
- ^{xxxiii}Dep. b.228/4, Godwin hand, single quarto sheet, laid paper, no watermark, pinhole in top left corner, no signature. Draft letter from Godwin to Harriet Lee, 2 June 1798. Corresponds to MWS description (above) 'the first is little more than a concise announcement of his intention to revisit Bath'. MWS concludes it was probably not posted.
- ^{xxxiv}Belvidere House, the Lee sisters' Bath residence and girls' school.
- ^{xxxv}Dep. b.228/4, Godwin hand, single quarto sheet, laid paper, written recto and verso, no watermark, no outer. Of the two letters from Godwin to Harriet Lee dated 2 June 1798, this one is said by MWS (above) to have 'certainly' reached Harriet Lee and to have 'displeased' her.
- ^{xxxvi}Sophia Lee contributed *The Young Lady's Tale, or The Two Emilys*, to *The Canterbury Tales*, ii, 1798. It was published separately in French translation in 1800, as *Les deux Émilies, ou les aventures du duc et de la duchesse d'Aberden*, erroneously attributed to Henriette Lée. Godwin's journal (Duke reel 2) records that he was reading 'The Two Emilys' in May 1798. Its publication accounts for Godwin's 'kind of suspicion' that either Sophia (Miss Lee), or Harriet would visit their (and his) London publishers, the brothers George and John Robinson.
- ^{xxxvii}Annotated in margins recto and verso in Harriet Lee's hand.
- ^{xxxviii}If 'the former letter' is Godwin's offer of accommodation in April 1798, this confirms St Clair's suspicion (C202) that Harriet Lee did receive it.
- ^{xxxix}'An alternative forced imposed on *her* by the second clause, presents itself to *me*' (my emphasis), suggests that Sophia Lee may have written or dictated these comments. The sisters had similar handwriting and Harriet was admittedly consulting Sophia during the correspondence with Godwin. Paul prints this passage of 'Mrs Shelley's Notes', but deletes the phrase 'imposed on her', and gives 'An alternative proposed by the second clause presents itself to me thus' (CKP i 301). This obscures the evidence that Sophia Lee may have written this sentence.
- ^{xl}Dep. b.228/4, MWS hand, two single quarto sheets, wove paper, written on recto only, Joynson 1839 watermark, pinhole left top corner. MWS transcription of Harriet Lee's comments on Godwin's letter of 2

June 1798 (above) adds punctuation marks and contains occasional slips, 'had' for 'has', 'whether' for 'that', 'priviledges' for 'privileges', 'rights' for 'right'.

^{xli}Cancelled (1), is usual MWS way of numbering footnotes.

^{xlii}MWS suggests that the parties returned each others' letters when the acquaintance was broken off. But the 2 June letter returned to Godwin with comments in the margins, St Clair conjectures, was 'more probably ... returned at the time', 'marked up with snubbing third-person comments' (C203, n15). If St Clair is correct, I should expect to have found even sharper reactions in Godwin's already highly reactive letters. St Clair quotes from Paul's edited version of the 'third-person comments' (CKP i 301. Cf. my endnote 39 (above)).

^{xliii}*Bodleian folder rubric Dep. c.507/6, laid paper, no watermark, pinhole in top left corner. Harriet Lee's letter of 4 June, 1798, posted to Godwin's Polygon address on the day he left London.

^{xliv}Dep. b.228/4, MWS hand, single quarto sheet, wove paper, Joynson 1839 watermark, pinhole left top corner.

^{xlv}Dep. b.228/4, Godwin hand, single quarto sheet, laid paper, written recto and verso, no watermark, many cancellations, pinhole left top corner. Draft of 5pp. letter from Godwin to Harriet Lee, n.d., lacks signature, 6 June 1798. Cf. St Clair 'a meeting took place at Bath on 5 June 1798 at which Godwin evidently proposed marriage' (C203).

^{xlvi}Cf. Harriet Lee letter of 31 July 1798 (below), which begs to differ on the degree of consensus between herself and Godwin.

^{xlvii}Godwin's use of the terms 'bigoted' and 'bigotry' becomes a matter of contention in the letters of July and August. In this June letter, Godwin offers to exempt Lee from the charge, on condition that she separates herself from orthodox majority opinion: 'You are not of that weak & bigoted herd'.

^{xlviii}Part of the word 'harm[on]y' obscured by inkblot.

^{xlix}Dep. b.228/4, Godwin hand, single quarto sheet, laid paper, written recto and verso, many horizontal and vertical cancellations, pinhole left top corner.

^lGodwin's Plutarch quotation is based on Seneca, *De clementia*, making the distinction between a good king and a tyrant.

^{li}It is not clear whether 'the force of this' refers to the immediately preceding paragraph, which is cancelled by horizontal and vertical lines, or to a preceding uncanceled passage.

^{lii}Dep. b.228/4, Godwin hand, single quarto sheet, laid paper, written recto only, many horizontal and vertical cancellations, pinhole left top corner. This sheet has 1797 watermark.

^{liii}Cf. Mary Wollstonecraft's celebrated phrase for Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 'my Prometheus of sentiment'.

^{liv}Dep. b.228/4, quarto fold, 4pp and marginalia, Godwin hand, pinhole in right top corner would have pinned the fold shut. This quarto fold has been placed at the back of the Bodleian folder and this reflects a difficulty in deciding its place in the correspondence. Godwin's reference to 'what passed at our last interview' indicates that it was written in London, after Godwin's return from the 5 June visit to Bath; and contra-indicates his receiving any letter from Harriet in the interim. No evidence that this was posted.

^{lv}A looping line traced around the phrase 'in the first instance' shows Godwin revising his draft.

