

Basil Montagu Esq

Lincoln Inn

Eldon

Dear Montagu

I think that your sacred  
Imie. of finding me will be on  
Monday or Tuesday about half past  
Ten - You may be sure that I shall  
be glad to see you, and, in any  
way, I care to promote your welfare  
and wishes - It is difficult with  
me from my having greatly trusted  
upon Dr Fisher in former instances  
with respect to James Stedent's case,  
but I'll do the best I can - being  
most sincerely yrs Eldon

ANECDOTE OF LORD ELDON.

In Eldon's "Memoirs," about the very same time, I read that the bar loved wine, as well as the woolstack. Not John Scott himself, he was a good boy always, and though he loved port wine, loved his business, and his duty, and his fees a great deal better. He has a Northern Circuit story of those days, about a party at the house of a certain Lawyer Fawcett, who gave a dinner every year to the counsel. "On one occasion," related Lord Eldon, "I heard Lee say, 'I cannot leave Fawcett's wine. Mind, Davenport, you will go home immediately after dinner, to read the brief in that cause that we have to conduct to-morrow.'—'Not I,' said Davenport. 'Leave my dinner and my wine to read a brief! No, no, Lee, that won't do.'—'Then,' said Lee, 'what is to be done? who else is employed?'—'Davenport: 'Oh, young Scott.'—Lee: 'Oh, he must go.' Mr. Scott, you must go home immediately, and make yourself acquainted with that cause, before our consultation this evening.' This was very hard upon me; but I did go, and there was an attorney from Cumberland, and one from Northumberland, and I do not know how many other persons. Pretty late, in

came Jack Lee, as drunk as he could be. 'I cannot consult to-night; I must go to bed,' he exclaimed, and away he went. Then came Sir Thomas Davenport. 'We cannot have a consultation to-night, Mr. Wordsworth' (Wordsworth, I think, was the name; it was a Cumberland name), shouted Davenport. 'Don't you see how drunk Mr. Scott is? it is impossible to consult.' Poor me, who had scarce had any dinner, and lost all my wine—I was so drunk that I could not consult! Well, a verdict was given against us, and it was allowing to Lawyer Fawcett's dinner. We moved for a new trial; and I must say, for the honour of the bar, that those two gentlemen, Jack Lee and Sir Thomas Davenport, paid all the expenses between them of the first trial. It is the only instance I ever knew, but they did. We moved for a new trial (on the ground, I suppose, of the counsel not being in their senses), and it was granted. When it came on the following year, the judge rose and said—'Gentlemen, did any of you dine with Lawyer Fawcett yesterday? for if you did, I will not hear this cause till next year.' There was great laughter. We gained the cause that time.—"The Four Georges."

CHANCELLOR ELDON'S DEBUT.—"The first cause I ever decided," said his lordship, "was an apple-pie cause; I must tell you of it, Mary. I was, you know, a senior fellow at University College, and two of the undergraduates came to complain to me, that the cook had sent them an apple-pie that could not be eaten. So I said I would hear both sides. I summoned the cook to make his defence; who said that he always paid the utmost attention to the provisions of the College, that he never had any thing unfit for the table, and that there was then a remarkably fine fillet of veal in the kitchen. Now here we were at fault; for I could not understand what a fillet of veal in the kitchen had to do with an apple-pie in the Hall. So, in order that I might come to a right understanding of the merits of the case, I ordered the pie itself to be brought before me. Then came an easy decision: for the messenger returned and informed me, that the other undergraduates had taken advantage of the absence of the two complainants, and had eaten the whole of the apple-pie; so you know it was impossible for me to decide that that was not eatable, which was actually eaten. I often wished in after-life that all the causes were apple-pie causes: fine easy work it would have been."



L. E. del. A. Picken. lith. ENCOMBE, COURT-CASTLE, DORSET, THE SEAT OF LORD CHANCELLOR ELDON. London, Published by John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1844.

LORD CHANCELLOR ELDON, when he retired for the vacation to his estate in Wiltshire, used to walk about his grounds in very homely attire. One morning he encountered two sportsmen, who had unwittingly trespassed on his lands from the neighboring manor. On his explaining this to them, one of them, producing a couple of half-crowns, said, "Come, my man, I think we can make this all right; I suppose you are one of Old Bags' keepers." "No, gentlemen," said the cart, "I am Old Bags himself!"

