

Original letters that passed between Mess. Brand and Ford, surgeons, on account of Mr. Ford's conduct relative to Mr. Patterson, and afterwards to one Sheldrake, a truss-maker, who was convicted, in the Court of King's Bench, of being the author of a false, scandalous, and malicious libel against Mr. Brand.

Contributors

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Royal College of Surgeons of England

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6.
O R I G I N A L
L E T T E R S

T H A T P A S S E D B E T W E E N

Mess. B R A N D and F O R D,
S U R G E O N S,

O N A C C O U N T O F

M R . F O R D ' S C O N D U C T R E L A T I V E T O M R . P A T T E R S O N ,

A N D A F T E R W A R D S T O

O N E S H E L D R A K E , A T R U S S - M A K E R ,

W H O W A S C O N V I C T E D , I N T H E C O U R T O F K I N G ' S B E N C H , O F
B E I N G T H E A U T H O R O F A F A L S E , S C A N D A L O U S , A N D M A L I -
C I O U S L I B E L A G A I N S T M R . B R A N D .



L O N D O N :

P R I N T E D F O R J . M U R R A Y , N o . 3 2 , F L E E T - S T R E E T ,

M D C C L X X X I V .

Page 37, Line 7 from the bottom, for *depends* read *depend*.

— 38, — 7 from the bottom, for *depends* read *depend*.

R E A D E R.

THOUGH the disputes of individuals are in general but little interesting to the Public at large, so much has been said in different circles on that which some time ago happened between Messrs. Brand and Ford, and its origin, progress, and termination have been so variously represented, that in order to prevent all further mistakes, it has been thought proper to publish genuine copies of the Letters that passed between Messrs. Brand, Hodges, and Ford, upon that subject. By these, such Readers as think this matter a proper subject for their examination, will have an opportunity of making a just estimate of the merits of each; and from hence, as the only genuine source of information, draw proofs tending to exculpate or condemn each of the opponents.

The medical profession is a kind of public one, and those who exercise it are, considering its importance, held to be amenable to the world to give proofs of their integrity and honour as well as of their skill. This there-

fore, joined to that impatience which every man must feel at the slightest attempt to cast a stain upon his conduct, either through ignorance or prejudice, will, it is hoped, be a sufficient apology for making a public defence against a private attack; and as the Letters here inserted are original and authentic, none can complain of injustice or want of candour. Each party must stand or fall by his own words, given under his own hand :

Verbum emissum perit, Litera scripta manet.

Although Mr. Brand has ever bestowed his attention on the industrious class of Patients who are unable to discharge the professional fees of Surgeons, and in the palliative cure of Ruptures has applied proper bandages at the expence usually charged by trussmakers, yet he never imagined that this, which he intended as an act of humanity, should be made use of as a precedent to deprive him of his rights as a Surgeon.

Mr. Brand's reasons for publishing these Letters are to be found in that of March 27, 1784, which is added to these.

ORIGINAL

LETTERS, &c.

LETTER I.

To EDWARD FORD, Esq.

SIR, *Soho-Square, January 22, 1783.*

IT is with the extremest concern that I find myself under the disagreeable necessity of writing to you. But it is the duty of every Gentleman, who has a proper respect for his character, to permit no one to slander him with impunity. The injured, indeed, are not always so fortunate as to discover their traducers; and, when discovered, they are sometimes so far beneath their notice, that no personal regard can be paid to them. Such can only be treated with silent contempt. Their calumnies constantly and completely defeat themselves. In what light I ought to consider you, time must soon discover.

You are an entire stranger to me, and it has so happened, that, until you thought proper to trouble yourself with my concerns, I never heard of your name.

The executor of a patient, whom I attended about a year ago, refused to pay me, and I was obliged to employ my attorney. It appears, that his refusal was entirely in consequence of your telling him, that my charge was more than I could demand. Mr. Patterfon, upon better enquiry, and applying to Gentlemen of unquestionable honor and the first rank in their profession (who attended the case with me), finding that you had misled him, gave you up, as the only reparation in his power to make for his conduct. How you could be a judge of what you did not see, yourself must determine; but by your valuation, I am induced to suspect that you are not much in the habit of performing operations of such consequence, as that for the strangulated hernia.

No Gentleman, certainly, would take the liberty of putting a value upon another's trouble. None but a fool or a knave would undervalue another practitioner. To tell Mr. Patterfon that I had a right to no more than he offered, was tantamount to declaring my charge an imposition. How you *dared* to make such an accusation against my character, is what I call upon you to answer; and be assured, Sir, I shall not give you up until I have received ample satisfaction for the injury you have done me.

You had the artful precaution of endeavouring

to skulk behind a promise of secrecy, which you extorted from Mr. Patterson. Was that the conduct of a Gentleman? Was it either fair or honorable? That circumstance, alone, proves, beyond all doubt, that you was even conscious of doing a base action. Had you been acting like a man of honor, why did you require secrecy? Secrecy is the black refuge of the dark affassin.