^{lvi}Not for the first time, Godwin's negative constructions lead to confusion. Presumably, 'I should not fear *but* that your partiality ... would ripen' etc.

^{lvii}The phrase between carets has been squeezed in above the line, in different ink. This is one of several indications that this is a draft undergoing progressive revisions, revisions which include reducing the

incidence of the masculine singular pronoun.

^{lviii}Probably, the interview in Bath on 5 June.

^{lix}Godwin thematizes Harriet Lee's 'silence', not always consistently. In the drafts of cMay he wrote: 'How wonderfully you contrive to torment me! How numerous are the conjectures I have formed respecting your silence!' But elsewhere he proposed that 'Silence, if you please, shall merely pass for the symbol indication of a mind not absolutely determined against me'; and in another undated draft: 'If, to a letter so unambiguous as this, you return no answer, I shall conclude that you are not utterly resolved determined against the renewal of my visit. Yet I would that you would answer me by something more pleasing encouraging than silence'.

^{lx}Several sentences repeated from drafts of cMay. Other indications place this after 5 June.

^{lxi}Godwin's marginal postscript on the last page of the letter continues in the lefthand margin of the first page, above the opening address 'Dear Madam'.

^{lxii}The 'over anxious retrospect to this point', probably warns Lee against enquiring into Godwin's financial prospects.

^{lxiii}Dep. b.228/4, quarto fold, wove paper, Durham & Co 1794 watermark. The cancelled date 17th is the only blot in an elegant script.

^{lxiv}Harriet Lee's letter, dated eleven days after the interview of 5 June, refers to 'our last Conversation', but her emphatic, 'permit me to repeat' suggests that Godwin has posted at least one letter of 'appeal' in the interim, including a promise to 'await the award of time' as in the draft version (above).

^{lxv}There is a plural apostrophe to 'Brothers', but Lee is referring to her brother-in-law, Anne's husband.

^{lxvi}'My elder sister', Sophia Lee.

^{lxvii}Godwin hand, single quarto sheet, laid paper, no watermark, written recto and verso.

^{lxviii}Probably Harriet Lee's letter of 16 June (above).

^{lxix}Presumably, the sceptical view of marriage expressed publicly in *Enquiry concerning Political Justice*, and in Godwin's private correspondence in 1796-7. See 5: *women*.

^{lxx}Cf. MWS script (above), 'his immediate desire was to study her mind'.

^{lxxi}Dep. b.228/4, MWS hand, single quarto sheet, wove paper, no watermark, written recto and verso.

^{lxxii}Dep. b.228/4, Godwin hand, quarto fold, written on all four pages. The first paragraph has been inserted at a later stage. The sentence beginning 'Let me first state the quantity of difference' is where Godwin began writing the draft. The draft continues on a second quarto fold. Another draft, consisting of little more than a page, looks like an abandoned attempt at a fair copy of this material. It is omitted here.

^{lxxiii}Godwin's aspersions on 'bigots' and 'bigotry' are retorted against by Lee in the 'Saturday morning' letter (below).

^{lxxiv}'his choice' i.e. the creator's choice.

^{lxxv}Foregoing paragraph heavily cancelled with vertical penstrokes.

^{lxxvi}The 'attack upon a judge' is Godwin's *Cursory Strictures, upon the Charge ... of Lord Justice Eyre*, published 21 Oct. 1794. See 3: *law*.

^{lxxvii}'Our contract' consists of Lee's concession in her letter of 16 June that 'the award of time' might bring about an understanding. The 'conversation' probably took place at one or more of the meetings in London in July.

^{lxxviii}The foregoing paragraph cancelled by heavy vertical penstrokes.

^{lxxix}Uppercase initial A is Godwin hand, [1r] of quarto fold. This document has first few letters of some words

in left margin effaced and may be a letterpress copy. The materials set out under the letters A B C D duplicate with variations those on the quarto fold draft beginning 'Let me first state the quantity of difference' (above).

^{lxxx}Blurred copy, perhaps 'for fear that'.

^{lxxxi}'B' is Godwin hand, [2r] of same quarto fold as 'A'.

^{lxxxii}Godwin hand, [1r] of another quarto fold. This quarto fold bears the relation of a substantial footnote and appendix to 'my letter regarding our difference of opinion', which itself consists of drafts on two quarto folds, beginning 'Let me first state the quantity of difference between us' (shown above).

^{lxxxiii}Godwin's draft, cancelled with vertical slashes, breaks off and resumes on same page after a blank space.

^{lxxxiv}b.228/4, Godwin hand, two unnumbered sheets, written recto and verso, heavily cancelled, contain overlapping versions of Godwin's argument with Harriet's Christian beliefs, and the conditions she places on their correspondence. The paragraph beginning 'But I have done' is a later addition. This material is presented as part of a letter from Godwin to Harriet and conjecturally dated '[June 1798]' by Paul (CKP i 304-7). Cf. (below), Lee's letter of 31 July: 'You distress me, Sir, extremely by again agitating a question...', which supports Paul's conjecture that she had received at least one of these drafts before the end of July. Another sheet beginning on recto page: 'What you have done is in the genuine style of the eleventh & twelfth centuries' is a revised version of the two shown here, and is shown (below) in the context assigned it by Paul's conjectural dating to '[early August 1798]'. I cannot adjudicate Paul's decision to separate these three alternate versions of the same (or similar) arguments by three months, June to August.

^{lxxxv}Uppercase initial 'A' in Godwin's hand. Godwin's use of alphabetical points suggests that he is rehearsing arguments, before posting a final version to Lee. The following paragraph cancelled by horizontal and vertical slashes.