**The Volunteers.**—In 1802, in the face of the most real and fatal danger, the Addington ministry was afraid of allowing volunteer regiments, and Lord Eldon, while pressing the necessity, could use as an argument that if the people did not volunteer for the Government, they would against it. So broad was even then the gulf between the government and the governors. How much broader did it become in after years! Had invasion threatened us at any period between 1815 and 1830, or even later, would any ministry have dared to allow volunteer regiments? Would they have been justified in doing so, even if they had dared? And now what has come to pass, all the world knows; but all the world should know likewise, that it never would have come to pass save for—not merely the late twenty years of good government in State, twenty years of virtue and liberality in the Court, but—the late twenty years of increasing right-mindedness in the gentry, who have now their reward in finding that the privates in the great majority of corps prefer being officered by men of a rank socially superior to their own. And as good always breeds good, so this volunteer movement, made possible by the goodwill between classes, will help in its turn to increase that goodwill. Already, by the performance of a common duty, and the experience of a common humanity, these volunteer corps are become centres of sympathy between class and class; and gentlemen, tradesmen, and workmen, the more they see of each other, learn to like, to trust, and to befriend each other more and more; a good work in which I hope the volunteers of the University of Cambridge will do their part like men and gentlemen, when, leaving this University, they become each of them, as they ought, an organising point for fresh volunteers in their own districts.—*Alton Locke: By the Rev. C. Kingsley.*

**LORD ELDON'S RULE OF LIFE.**—Mr. Courtenay, now Bart of Devon, being appointed this summer to a Mastership in Chancery by the Lord Chancellor, (in whose gift these offices lay until the remodelling of them by Lord Brougham's Act, 3 and 4, W. IV, c. 94,) asked Lord Eldon whether it would be necessary for him to resign his retainer for Queen Anne's Bounty, to which he was then the standing counsel. "Why, speaking as a friend," answered Lord Eldon, "I would advise you to do no such thing; the true rule, I fancy, is, to get what you can, and keep what you have.—*Twiss's Life of Lord Eldon.*"

**LORD ELDON ON CRIMINAL LAW.**—Saturday, Feb. 26, 1825.—We had a long speech from Lord Sturfield, introducing a bill to prevent people in future from setting spring-guns anywhere. There was no opposition to it as yet; but I understand the Norfolk game-breeders are, or will be, against it. For my own part, I can't understand why these engines of death should be allowed. I don't think a poacher should be put to death to preserve a hare or a partridge.—*Ibid.*

**LIBERALITY OF LORD ELDON.**—In 1788, when Mr. Scott first became a candidate for the borough of Weobly, he was received and lodged in the house of Mr. Bridge, the vicar, who, having a daughter, then a young child, took a jocular promise from him, that if he should ever become Chancellor, and the little girl's husband should be a clergyman, the Chancellor would give that clergyman a living. Now comes the sequel, partly related by Lord Eldon himself to [his niece] Mrs. Foster. "Years rolled on—I came into office: when one morning I was told a young lady wished to speak to me; and I said that young ladies must be attended to, so they must show her up. And up came a very pretty young lady, and she curtsied and simpered, and said she thought I could not recollect her. I answered I certainly did not, but perhaps she could recall herself to my memory; so she asked me if I remembered the clergyman at Weobly, and his little girl to whom I had made a promise. 'Oh, yes!' I said, 'I do, and I suppose you are married to a clergyman?' 'No,' she said, and she blushed, 'I am only going to be married to one, if you, my Lord, will give him a living.' Well, I told her to come back in a few days; and I made inquiries to ascertain from the bishop of the diocese that the gentleman she was going to be married to was a respectable clergyman of the Church of England; and then I looked at my list, and found I actually had a living vacant that I could give him. So when the young lady came back, I told her she might return home and get married as fast as she liked, for her intended husband should be presented to a living, and I would send the papers as soon as they could be made out. 'Oh, no!' she exclaimed, and again she simpered, and blushed, and curtsied; 'pray, my Lord, let me take them back myself.' I was a good deal amused; so I actually had the papers made out, and I signed them, and she took them back herself the following day. But, alas, for the honour of man! Miss Bridge, after all, did not become Mrs. Jones, until two years after the gentleman had been rector of Stanton. The son of the clergyman who ultimately married them at Stanton, writes thus:—'Jones would have jilted the lady, but was shamed into the fulfilment of his engagement by the friends and relations of both parties. Miss Bridge, with her party, arrived there from Hereford in a post-chaise. She refused, however, to enter the parsonage-house, until she did so as his wife.' To conclude the story, Mrs. Jones survived her husband, and, being in indigent circumstances, once more applied to the Chancellor, "to obtain for her an admission into a recently instituted establishment, near Bath, for the support, maintenance, comfort, and benefit of the widows of clergymen and others." Lord Eldon not only complied with her request, but sent her money to defray the expenses of her removal.—*Life of Lord Eldon.*