The worst of people have some reason that urges them to bad actions; but I cannot discover even the smallest pretence, you can have, for making me the immediate object of your baseness. I am entirely unacquainted with you, and, as I never did offence to any one, I am very sure you can have no resentment to gratify against me. Your conduct, therefore, must arise from an innate wickedness, which can only be accounted for from the influence of a bad heart.

Had it been your pleasure to do me a wrong, why be a traitor to the profession of surgery, and endeavour to lessen it? In attempting to lessen another surgeon's merits, you wanted the common virtue of the meanest mechanics.

Did you imagine, that by assuming the importance of a dictator you could raise your own? Be assured, Sir, if you have no other consequence than what you have derived from injuring me, you shall not long remain possessed of that.

In the emotions of honest resentment, it is but too common to make a waste of words. I feel myself in that error, and will hasten to the necessary point. Had you been contemptible enough to have merited only contempt, I would have spared myself this trouble. There is a recent instance, to prove that I can see the falshoods of a mean fellow * stand personally unrefuted. Possibly you have been weak enough to draw a false conclusion from my conduct in that case. If so, you had even less respect for yourself, than I shall shew you, because I understand you are related to Dr. Ford, who is a respectable character; and I shall give you the privileges of a gentleman, because you happen to be a surgeon, although I shall not be less sparing in my pursuit of justice on these accounts.

I am not to be informed how disagreeable and ill-becoming disputes of this kind are to men of our profession. I enter upon it with reluctance, I own with the sincerest reluctance. But I cannot live under a false and injurious accusation

* Alluding to a scurrilous pamphlet published by one Shel-drake, a Truss-maker. Mr. Brand took no personal notice of it, but brought an action in the Court of King's Bench, and Shel-drake was cast as the author of a false, scandalous, and malicious libel against Mr. Brand's character. Mr. Ford attended the libeller in Court.—Mr. Brand was totally unacquainted with the connection when he wrote the letters relative to Patter-son.

against my reputation—it is dearer to every man of honor than life itself.

Whatever steps I may hereafter find it necessary to take, you will see that I shall act openly and honorably towards you, although your conduct has made it more a condescension on my part than any just claim of your own.

To sum up the whole:—Your conduct has been secret, false, and injurious to my reputation. You have done me the worst of injuries, and you shall do me ample justice. I expect to hear from you immediately.

I am, SIR,

Yours, &c.

T. BRAND.

L E T T E R II.

To T. BRAND, Esq.

SIR,

IT is impossible you can expect I should answer the questions suggested in your letter, as they are accompanied with charges of such a nature, that, if true, I should deserve to be treated with

the coarse language you have condescended to adopt.

When I am called upon in a proper manner, I will explain what I said to Patterson; and if you are not content with my explanation, it will then remain to be seen, whether I merit such a mode of address as you used.

ED. FORD.

Golden-square, $\frac{1}{4}$ past Four.

[Received at six o'clock, P. M. Jan. 22, 1783.]

L E T T E R III.

To EDWARD FORD, Esq.

S I R,

Jan. 23, 1783. Thursday Morning.

I MUST say, that your affected brevity is very ill-becoming your present situation. You will find that I SHALL expect an answer, and one completely satisfactory to my reputation, which you have wounded.

My charges against you are clear and determined, and such as no man of honor would lie one moment under. It is not my resentment alone you will have to dread. You will be the detestation of all honest men,

The

The proof of your having injured me rests upon the most unquestionable evidence. As to your explaining what you said to Mr. Patterson, I want no explanation of words—truth is plain. The words you have used have been but too clear to require any explanation; and your required secrecy from Mr. Patterson, a full testimony of the baseness of your intentions against me.

I am not to be taught how to conduct myself, even when engaged in the most important cause of vindicating my honor. If my address be not graced with those harmonious periods that adorn your letter, you shall find me very sincere in the pursuit of justice. I have found a traducer of my reputation, and I will have ample satisfaction. I therefore expect an unequivocal answer to my former letter.

I am, S I R,

Yours, &c.

T. BRAND.

B 4

[Mr.

In addressing you, I have not used the terms of villain, liar, or coward. My case is too strong to stand in need of such auxiliaries; and I am not to learn, that to support a cause with firmness, it must be maintained with moderation.

The reluctance you have shewn in coming forward argues something, if possible, even worse than the charges I have preferred against you. It may seem extremely prudent to your personal fears; but it must entirely shut you from the society of all honorable men for ever.

My anxiety can be better conceived than described; and you have no right to hope that I shall let you enjoy that peace of which you have robbed me. Justice to myself obliges me to repeat this, and I owe it to a reputation which cannot be less valuable in being honored with the attention and friendship of some of the most respectable and distinguished characters in the kingdom.

I am, SIR,

Yours, &c.

T. BRAND.

LETTER

L E T T E R V.

To T, B R A N D, Esq.

Golden-Square, half past 10, Saturday Evening.

S I R,

AS you think you have received an injury from me, which I am not conscious of having given, I must say that it is my desire, that this affair should be canvassed by gentlemen of the profession.

I would with the utmost pleasure submit my conduct to the arbitration of my brethren, and will readily conform to their decision,

I am, SIR,

Yours, &c.

E D W A R D F O R D,

L E T :

LETTER VI.