^{lxxxvi}Paul amends Godwin's abbreviation, to read: 'with either deism or Christianity' (CKP i 306).

^{lxxxvii}For Godwin's 'the jargon of priests' Paul substitutes: 'I know it has been fashionable among divines'(CKP i 306). This substitution has no warrant in Godwin's script.

^{lxxxviii}The writing breaks off mid-line at 'assign to'; the paragraph is cancelled with a heavy vertical line.

^{lxxxix}This final paragraph is written without cancellations below a blank space and appears to have been added as a final statement summarising three versions in of Godwin's argument that 'What you have done is in the genuine style of the eleventh and twelfth centuries'. St Clair notes another visit to London by Harriet Lee in Jan. 1799, when she met Godwin and he again wrote to her (C204, and n17). This paragraph may have been added at that date.

^{xc}Harriet Lee responds to Godwin's complaint that she has been swayed by the 'advice' of 'others'. Harriet retorts that she values Sophia's opinions as she knows them to be Sophia's settled convictions, it being unlikely 'that I should cherish opinions she has not entertain'd long before'. Cf. Harriet Lee letter of 7 Aug. (below) 'on the subject of my Sister's silence'. 'I have taken from my Sister the unpleasant task' suggests that Godwin had written to Sophia Lee and this is confirmed in his letter of no date (below), where Godwin mentions 'writing at the same time to your sister'.

^{xcj}Refers to Godwin's letter c6 June: 'among those who personally know me, the respect & love I have obtained ...'.

^{xcii}Godwin hand, single quarto sheet, laid paper, written recto and verso, no watermark. Large initial A at top of recto page; large initial B in middle of verso page. Paul conjecturally dates this document, described as 'the following extracts', to '[early August 1798]' (CKP i 308-10).

^{xciii}Godwin's use of the term 'deism', interchangeably with 'theism', is idiosyncratic; contemporary usage opposed them, equating deism with scepticism and scientific materialism.

^{xciv}Godwin recites JHWH's questions to Job (*Job* 38: 4-6; 21-2); and adds his own concluding sentence.

^{xcv}During 1798, Godwin was holding discussions with the Rev. Thomas Malthus, who was writing his *First Essay on the Principle of Population*, published that year.

^{xcvi}The slippage in pronouns here indicates that the hypothetical description of the just man has slipped into special pleading in his own behalf with Harriet Lee (or a hypothetical female interlocutor).

^{xcvii}Dep. b.228/4, Godwin hand, verso of single quarto sheet.

^{xcviii}Godwin canvasses the topic of 'the retirement & peculiarity of your situation' on two other sheets in the folder. See above, letter dated '[June 1798]' by Paul (CKP i 304-7). I take Godwin to refer to Harriet Lee's being unmarried at the age of forty-one, residing with her sisters, and teaching in a provincial girls' school.

^{xcix}This is Godwin's keynote statement, that a woman's assent to or rejection of a man's proposal of marriage passes judgment on his standing in a male meritocratic order.

^cGodwin hand, single quarto sheet, laid paper, written recto and verso, no watermark, a number of cancellations and carets.

^{ci}Godwin had written to Sophia Lee, at some time before Harriet's letter of 31 July (above), in which she writes, 'I have taken from my sister the unpleasant task of telling you what you are unwilling to credit.'

^{cii}Cf. Harriet Lee letter of 31 July (above): 'perhaps I do not agree with you in supposing our minds in unison'.

^{ciii}Cf. Harriet Lee of 7 Aug. to Godwin (below): 'Of the opinions you "cling to" I had no right to speak'.

^{civ}Dep. b.228/4, quarto fold, laid paper, no watermark, pinhole on left top corner. Paul cites this letter from Harriet Lee of 7 Aug. 1798 as the last of the series, 'seems to have been taken as final ... and so concluded this singular correspondence' (CKP i 310). Paul believes that Harriet Lee's 'Adieu!' with a promise of 'friendly remembrance' was intended as her final word. Even so, if Godwin wrote again, she may well have felt constrained to respond again.. Paul concedes that dating is provisional: 'It is not possible to fix exact dates to Godwin's letters to Miss Lee, because only the undated drafts remain' (CKP i 302).

^{cv}Probably, the style of Harriet Lee's letter of 31 July 1798 (above).

^{cvi}Cf. Godwin undated letter (above): 'You are unnecessarily piqued by my appeal to your sister'; You say, under the influence of this pique'.

^{cvi}Dep. b.228/4, quarto fold, laid paper, 'T Stains 1797' watermark. Unusually for Harriet Lee, there are several cancellations and carets, suggesting she wrote in haste or under stress, and the informal dating 'Saturday morning' adds to this impression. I have placed this as Lee's last letter in the series, immediately after her 7 August 1798 letter, which Paul places as her final one. Paul omits (possibly had not sighted) this letter dated 'Saturday morning'.

^{cviii}Not known which of Godwin's letters Lee refers to here.

^{cix}Harriet Lee objects to Godwin's charge of 'bigotry', advanced by him in his letter (or letters): 'I sit down now as a disinterested friend', c. June-July 1798. Paul conjecturally dates Godwin's undated letters about 'bigotry' and 'bigots' in '[June 1798]' (CKP i 304-7); and 'early August 1798' (CKP i 310). Godwin's justification that he used the term 'bigot' 'merely as a dictionary word' places his undated letter (below), as a reply to Lee's dated 'Saturday morning'. I have placed it as his final letter in the series.

^{cx}Lee retorts to Godwin's charge 'My personal qualities, good or bad, are of no account in your eyes', in his letter 'I sit down now as a disinterested friend'.

^{cx}Lee protests at Godwin's instructing her to 'suppose that the person whose visits you have lately had the occasion to receive is dead', in his letter 'I sit down now as a disinterested friend'.