**LORD ELDON AND THE CHIMNEY SWEEP.**—Travelling the circuit with a companion who, according to a custom not uncommon in those days, always carried pistols with him and placed them under his pillow, they slept one night at an inn, and at dawn of day Mr. Scott discovered in his bed-room a man's figure, seemingly dressed in black. The intruder, being sharply challenged, said, "Please your honour, I am only a poor sweep, and I believe I've come down the wrong chimney." "My friend," was the reply, "you have come down the right one—I give you a sixpence to buy a pot of beer; while the gentleman in the next room sleeps with pistols under his pillow, and had you paid him a visit, he would have blown your brains out!"—*Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors.*

**ELDON AND FLOOD ON THE INDIA BILL.**—These leaders (Pitt and Grenville) had a long following; among the most conspicuous of whom may be noted, John Scott, afterwards Lord Chancellor Eldon, and Henry Flood, the rival of Grattan in the Irish Parliament. Both of these eminent persons addressed the House for the first time on the India Bill, and the speeches of each that had ever been heard within the walls of the House of Commons. It is not often that a member of the learned profession has the good fortune to be heard with favour by that fastidious and jealous assembly; and a finer opportunity than this debate afforded to a legal candidate for Parliamentary distinction rarely occurs. It was a question of high constitutional law, of chartered rights and vested interests. But the eminent lawyer, instead of confining himself to those topics on which he might have spoken with authority, with a perverseness of taste, which men of sense and knowledge sometimes display, fancied the subject was one to be treated with wit, railleury and sarcasm, and that his was the hand which could wield those dangerous weapons. He pulled a Bible out of a cabinet, and proceeded to show, by quoting long passages, that the Bill was foreshadowed in the Book of Revelation—an illustration the like of which had not been witnessed within those walls, since the time of Barabbas. From the New Testament, Mr. Scott passed to 'Thucydides and Shakspeare; he accused Mr. Fox of attempting to smother the constitution, citing Othello and the death of Desdemona, as a precedent in point. The House was too much of a cant silence. Flood likewise failed altogether to sustain the high reputation which he had brought from the other side of the Channel. He spoke in the last stage of the discussion, when the subject, as well as the patience of the House was nearly exhausted. He began by saying that he was wholly unacquainted with the question, that he had not read a line of the Reports which lay upon

**LORD ELDON'S VISIT TO THE KING.**—Mr. Wilberforce said to Lord Eldon, about the time of the second illness of George III at the moment when the King again began to transact business, "How is the King? I fear you and your friends have been in too great a hurry to bring him back to public life; surely he can hardly yet be fit for it." "Indeed, but he is," said Lord Eldon, "and I'll give you a proof how much he is himself. The first time I went to his closet after his recovery, to pay my respects, he called to me as I was retiring. 'My Lord, how is Lady Eldon?' She is pretty well, I replied, 'but I could hardly have flattered myself that she would attract your Majesty's notice or inquiries.' 'Indeed, but I am deeply indebted to her,' replied the King, 'since had it not been for Lady Eldon, your lordship would at this moment have been a country curate, instead of my Lord Chancellor.'—*Harford's Recollections of Wilberforce.*