EDWARD FORD, Esq.

SIR,

Monday Night, Jan. 27, 1783.

I Do assure you, upon my honor, that I have not had one moment to call my own since Saturday night. I shall answer yours to-morrow, and as I intend to send it by a gentleman, I beg to know at what hour you are to be met with in the afternoon.

I am, SIR,

Yours, &c.

T. BRAND.

LET

L E T T E R V H.

T. B R A N D, Esq.

S I R, *Golden-Square, Tuesday Morning, Jan. 28, 1783.*

I SHALL be at home this evening from seven till ten, and am sorry I cannot fit an earlier hour as I am engaged to dine from home.

I am, S I R,

Yours, &c,

E D W A R D F O R D.

[*The following Letter was delivered open by Mr. Hodges, who waited on him agreeably to the appointment. Mr. Howard of Argyle Buildings was present with Mr. Ford.*]

L E T T E R V I I I.

E D W A R D F O R D, Esq.

S I R,

Tuesday, Jan. 28, 1783.

Y O U have still declined giving me a fair and direct answer, and yet I have done every thing in my power to excite it. What you mean
by

by having the affair canvassed, I do not very well understand, as the facts stand uncontroverted even by yourself. What you say, of submitting your conduct to the arbitration of your brethren, may be extremely fine, but it has nothing to do with my reputation. There are some gentlemen of the profession, for whom I entertain the greatest respect and affection, and in whom I would place every confidence. But I am hitherto the guardian of my own honor, and will not easily be prevailed on to resign it.

I hope I may be permitted to say, without the accusation of extreme vanity, that no one takes more pains, or exercises his professional endeavours with more fidelity for the benefit of his patients, than myself. Why then am I to be slandered? You might have given less reason to suspect, that an envious disposition, where it could not emulate, had endeavoured to satiate itself with detraction.

To come to the point, you need not be told that this is no question of surgery, and therefore one gentleman is as proper a judge as another. If surgeons do not insist upon the rules which regulate the conduct of gentlemen, they can have little claim to respect from the world.

From

From this you will easily perceive, that I must be satisfied.

Provided my character be safe, I want no more of you. I will accept of an apology in presence of Mr. Patterson, and our common friends; and, to prevent any misunderstanding, I have sent you by Mr. Hodges, who does me the honor of delivering this, the apology I require. From this I cannot recede.

I am, SIR,

Yours, &c.

T. BRAND.

[*Apology required from Mr. Ford.*]

“ I AM extremely concerned in having given offence to Mr. Brand, in consequence of an application made by Mr. Patterson to me, in which I imprudently gave an opinion that might have proved injurious to Mr. Brand’s character; and as I cannot consistent with truth impute any thing improper or dishonourable against him, I make this apology for his satisfaction.”

Mr.

[*Mr. Hodges brought the following Answer, which he wrote in presence of Messrs. Ford and Howard, to Mr. Brand.*]

“MR. FORD will not accede to the apology proposed by Mr. Brand upon the present ground. He offers to meet Mr. Brand, with each their friends, and refer the matter to arbitration; and if it is then thought requisite upon that meeting (after the case is stated), he will make any apology that may be deemed adequate and necessary by the parties.---*He refuses to meet Mr. Patterson on any occasion, or the making any apology in his presence.*”

[*Mr. Brand's Answer to Mr. Ford's Message by Mr. Hodges.*]

“MR. BRAND does not precisely know how to understand, *That Mr. Ford will not accede to the apology proposed to him upon the present ground.* Mr. Brand can offer no better ground than what has appeared—a conviction of the injury he has received from Mr. Ford.—Mr. Brand objects to the term *proposal* being precise.—He said he would
accept

cumstances : I totally deny the extorting any
promise of secrecy of him.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

ED. FORD.

LETTER X.

T. BRAND, Esq.

DEAR BRAND,

Saturday Morning, 10 o'clock.

I Received the inclosed from Mr. Ford late last
night; and though the former letter on this
subject was a little obscure, the purport of this
appears obvious, and what his intentions are
at the proposed meeting. You will take this
matter into consideration, as I think you should
answer this letter yourself.

I am yours sincerely,

J. HODGES.

LET-

LETTER XI.

EDWARD FORD, Esq.

S I R,

Feb. 6, 1783.

MY friend Mr. Hodges has presented me with a letter addressed to him from you. Although he did me the favour of waiting on you with my last resolution, I hold it no ways necessary that he should be involved in a correspondence on my account. With you, indeed, it is no easy matter. Not that your letters are tediously long, although this last may stand pre-eminent for other pretensions not very flattering to your precision or understanding.

With regard to submitting the affair to the Master and Wardens of the Company, I should be sorry to be improper; and had it been a case that came properly within their cognizance, I probably should not have troubled you. This is a question of honor. My reputation has been wounded by you, and I have endeavored to make you consider yourself only as a gentleman; but it would seem, that you are ready at any kind of proposal that may delay the time, or put off a proper explanation. Your being a surgeon *aggravates* the offence; but had it been any other

except an apology, and, to prevent trouble, stated what he deemed necessary.