^{cxii}Dep. b.228/4, Godwin hand, single quarto sheet, wove paper, written recto only, watermark obscured. No evidence of posting.

^{cxiii}Not known which of Godwin's earlier letters he refers to as 'the letter I gave you'. It may be the one to which Harriet's 'Saturday morning' refers in its first sentence 'the frame of mind your letter announces', since she was provoked by that to write: 'I tell you we ought not to meet again'.

^{cxiv}The three-way exchange about Godwin's 'personal qualities', like the three-way exchange about 'bigotry' in the following sentence, places this letter of Godwin's last in the series.

^{cxv}Cf. Lee to Godwin 'Saturday' [n. d.] (above) 'while you accuse me of bigotry'.

^{cxvi}Cf. Lee 'Saturday morning' (above), requesting 'that my letter will never meet any eye but your own'. Harriet Lee lived until 1851 and this pledge by Godwin may have entered into MWS deliberations about what letters should be published in the *Life of William Godwin*. No correspondence located between MWS and Harriet Lee. In contrast to this, MWS letter April 1836 to Mary Hays (Bennett, ii, 270), undertakes to return Hays's letters to Godwin to her. See 5: *women*.

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endnotes *documents

^{cxvii}Dep. c.507/6, single sheet, laid paper, folded, seal, 'Mr Godwin' on outer, no watermark, pinhole on left top corner. An undated formal note addressed from Belvidere House, Bath, where the Lee sisters ran an exclusive boarding school for girls. Godwin visited Bath between 4 and 14 March 1798, and again between 5 and 10 June 1798 (Duke reel 2, Godwin's Journal). Harriet must have written this note, perhaps for delivery by hand, on one or other of these two occasions, as, according to St Clair, '[Godwin] was seeing her in London in January 1799 and several letters followed, but there is no indication that he again visited her in Bath' (C204, and n17).

^{cxviii}Dep. c.507/6, quarto fold, laid paper, no watermark, pinhole on left top corner. Letter of 2 June 1799 from Sophia Lee to Godwin, after he had complained in a letter of 1 June that a character in a tale by Sophia Lee in *Canterbury Tales* iii, 1798, was pointed at himself. St Clair does not cite a shelf number for Godwin's 'letter of complaint' on June 1, and I have not sighted it. He identifies the offending phrase 'a philosopher of the new school' in *The Clergyman's Tale* 1832 [Standard Novels Edition] (C207, and n25).

^{cxix}The 'nice question' may refer to Sophia's influence with Harriet when Godwin proposed to Harriet in 1798. The Lee sisters had a habit of interchanging grammatical third and first person in their letters.

^{cxx}Written sideways on second sheet of quarto fold, a postscript of compliments & thanks from Harriet Lee for Godwin's '*sincere*' opinion of her story (unspecified).

^{cxxi}Godwin's novel *St Leon: a tale of the sixteenth century* (4 vols; London, G. G. J. and J. Robinson, 1799).

^{cxxii}Dep. c.507/6, quarto fold, laid paper, no watermark, pinhole on left top corner.

^{cxxiii}The only son of the novel's protagonist Reginald de St Leon prefers to be known by his mother's name as Charles de Damville. His father's 'dream' of a military career for Charles in Chapter XIV becomes a reality through Charles's own efforts in the final chapter.

^{cxxiv}Dep. c.507/6, quarto fold, laid paper, no watermark, pinhole on left top corner. This letter from Harriet Lee dated 8 December has no outer, so it may have been posted inside the letter from Sophia Lee dated 7 December.

^{cxxv}Harriet Lee praises the character of Marguerite de Damville, the longsuffering wife of the obsessional alchemist St Leon, but finds ‘the least pleasing one of the whole’ to be the account in the third volume of Marguerite’s death ‘the victim of her disconsolate and repentant husband’s unhallowed wealth’ (*St Leon* 1994: 295). Mary Shelley had inherited the tradition that Godwin modelled the character of Marguerite as a tribute to Mary Wollstonecraft. Accordingly, Pamela Clemit’s introduction to her 1994 edition describes the novel as Godwin’s ‘most overt tribute to Wollstonecraft’s thought’ (Introduction, *St Leon*: xv). Clemit quotes a letter from Holcroft to Godwin, written from Germany in September 1800: ‘Knowing the model after which you drew, as often I recollected it, my heart ached while I read’ (xvi, citing CKP ii 25).

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Chapter note 6: *writing*

Chapter 6: *writing* consists of all the manuscripts in Abinger Dep. b.228/4. One item in the chapter comes from Dep. c.507/6, and together with the four *documents presents the entire gathering in Dep. c.507/6, consisting of five letters to Godwin in 1798 and 1799 from sisters Sophia Lee (1750-1824), and Harriet Lee (1757-1851). The first *document is a formal note to Godwin from Harriet Lee at Belvidere House, Bath, the girls' school at which Sophia, Miss Lee, was headmistress, and Harriet her deputy. The note was probably hand-delivered to Godwin in Bath either in March or June 1798. The next documents are a letter from Sophia Lee to Godwin dated from Bath 2 June 1799, and this carries a brief postscript from Harriet. The letters from Sophia Lee to Godwin dated from Bath 7 December 1799, and Harriet Lee to Godwin dated from Bath 8 December 1799, were apparently posted as one packet.

Dep. b.228/4 contains MWS script on 1839 watermark paper, and an attached bundle of Godwin's and Harriet Lee's original holograph letters in 1798. One letter from Harriet Lee to Godwin in the course of this correspondence has become detached from the rest and is given in this chapter from Dep. c.507/6. All MWS script b.228/4 is on wove paper with a *papier satine* Joynson 1839 watermark, the same paper as appears in MWS scripts of Dep. c.532/8 and Dep. c. 606/4 in our chapter 5: *women*.

Both the MWS script and the Godwin-Lee letters, in abbreviated and at times silently censored versions, were published in 1876 by Charles Kegan Paul in the first volume of *William Godwin and his Contemporaries* (CKP i 297-310). From external evidence, the correspondence may be dated between March and August/September of 1798. Most of Lee's letters are informally dated with the day of the week. Godwin dated only the final drafts of those of his letters he had readied for posting. Paul published a selection of passages from Godwin's letters headed with conjectural dates. I have indicated Paul's placings and datings in endnotes, but have not relied on them. With posterity in mind, Godwin habitually kept rough drafts, fair copies, and wet-press copies of his numerous letters. In the affair with Harriet Lee, St Clair endorses Godwin's rationale for this librarianship: 'He showered [Harriet Lee] with letters, all prepared with great care and a few constituting substantial ethical essays in their own right' (C204).

All the sheets in the folder b.228/4 have a matching pinhole where they have been formerly pinned together. It remains open as to whether it was Mary Shelley herself or Paul who pinned the sheets of variously sized paper together. Elsewhere in the archive Paul had found Mary Shelley's bundles of sheets already pinned, but whether in this case, is not certain. There is no MWS page numbering on these materials, of the sort that

proved such a useful guide to consecutive order in our chapters 1 to 5. As well, there are no transcriptions or editorial marks from Mary Jane Godwin's hand, and I have concluded that this material was collated by Mary Shelley circa 1840, when Mary Jane's health was deteriorating. There may also have been a reluctance on Mary Shelley's part to collaborate with Mary Jane in reading and arranging the evidence of Godwin's eager pursuit of Harriet Lee.

Likewise, Dep. c.507/6 bears no annotations or other signs of editing by either Mary Shelley or Mary Jane Godwin. Of five letters contained in this folder, one only is included within the chapter 6: *writing*: This is Harriet Lee's letter of 4 June 1798, postmarked 5 June, addressed to Godwin at his London residence, the Polygon, Somers Town, and readdressed from there to his temporary lodgings at Bath.

The documentation of this chapter 6 is cross-referenced to the Abinger MS microfilm (Duke reel 2), which contains Godwin's Journal for 1798. Mark Philp has described Godwin's methods of composing the journals, suggesting that the on-page appearance of a daily jotting is not quite true to form, and that Godwin on occasion filled in blanks from memory, and altered or added to entries. Our transcriptions from Dep. b.228/4 have been checked against the microfilm copy of these materials in Duke reel 5, and transcriptions from Dep. c.507/6 have been checked against Duke reel 12.

St Clair (C204, n17) cites a correspondence 'or conversation' between Godwin and Harriet Lee, in January 1799, in Dep. c.512. I have seen no evidence in MWS script that Mary Shelley knew that Godwin and Lee were still corresponding privately at that date, and no papers from c.512 are included in this chapter 6: *writing*.

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The c.507/6 letters of June and December 1799 shown here as *documents were received under the rubric of literary 'conversation' by the 'fair authoresses of The Canterbury Tales', as MWS script refers to them (b.228/4). The Bodleian folder rubric endorses this convention:

c.507/6: Five letters from Harriet Lee and Sophia Lee (Authoresses of the Canterbury Tales) to Godwin. 5 items in ten leaves, with typed abstract.

This polite understanding held even when, as in Godwin's letter of 1 June, 1799, and Sophia Lee's reply on 2 June, they touch on controversial matters of reputation and *amour propre*. It appears that Godwin had taken offense at a character, 'a philosopher of

the new school', in one of Sophia's stories in the 3rd volume of *Canterbury Tales* (1798), jointly-authored by herself and Harriet. St Clair identifies *The Clergyman's Tale* and calls Sophia's apology 'disingenuous' (C207, n25). Godwin had read the first volume of *Canterbury Tales* (1797) with great enthusiasm, travelling by coach in 'summer of 1797 when he had visited Parr and Wedgwood', leaving newly-wed and heavily pregnant Mary Wollstonecraft in London (C201). The sisters' joint letter to Godwin in December 1799 (*documents c.507/6), mingles a little irony into their praise of Godwin's new novel, *St Leon: A Tale of the Sixteenth Century* (1799). Yet Mary Shelley herself would endorse Harriet's impression: 'I see thro' the whole an energy of thinking & feeling peculiar to you' (c.507/6)

As Godwin's literary executor, Mary Shelley might have come upon evidence of the Harriet Lee affair at any date from April 1836 when Godwin died, through July 1836 when she accepted Colburn's commission for the 2-volume *Memoirs and Correspondence*, to the latest date of composition of the biography, some time after May 1840. It would be interesting to know whether Shelley was surprised to discover the affair late in the piece, as St Clair hints. But all that is certain is that she did not proceed to write about it until 1839, on the same watermark paper as her script of the 1797 marriage of her parents. In any case, Shelley begins writing about Godwin's relationship with Harriet Lee on 1839 Joynson watermark paper in Dep. b.228/4, with a glance over her shoulder at what she had already written about Godwin in love and Godwin's mourning for Mary Wollstonecraft:

The other alteration that had taken place in Mr Godwin, to which I alluded, was an entire change of sentiment on the subject of marriage. The happiness he had enjoyed with his wife made him eager to instilled the opinion that a m he might at least in a degree renew regain a portion of its blessings married a portion of the treasure he had lost.