“ Mr. Brand *declines any interview with Mr. Ford*, unless he avows his intention to be, either to vindicate the wrong he has done, like a gentleman, or receive his apology.

“ Mr. Brand, in respect to Mr. Ford's *refusing to meet Mr. Patterson*, can only say, that it adds fresh conviction to his mind, as it must to every unprejudiced person. Mr. Ford would have done well to have stated some proper objections. To remove the only one that can exist, Mr. Brand can hardly think it necessary to say, that he had no idea of introducing Mr. Patterson as a party, or as a gentleman. He may however claim the respect of an honest man, and, as such, can give no offence to the feelings of men of much more elevated rank than either of the principals of this affair. Mr. Ford must be as well acquainted with the force of Mr. Patterson's evidence as Mr. Brand; and upon that ground it might be prudent to avoid him, if possible.---But this determination of Mr. Ford's, instead of answering that purpose, carries as compleat a conviction as words could possibly do. Mr. Brand thinks no one beneath *his* notice who employs and pays him for *his* trouble.”

L E T T E R IX.

To Mr. H O D G E S.

DEAR SIR,

Golden-Square, Jan. 31, 1783.

I Believe it is necessary for me to make an apology for troubling you with this letter;— which is only to beg the favour of you to acquaint Mr. Brand, that I am ready to submit the decision of this affair to the Master and Wardens of the Company, or to any other fair referees; and if it be the opinion of referees, that I have acted wrong, I shall be content to make an apology, or to terminate the difference in any other manner.

However, I think myself free to acknowledge, that I did not suppose it possible that any words which passed between me and Mr. Patterson could be construed to Mr. Brand's disadvantage; neither could they be so meant, as I had at that time no knowledge whatsoever of Mr. B.

Patterson applied to me as a poor man, unable to pay a debt he had incurred;—and I advised him to apply to his creditor, and state his circumstances:

C

cumstances:

gentleman who had done me the same kind of injury, I should certainly have acted in the very same manner. When I took up my diploma, I made no surrender of the common privileges of a gentleman. If my education and conduct entitle me to such a consideration, I hope, because I am a surgeon, I am not obliged to forego the necessary spirit of a man.

In applying to Mr. Hodges to state your case to me, it no doubt was very proper to give your own account of the transaction; and as you have taken so much time, it may be considered as an act of the soberest deliberation.

“ You think yourself free to acknowledge, that you did not suppose it possible, &c.”

The condescension of *acknowledging* what is so necessary for your honor to prove and clear up, is your own language. This may be only a poetical manner of expressing yourself, and therefore not improperly suited to the occasion.

Your conclusion is, *neither could they be so meant, as at that time you had no knowledge of Mr. B.* I hope the knowledge you have now acquired, will never induce you to do me another injury.—If you can demonstrate, that there is reason in this argument, or force or truth in the conclusion, I will undertake to change places with

with you, and, at present, I am not very ambitious of that honor.

You say, *That Patterson applied to you as a poor man unable to pay a debt he had incurred, and you advised him to apply to his creditor to state his circumstances.* It was very good advice. Surely you must know, that to mutilate is to misrepresent. Was there not something *more* passed? You know the fact is not true—He had incurred no debt—He was only the executor, and, as residuary legatee to a considerable fortune, he is not very easily to be considered as a poor man. Even allowing (what I do not admit) that you had been the dupe of an imposition, is that a reason why I should be the sacrifice of your folly?

Turn where you will, the matter only thickens against you; and whatever resentment you may dread from me, you must have some claim to the pity of your friends.

You totally deny extorting any promise of secrecy of Mr. Patterson. The whole force of this lies upon the word *extort*. I called it extorting, and you have not convinced me that the expression was improper. Surely you must have formed a very light opinion of my understanding to think this a refutation of a material point. Is there any difference to me, whether you extorted it,

required it, entered into---or how it was fashioned---so that you desired to be concealed?

As you have not denied any other facts, I need not insist upon them again. I am not vindictive, nor can I be gratified by an indulgence of those advantages you have given me over you. My resentment is no farther against you, than the vindication of my own character demands. I sought no quarrel with you, and it is you alone who are the aggressor. You cannot but know that my present conduct is the indispensable duty of every honest man.

Perhaps the little reputation I stand possessed of, has raised me some little enemies among little men. I know my own interest too well to oppose such profitable adversaries, and I can desire no stronger recommendation than the slander of a fool. I have not admitted you under this description.

Mr. Hodges told me that you desired a few days to consult with your friends.

Such a delay is very unusual; but I am actuated by no sudden gust of passion. The wrong strikes deep, and it must at last be removed. Circumstanced as I am, if I could with delicacy advise you, I should recommend you to consult your friends,

friends, while one gleam of hope remains of extricating yourself without eternal dishonor.

I will only say a few words of the Apology.— Considering the whole, what I said was most reasonable. If I wished your ruin, I would advise you not to make it. I have submitted that, and every other part of my conduct to the consideration of such friends upon whose honor and understandings I have the firmest reliance.

I hope you will not practise on my patience, or trifle longer with my injury. Although I shall defend my character to the last, and only resign it with my life, I will take no advantage of the situation I have in being injured, but grant you every reasonable indulgence to consult with your friends. But I *must* and *will* be satisfied.