The phrase 'to which I alluded' looks back to MWS scripts c.606/4, and c.532/8, which our edition places in chapter 5: *women*, and thus affords confirmation of the sequence of composition that we have adopted in our chapter plan. In that chapter 5, MWS script described Godwin's sceptical attitude toward marriage, before his own marriage with Mary Wollstonecraft in March 1797 brought about a heartfelt change. The sensitive topic of her own parentage had elicited from Mary Shelley a flurry of comments protecting Godwin from suspicions of libertinism on the one hand, and of cold intellectualism on the other.

To complicate the question of the chapter sequence, MWS script in 5: *women* writes the episode of Godwin's proposal of marriage to the freshly widowed Maria Reveley in July 1799 as a continuous outpouring of his widowed affection and need. This enhances Wollstonecraft's posthumous presence to Godwin's mind but leapfrogs the narrative over the 1798 Harriet Lee affair. And our chapter plan has of course had to abide by this *volte face*.

Opening the book of Harriet Lee in March 1798, MWS script b.228/4 proposes another 'entire change of sentiment regarding marriage', a further turn of the wheel towards a never to be completed circle of heterosexual and familial attachment. Godwin the widower feels acutely his parental responsibility for Wollstonecraft's motherless girls. The burden of 'two orphan girls left in his charge' weights the balance in favour of a courtship that might otherwise seem precipitate. The 'kindly' lady residing in Godwin's household (young Louisa Jones of Bath), also puts his equanimity at risk (or would have done to a less carefully prepared Godwin than the one scripted here). The answer to these cares comes not only in Harriet Lee's person, but in the revived vitality with which Godwin hails her: 'his immediate desire was to study her mind' (MWS script, b.228/4).

Shelley hedges Godwin's attraction to Harriet Lee as 'regard' [cancelled] ^admiration^ [inserted] 'partiality' 'esteem & regard' 'to the end of his life'. 'To the end of his life' is the phrase with which, from time to time, Mary Shelley writes her own confidential relationship with Godwin in his latter days into her script-in-progress. In b.228/4, she indicates the limits of this confidentiality: 'though it was not till his papers were placed in my hands that I learned the nearer tie that he sought to establish between them'. If Mary Shelley was surprised and/or displeased by the discovery that Godwin was courting Harriet Lee within six months of Wollstonecraft's death, within weeks of publishing his testimonial *Memoirs* of her, and within days of meeting Harriet herself for the first time, she covers it in her usual manner.

The correspondence in b.228/4 between Godwin and Harriet Lee was not intended by either of them for publication, and some of Godwin's drafts certainly were withheld from the post. But, as is apparent in several exchanges of reply and riposte by both the parties, the librarian's insertion into the Bodleian rubric b.228/4(b): "'^one perhaps sent^'", errs far on the side of caution. Internal evidence of Lee's reactions to Godwin's claims of a consensus of liking between them, and against his charges of bigotry, show she did receive and read more than one of his communiqués. I believe Godwin made no less than three, and probably four postings: his first 'offer of accommodation' circa

March 1798; a second letter (called 'letter three' by Mary Shelley) dated 2 June 1798; his letter conjecturally dated by Paul [c6 June], the first to use 'bigot' and 'bigotry', and responded to by Harriet Lee on 16 June; and his undated letter, conjecturally dated by Paul '[June 1798]': 'I sit down now as a disinterested friend'. I believe this latter draft, or series of drafts, is of a later date than is assigned to it by Paul.

The question of privacy, for writers and from readers, which exercised Mary Shelley as the date for publishing *Memoirs and Correspondence of the late William Godwin* drew closer in May 1840, devolves on considerations of how to read a draft, and how to edit (give out) a lineage or array of drafts. The clash between formal generic literature and informal writing is sharpened by the desperation, even to tortuousness, of Godwin's efforts to promote his cause and master Harriet's acknowledgment of (his written proclamation of) himself.

At the time of writing her commentary on the Harriet Lee affair, on Joynson 1839 watermark paper, Mary Shelley was perhaps not aware that Harriet Lee, born in 1757, was living as she had for many years, in Clifton, near Bristol, a favoured spot among retired schoolteachers and governesses, and was not to die until 1851, the same year as Mary Shelley herself. There is no sign that Mary Shelley attempted to contact the ancient dame. Nevertheless, it is a fact that Lee was still alive when Mary Shelley was pondering the question of whether to publish *Life of William Godwin*, and if so, whether to omit certain letters (Cf. c.606/4, chapter note 5: *women*). And consideration of Lee's sensitivities, her so-called 'love of etiquettes', may at this point have weighed with Mary Shelley.

When it came to a correspondence between members of the literary fraternity, congratulating each other on the merits of their recent publications, female authors might safely conduct such a correspondence as honorary brothers. Godwin had initiated such an above board correspondence with an unsolicited letter to Sophia Lee in April 1796, after attending a performance at Drury Lane of her tragedy *Almeyda, Queen of Granada* (C201)

He resumed this conventional style of address in early December 1799, by sending a complimentary copy of his new novel, *St Leon*, to Belvidere House (b.228/4). Sophia and Harriet replied with bread and butter thank you letters, Harriet's folded inside Sophia's to economise on postage (*documents c.507/6). Harriet's letter seeks additional safety in numbers, relaying to Godwin the cordial compliments of her married sister Anne,

who had chaperoned Harriet on the one occasion she had been in Godwin's company outside Bath, her visit to London, 7th to 22nd July 1798.

In these supernumary letters Godwin's failed courtship of Harriet turns back to the collegiality of authorship, with its opportunity to play a mentor's role. This contextualises Mary Shelley's defense throughout the *Life of William Godwin*, of Godwin's literary idealism. It marks a preamble and a coda, the before and the after of an epistolary romance, as Godwin draws back from the brink of intimate embarrassment to reclaim the station of literary character and sponsor of writing.