I am, SIR,

Yours, &c.

T. BRAND.

LETTER XII.

To Mr. HODGES.

SIR *Golden Square, Wednesday Morning.*

I AM much obliged to you for the trouble of sending my last letter to Mr. B.

There is only one thing I think necessary to add, which is, that I beg to wave any objection that was made to Patterson's being employed, either as a witness, party, or otherwise.

I am at this instant unacquainted with the force of his evidence.

I am, SIR,

Yours, &c.

ED. FORD.

LETTER XIII.

To Mr. BRAND.

DEAR BRAND,

Saturday Morning.

I AM under the necessity of being out early this morning on business, therefore have enclosed you a letter I received late in the evening yesterday. If you will be at home near four o'clock to-day, I will give you a call.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

J. HODGES.

LET

LETTER XIV.

To Mr. HODGES.

SIR, Golden Square, Feb. 7, 1783.

I Would not trouble you with so insignificant a matter, as my being engaged to dine with a Medical Club in the City on the first Friday in the month, was it not to obviate the possibility of its being thought that I wished to protract the investigation of this business one moment; and at the same time I hope it will serve as an apology for not answering your note before. I can attend a meeting at Jack's Coffee-house to-morrow evening at eight o'clock, or at the same hour on Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday in the ensuing week, or the week after. Mr. Hodges must be sensible that it is necessary to give professional gentlemen as much notice as possible.

May I ask what number of friends Mr. B. intends to bring with him, that I may bring an equal number? I will (if necessary) send Mr. B. the names of those gentlemen who will favor me with their company. I do not ask that favor of Mr. Brand, as Mr. Hodges's name is sufficient for me.

I am, SIR,

Your obedient Servant,

ED. FORD.

[Agreeably to Mr. Ford's letter, Mr. Hodges, by Mr. Brand's desire, waited on him, to fix the first appointment of a meeting of the friends of each party; but although Mr. Ford had himself fixed Saturday evening at eight o'clock, he told Mr. Hodges he could not keep the appointment.

[The only reason for this delay appeared afterwards in the shape of an affidavit, which Mr. Ford procured from Mr. Patterson, whom he had before declared he would not meet on any occasion * !

[Mr. Brand never had called on Mr. Patterson from the time of fixing the charge against Mr. Ford until this very day, when he accompanied Mr. Hodges to the corner of the Square, and waited at Patterson's till Mr. Hodges came from thence, which might be about ten minutes.]

LETTER XV.

TO EDWARD FORD, Esq.

S I R,

Sunday Morning, Feb. 9, 1783.

YOU made an appointment with Mr. Hodges last night at eight o'clock, and he waited on you to inform you that he would meet you.

* See Mr. Hodges's message, p. 15.

You

You did not keep *your own* appointment. I cannot be put off longer, and my letters will shew the world, that I have shewn you every proof of candor and lenity.

For me to meet you is impossible, but for the purposes that I have already stated. You cannot misunderstand me.

Mr. Hodges will be at Jack's with another Gentleman at half past two o'clock to-morrow, to meet Mr. Howard, and any other Gentleman you please. They will hear what your friends have to say, and I wish it may be terminated without the necessity of proceeding to extremity. I need not repeat my resolution. This is the last time that I intend writing to you on the subject.

I am, SIR,

Yours, &c.

D. N. A. B. B. R. A. N. D.

L E T -

L E T T E R X V I .

To Mr. H O D G E S .

S I R ,

T. Feb. 9, 1783.

I Have this day received a letter from Mr. Brand, which contains these words: “ You made an appointment with Mr. Hodges last night, at eight o’clock, and he waited on you to inform you that he would meet you. You did not keep your appointment.”

If I wished to point out Mr. B.’s mistake, I think that I need only refer to your recollection of what passed between us yesterday.

I must repeat what I said before: I am ready to have this affair investigated, and Mr. Adair Hawkins and Mr. Vaux will attend upon my part at eight o’clock on Tuesday evening, at the place appointed by Mr. Brand.

I have rejected Mr. Brand’s appointment, as the middle of the day is the time of business to every surgeon: and in the propriety of this I am sure Mr. Hodges will concur.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

E D F O R D .

L E T -

L E T T E R X V I I .

T O M R . F O R D .

S I R ,

Frith-street, Feb. 10, 1783.

YOU certainly mistake the meaning of the quotation you have made from Mr. Brand's last letter; it had no allusion to any conversation, but refers merely to your own letter of February 7, which fixes either Saturday or Tuesday evening for our meeting. My last visit to you was for the express purpose of appointing Saturday evening with you. This you objected to, from the difficulty in convening your own party at such short notice, and then mentioned Sunday. I believe upon recollection you will find this was the whole of our conversation.

As I was instructed to deliver my message to you as on Saturday, *final* and *decisive*; on this account, therefore, another gentleman and myself with some difficulty prevailed upon him to recede from this resolution, and to wait till Monday, for which time I had absolutely fixed with another gentleman. The time of day brings its inconveniencies to me as well as yourself; but, even as a party only in this business, I assure you,

such

such procrastinations. give me particular anxiety. I therefore wish on every consideration to have the affair terminated as speedily as possible.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,

J. HODGES.

LETTER XVIII.