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As our final chapter, *6: writing* culminates a series of "open" maskings and incompleated abandonments with which MWS script articulates the half-turns or metamorphoses of Godwin's career in London up till the age of forty-two. Chapter *1: writing* opened with a MWS transcription of a Godwin fragment, Dep. c.606/1, a document on 1835 paper, its pages numbered 1) and 2), and signalling a 'crisis' and turning point in the year 1791, when Godwin gave up employment on a Whig journal, *New Annual Register*, and embarked on a financially risky career as an independent author. The final *document in this chapter, and our edition, marks the publication of Godwin's novel *St Leon: A Tale of the Sixteenth Century*, in December 1799. and signals yet another half-turn, another "opening" into the unwritten and out-of-time.

In successive gatherings of MWS script, an image of the clean break, a bidding for authorial independence and a new leaf, appears by turns as "open" letters, anonymous and pseudonymous political pamphlets, fictionalised autobiography, and in the vicarious investments of moral pedagogy, inculcating virtue in the rising generation of the ruling class. A romance tendency shapes the stages of Godwin's initiation, earnest scholar, trainee clergyman, apprentice to literary fame, political activist, legal advocate, pedagogue and mentor, husband and lover, father, sage, and elegist. MWS script shadows Godwin's steps with a melancholic accompaniment. A daughter-biographer 'left with nothing but conjecture' about Godwin's early manhood (in chapter *1: literature*), by the end of her composition on 1839 watermark paper (in chapters *5: women* and *6: writing*) has drawn her biographical subject into a family circle of loss and widowed renunciation, that marks her own birth as an absence.

Godwin's rejected proposals of marriage to Harriet Lee in 1798, and to Maria Reveley in 1799, retrospectively confirm the death of Mary Wollstonecraft in 1797 as the crucial instance of loss and gain, to which all others defer. The Godwin-Lee correspondence,

material documentation of a six-month-long outpouring of Godwin's words on paper, forms our final chapter 6: *writing*, titled to bookend chapter 1: *literature*, where MWS script lays the ground of Godwin's vocation as author of canonical English literature, the ground from which his master work *Caleb Williams* will rise.

In the fevered drafts of self-justification that Godwin addressed nominally to Harriet Lee in March-August 1798 (b.288/4, 6: *writing*), the crucible of literature is broken in an outpouring of writing against the inevitable. Godwin's retreat into unpublishable, unedited lecturing is sublated by the nervous energy of oral performance, as in the prepublication performance dictating *Cursory Strictures* to an audience of one, James Marshall, in 1794 (c.606/3, 3: *law*). The privileged orality of the advocate, parliamentarian, university professor, devolves on the labour of the disciple-secretary-scriptor.

Did Mary Shelley write her framing commentary to Godwin's proposal of marriage to Harriet Lee during the months March to August 1798, *after* or *before* she had written the section 'Mrs Reveley' about Godwin's proposal of marriage to Maria Reveley in the months following Willey Reveley's death in June 1799? How does the tone and tenor of MWS script on Mary Wollstonecraft engage with Godwin's duplicate and triplicate drafts in b.228/4?

In chapter 5: *women*, MWS script c.532/8, on 1839 watermark paper, the section headed 'Mrs Reveley' opens with a specific date: 'An event happened in June during this year which gave a new turn to Mr Godwin's feelings; this was the death of Mr Reveley ... on the 8th of June 1799'. MWS script glosses Maria Reveley's reaction: 'Endowed with the keenest sensibility her heart received a shock from which she could with difficulty recover'. This suggests that Mary Shelley may have planned a section of *Life of William Godwin* dealing with events and correspondence 'during this year', 1799. While it does not unsettle the arrangement of manuscripts in chapter 5: *women*, it does raise a question about MWS script b.228/4, on the same 1839 Joynson paper, and presented in this chapter 6: *writing*.

MWS script b.228/4 has already gone ahead of Wollstonecraft's death and Reveley's widowhood, and throws back a shadow upon Godwin's exhortations and expostulations with Harriet Lee. Shelley will write, or has already written (c.532/8, 5: *women*), a proleptic script of the courtship of Maria Reveley that took place in July 1799, almost a year after he had given up hopes of Harriet Lee. 'There' and 'then' within the frame of MWS script, the widow Reveley is a lay figure of the widow Mary Shelley in July 1822, a

mourner and keeper of vigils who waits for Godwin's writing to catch up with his destiny. In c.606/4, along with Elizabeth Inchbald, Reveley is said (by Godwin) to have 'shed tears' when Godwin announced his marriage, but unlike Inchbald, to have subsequently 'become an intimate friend' of Mary Wollstonecraft. Breaking the time-frame, MWS script c.606/4 inserts a reference to Maria Gisborne, as a *viva voce* source '^in after days^' of the encomium on Wollstonecraft's 'devotion disinterestedness nobleness of nature disposition' that follows in the c.606/4 script of chapter 5: *women*.

According to St Clair's *The Godwins and the Shelleys*, chapter 15, 'The Jacobin Monster', Godwin's first approach to the married Maria Reveley was on 17 November 1797, 'when Godwin decided that justice to the children required him to find a suitable companion who would help with their upbringing' (C199-200), and his second proposal to her followed a month after Willey Reveley's demise in June 1799 (C200, n9, n10, n11. Cf. MWS script c.532/8 'He waited a month ...'). After chronicling Reveley's 'rebuff', St Clair sets the Harriet Lee story in ironic retrospect, to be read across Maria Reveley's story, an anachronising sequence that parallels the ordering of MWS scripts c.532/8 and b.228/4.