Mr. HODGES.

Golden-square, Monday Morning.

MR Ford's compliments to Mr. Hodges, and is exceeding sorry for any mistake. He has wrote to his friends desiring their attendance on Tuesday evening.---He should be sorry to have the meeting deferred.---but he thinks two days notice is little enough for men of business. It would be impossible for Mr. Ford's friends to meet to-day---or Wednesday.

[Mr. Hodges inclosed the above Note to Mr. Brand, upon which Mr. Brand wrote him the following Letter, to be communicated to Mr. Ford.]

LET-

L E T T E R XIX.

To Mr. H O D G E S.

Monday Evening, Feb. 11, 1783.

DEAR HODGES,

Soho-Square.

TH E S E procraftinations are monstrous--
beyond all example. If I had not the most
implicit confidence in your propriety, I could
not be prevailed on.

Why Mr. Ford did not keep *his own appoint-
ment on Saturday*, is not satisfactorily accounted
for. He could not have fixed that time without
having previously consulted with his friends; and
I am much mistaken if either Mr. Vaux or Mr.
Adair Hawkins would have disappointed him on
such an occasion.

All this ought to be seen into. Because I
have been injured, I am not surely less susceptible
of an insult.

Let me hope, as you value my peace of mind,
the reputation of your friend, and as you regard
the honour of the profession, that you will not
advise me again to wait one moment beyond the
appointed time--I cannot, cannot do it.

I am, dear Sir,

Very truly yours,

T. B R A N D.

Mr.

[*Mr. Ford in consequence sent the following :*]

To Mr. H O D G E S.

MR. Ford's compliments to Mr. Hodges, and takes the liberty of repeating what he said yesterday, that his friends will be at Jack's Coffee-house this evening at eight.

Tuesday, Feb. 11, 1783.

ON Tuesday evening the parties met : Three on the part of Mr. Ford, Mess. Howard, Vaux, and Adair Hawkins ; on the part of Mr. Brand, Mess. Hodges and O'Bryen.

Without entering into a tedious detail of a desultory conversation, let it suffice to say, that Mr. Ford's friends presented the affidavit which had been procured from Patterson. The words of this affidavit cannot be recollected, as Mr. Ford's friends took it away with them without leaving a copy of it ; but its quality may be ascertained by two circumstances.—First, Mr. Brand denied its truth, and declared to his friends that he had two gentlemen to prove its falsehood, one of whom he brought to the Coffee-house in an hour's time :—and the second, That Mr. Ford's friends
 having

having declared, that Mr. Patterfon would come to Jack's Coffee-house and answer any questions necessary to support his affidavit, he did not make his appearance. In short, Mr. Ford's friends maturely weighing the matter, and finding that Patterfon deserted his promise of coming to speak personally to what he had sworn, agreed to the necessity of Mr. Ford's making an apology to Mr. Brand. As soon as the words were settled, Mr. Ford was sent for, who came to Mr. Brand and made the Apology; after which Mr. Brand apologized for any terms that might be deemed harsh, which had escaped him in his Letters to Mr. Ford.

...to the house and answer the questions

...friends warmly welcoming the master and his

...to the house and answer the questions

...were killed, Mr. Ford was left for, who came to

...Mr. Ford and made the apology, after which

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...to depend solely on his innocence, but he

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...dicate himself, and to defeat his opposers.

...Mediocrity in surgery is far from being

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...educated

L E T T E R

T O

EDWARD FORD, Esq.

G O L D E N S Q U A R E.

S I R,

THE Public are equally interested in the true character, as in the abilities of a surgeon. His profession requires that unbounded confidence, which can only be placed in a man of honor. But it is in surgery as in other professions, whoever aspires beyond mediocrity is liable to the ill offices of malice and envy. To resist these, it is neither prudent nor right for an honest man to depend solely on his innocence, but he must stand forward, when attacked, to vindicate himself, and to defeat his opposers.

Mediocrity in surgery is far from being one of the most enviable ranks in society. The numbers seduced by appearances, and

educated in this profession, render it impossible that every one can find an ample, much less a splendid return for his labours. It is true, the number of surgeons cannot lessen the intrinsic consequence of the profession; and surgery is of that importance to the happiness of mankind, that it must ever secure to real skill a respectable estimation. But is it not hard, that after an expensive, laborious and dangerous education, a surgeon has more difficulties to encounter with than any other profession whatever? that he must, or ought to be more tenacious of his reputation than is necessary in almost any other situation of life?

If a liberal conduct among surgeons be not observed and insisted upon, the profession must suffer, and soon fall into contempt. Of the only interruptions I have ever met with, I shall presently take notice.

If the best chirurgical education that this kingdom can afford—if an unwearied assiduity to acquire knowledge, and a constant intercourse with the most eminent physicians and surgeons—if these can form advantage, or give a reasonable prospect of consequence
in

in surgery, I hope I may be permitted to look up to it without presumption.

The history of surgery has probably never afforded an instance of any one being more successful than myself; and it is my greatest satisfaction to say, that I have ever lived upon terms of amity with some of its most distinguished characters.

The subject of Ruptures has afforded an endless theme to writers, and of misunderstanding. Almost every surgeon of eminence has taken it up; yet at this time it is a fact, that the treatment and cure of these disorders is really so little understood or practised, that numbers are falling sacrifices to neglect and mismanagement.

Mr. Pott has indeed told us, that the *success* and *reputation* of a surgeon *depends* on the truss he applies; and yet, how few surgeons give attention to these *important applications*, but refer their patients to truss-makers? From truss-makers they are soon driven by despair to the depredations of quacks, by whom the tragedy is soon finished.

It is a reproach made against surgery, that regular surgeons too commonly neglect the treatment of Ruptures ; and it is certainly not without foundation. Can there be a stronger proof required, than the number of operations that are rendered necessary, for want of regular and skilful treatment ? Without an intimate knowledge of a disorder, it is impossible to expect success ; and I am afraid that those who are obliged to rely upon Mr. Pott's anatomy of this complaint, have not a perfect idea of the truth and nature of the most common Rupture. Yet he is the most eminent modern writer, and I am willing to allow he has opinions that every honest surgeon must approve.

No surgeon is more convinced than I am of the truth of Mr. Pott's assertion, that the success and reputation of a surgeon *depends* on his care of the application in a Rupture case. I shall persevere in my endeavour to improve these applications, and never abandon my patients to truss-makers, although those surgeons who are more desirous of performing operations than preventing *their necessity,*

necessity, will most probably dislike my determination.

The application of trusses cannot form an object of profit to a surgeon, although they are the most difficult, troublesome, and disagreeable in the whole practice of surgery. It is by *improper* trusses that patients are rendered *profitable*; and if a surgeon prefers his own interest to the safety of his patient, and is willing to give up all pretensions to success and reputation, he cannot do it more effectually than by sending his patient to an ignorant trussmaker. An ignorant trussmaker certainly promotes the interests of surgery, by creating the necessity of operations, and a long attendance; and in proportion to a surgeon's regard to future profit, he will recommend the most ignorant trussmaker he can discover.

By publishing the pernicious consequences that patients are exposed to from *improper trusses*, I must prevent some profitable cases to surgery; yet I am convinced, that the majority of practitioners are neither so wicked nor so sordid, to wish to profit by those

miserics, which it is in the power, and ought to be the business of art to prevent.

If you wonder why these remarks have been addressed to you, I will freely declare, that my reasons are very different from those which are excited by extreme respect.

To general detraction, an honest man can make but one general answer—That he is always ready to meet his detractors openly, and desires to possess the respect of the Public no longer than he can prove himself worthy of being respected. I am ever ready to act upon this ground; and I consider it not more a piece of justice due to myself, than a duty I owe to those whose good opinion I have the honour to possess, to stand forward, and to vindicate myself against those who attempt to injure me.

But it is *only* you, Mr. Ford, and Shel-drake the truss-maker, that I could ever charge with attempting to do me an injury.—Mark the consequences—I obliged you to make me an apology, and I convicted Shel-drake, in the court of King's Bench, as the author of a *false, scandalous, and malicious* libel against my character.

When

When I received your apology, I did not know that you was acquainted with Sheldrake, whom I was then prosecuting as a libeller.

But what sense of delicacy must you possess, to sit next the libeller of a gentleman, in a public court, to whom you had yourself but recently been under the necessity of making an apology? Indeed, Mr. Ford, my attention was not so entirely engrossed in my own cause, but I spared a moment to blush for you; for really I never wished to have reason to despise you.

You had an opportunity, however, to hear my character vindicated by gentlemen of the first eminence in physick, surgery, and anatomy. The evidence of Sir William Fordyce, Dr. Hoffack, Dr. Osborne, and Mr. Cruickshanks, completely refuted the attempts of Sheldrake's infamous libel; and the verdict of an honest jury not only did me justice, but has fixed that indelible mark upon Sheldrake, which holds up a libeller to public shame.

It was, no doubt, the intention of Sheldrake's libel to provoke me into a personal

refutation of his falsehoods; but I would as soon hold a correspondence with the meanest Quack in town, and therefore I gave *him* up to the offended laws of his country.

Although Sheldrake has been punished as the author of the libel, yet it is believed there is some more artful, though more dastardly miscreant concealed behind the curtain, who, not daring to appear, has pushed that unhappy figure forward to screen himself. I cannot take any other notice than I have done of such a fellow as Sheldrake; but *if any GENTLEMAN will avow himself the author, or presume to propagate his falsehoods, or support a SINGLE article that can affect me as a gentleman and a man of honour, I will, with as much good-manners as the case will admit of, prove him to be a VILLAIN and a LIAR.*

There is something very extraordinary in your conduct, and yet I cannot charge you with being concerned in Sheldrake's libel. But you will permit me to observe, that you might have been more cautious not to incur suspicion; and if appearances can justify

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tify suspicion, you must only blame yourself for being suspected.