St Clair maintains that Maria Reveley in 1797 and 1799, and Harriet Lee in 1798, rejected Godwin in cold blood because he had gone out of fashion politically, and because of their conformity to a rigid sexual code. The conflation of women's sexual choice and antifeminist politics, a major feature of 1790s anti-Jacobin rhetoric, seems made to order for St Clair's argument.

In direct contrast, Mary Shelley filters sex and politics, and ('above all') sexual politics, out of her script, and steers Reveley's and Harriet Lee's stories into different streams of Godwin's lifestory. MWS script b. 228/4 performs a retrospective troping, in order to purloin (stretch) Godwin's relationship with Maria Reveley, a relationship under the aegis of Reveley's friendship with Wollstonecraft and Godwin's urgent cares for the motherless infants Fanny and Mary. This borrows emotional colour and provides preliminary cover for Godwin's advances to Harriet Lee, to which the narrative of MWS script is to revert. Reveley is an insider, Lee an outsider, to the charmed circle of Wollstonecraft's influence. Reveley is held together with Wollstonecraft, often on the same page of MWS script, the only surefire way to prevent separation. As Maria Reveley she was a stopgap carer for the infant Mary, but as Maria Gisborne she lived to feed Mary Shelley's hunger for a mythical maternal figure. Thus Godwin's affair with Harriet Lee is materially separated from these living women, propelled into a space-time posthumous to Wollstonecraft, and dedicated to her memory.

October-November 1797 is the juncture at which Maria Reveley, who had undoubtedly saved the baby Mary's life in its first few days, sent her back to her father's household, accompanied by a wet-nurse (Duke reel 2, Journal entry 30 April 1798: 'Wet-nurse dismissed'). Godwin then apparently asked Reveley to move in permanently and run the household and care for the children (C199-200). But MWS script does not mention this episode. If she had any knowledge of it (and that cannot be said for certain), perhaps Shelley could not come to terms with Reveley's refusal (to care for herself as infant).

Shelley implies that Godwin approached Harriet Lee in 1798 because he urgently needed a carer for 'two infants of the opposite sex'. What we have here in MWS script b.228/4 is a displacement of the offer to Reveley in 1797 (in the name of the mourning father of the motherless daughters), on to the offer to Harriet Lee in 1798, an offer which, once we have b.228/4 open before us, is nowhere to be read, certainly not to be read as part of the marriage proposal so pertinaciously urged on Lee. Godwin's only reference to the children is to gesture towards the respectability of his London household, in his first and fateful letter offering accommodation.

The technique of reversed chronology of MWS scripts c.532/8 (1799 Maria Reveley's rejection of Godwin); and b.228/4 (1798 Harriet Lee's rejection of him), stems from Mary Shelley's devoted readings in Godwin's novels, with their complex shifting temporal perspectives. Godwin's narrational strategies culminate in his novel *St Leon: A Tale of the Sixteenth Century* (London: Robinson, 1799) an extended palinode or 'incompleted abandonment' of the male protagonist's ego defenses, and his romantic idealisation of knowledge (literature).

Chapter xxviii *St Leon* comes towards the end of the third volume (of four) in the 1799 first edition that was sent to Sophia and Harriet Lee. This chapter narrates the death of St Leon's wife Marguerite de Damville of childbirth fever, one of the incidents 'that render the latter part of the 3rd Vol to me the least pleasing one of the whole', as Harriet Lee wrote to Godwin on 8 December 1799 (*document c.507/6).

The novel portrays a widower whose care of his daughters impels him to seek a surrogate mother for them. Godwin had freely expressed such sentiments in the immediate wake of Mary Wollstonecraft's death, writing to a woman friend: 'I have her two children about me. They have no mother, & I am afraid I am scarcely worth having as a father. I feel as if I were the most unfit person in the world for the business of

education. She was the best qualified of any person [that] ever was. What a reverse! Poor infants, poor little wretches!' (Duke reel 7, to an unidentified correspondent, circa October 1797, microfilm of letterpress copy).

Godwin sent the just published *St Leon* to the Lee sisters in December 1799 (*document c.507/6), a strategic *finis* to the unsatisfactory courtship. In the introduction to her recent edition of *St Leon* (Oxford, 1994) Pamela Clemit states that Godwin began reading for and planning the novel as early as 1795, and began writing 'at the start of 1798' (Clemit 1994, xiii, xviii, citing Abinger MS. e. 202). A gestation interrupted by three momentous years produced a patchwork tessellation of autobiographical elements backlit against a Faustian allegory. The moment in which *St Leon* renounces egoistic and sexual interests, out of devotion to his late wife's memory, and to secure the protection of her daughters, culminates a rewriting of recent history in order to generate a more desired and self-favouring completion, a classical trope of anxiety and spur to (further) writing.

.....

Bodleian folder rubric Dep. b.228/4

Dep. b.228/4 Papers concerning William Godwin's unsuccessful wooing of Harriet Lee, 1798, comprising (a) (8 leaves) fragment of Mary Shelley's memoir of William Godwin; (b) (29 leaves) drafts of letters from Godwin to Harriet, in disorder, some in several stages, ^one perhaps sent^; (c) (8 leaves*) 4 letters from Harriet to Godwin. /45 leaves.*

Bodleian folder rubric Dep. c.507/6

Dep. c.507 [Abinger file 4]: Letters to Godwin from various correspondents. A Total of sixty-three letters. A review of Mandeville. 63 MS items in 111 leaves and 1 printed item in 6 leaves.

c.507/6: Five letters from Harriet Lee and Sophia Lee (Authoresses of the Canterbury Tales) to Godwin. 5 items in ten leaves, with typed abstract.

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