Without descending to enumerate Sheldrake's falsehoods, I may, without impropriety, be permitted to take notice of *one fact* which I am ready to believe is *very true*.

That *Sheldrake's* libel should contain a *single truth*, may surprise you, but it is not less worthy of notice for standing alone. He tells the public, that he is an *un-informed truss-maker*.

The Public cannot be apprised of a person more capable of exposing the unfortunate to danger, than an *un-informed truss-maker*; and it is a fact which no one can dispute with Sheldrake, because no one can be more conscious of *the truth* (that he is an *un-informed truss-maker*) *than himself*. The mischiefs brought on patients by the *ignorance of truss-makers*, have too long been a reproach against the practitioners of surgery, and a disgrace to humanity.

If *I* wished to profit by the miseries brought upon mankind by ignorance, I know no surer method than that of abandoning
patients

patients to common truss-makers ;—and the more ignorant, the more proper to fulfil the diabolical purpose.

In my *Chirurgical Essays*, by pointing out the dangers, I endeavoured to teach mankind WHAT ought to be guarded against. But I confess Sheldrake goes beyond my humble endeavours ; for, by publicly, and I had almost said *honestly*, declaring himself an *un-informed truss-maker*—he strikes at the root of the evil, by warning the Public, WHO the person is that *ought* to be *avoided* ; and there is no doubt but every patient who values his health, his manhood, or his life, will pay a proper attention to his declaration. Thus much, at least, must be allowed, that having apprised his employers (if he has any) what they have to trust to, they ought not in future to blame him for any ill consequences his particular ignorance may bring upon them.

Yet it certainly is, and ought to be a service of danger for the *un-informed* to meddle with the treatment of diseases. One *Raynes*, an advertising rupture-doctor, was cast in a
 hundred

hundred guineas damages for his mal-treatment of a poor man at Wandsworth. The patient is now in his grave, a victim to credulity, and the Doctor (as he calls himself) is retired to his *Villa near Hammersmith*, for the benefit of mankind.

But let us turn from such contemptible objects as Raynes and Sheldrake, and endeavour to recollect the obligations I have been under to you.

When Sheldrake's infamous libel was published, and he was secure from personal resentment, only by his meanness—while I was obliged to wait the slow, but certain remedy of the law—you afforded me an opportunity of convincing the Town, that a gentleman could not attempt to injure me with impunity.

But you must allow your apology was no recompence for my being involved in a law-suit for the recovery of my fees. I was determined to stand up for the rights of surgeons, and I was successful.

Mr. Hunter, whose name must ever be mentioned with respect, who attended the case with me, gave evidence, and declared the
justness

justness of my charge, and the jury consequently gave me a verdict for every guinea of my demand. But what was infinitely of more consequence to me than the recovery of forty guineas, it afforded an opportunity of hearing Mr. Hunter's sentiments of my conduct, in one of the most difficult situations a surgeon can possibly be engaged in. The case was a strangulated Rupture, and had been brought on in consequence of an improper truss. Mr. Hunter declared, that I had taken every measure to save the patient's life, and that I performed the operation for the strangulated Rupture, as well as any surgeon in Europe could do it. Such a declaration from Mr. Hunter would elevate a surgeon less ambitious to excel in his profession than I profess myself to be, and I cannot help thinking myself obliged to you for the public opportunity of hearing his approbation.

I have in this Letter taken notice of your having been obliged to make me an apology. The fact, however true, could not entirely justify my speaking of it in such terms, if your conduct afterwards had not discharged me from observing an extreme degree of delicacy

delicacy towards you. I have no reason to doubt your personal courage; but no degree of courage shall screen any man from my just resentment, nor prevent my pointing out whatever appears to me proper to clear up any thing that may have a tendency to do wrong to my character.

Yet I once hoped, that our misunderstanding might have been suffered to sink into oblivion; but that too has been misrepresented; and even at so distant a period, I find it necessary to take some step to state the matter as it was. To do so fairly, I know no better method than to publish the Letters. If I knew a better, I would accede to it. But this has been the advice of friends whom I respect, and, if I did not comply with their opinion before, it proceeded from an aversion to trouble the Public. I think it but fair, to apprise you of my intention, and could not help embracing this opportunity of saying what I have said.

It would seem to distrust the candour of the Public to think an apology necessary; for every man of honour will allow, that some indulgence is due to him who is called forward in his own vindication.

Conscious of the rectitude of my own conduct, I fear no quality of adversary who will stand forward openly.

As a surgeon, my success has certainly equalled my utmost hopes. But far from thinking myself above any part of my profession, where the health and safety of my patient, and my success and reputation are concerned; I am neither so mean nor so necessitous, as to seek employment or to accept of it upon any other terms, than those, which tend to support the honour and independence of surgery, and which are proper, while I discharge the duties of a surgeon, for supporting the necessary privileges of a gentleman.

In concluding, I will give you leave to say, that I have used a language which carries strong marks of self-approbation;—but at the same time, you must permit me to assure you, that the *defeat* of Mr. Ford and Sheldrake the truss-maker cannot make me vain.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

SOHO-SQUARE,
March 27th, 1784.

T. BRAND,