

being unable to account for the appearance of acids on the paper, on its being stated that the document for some time after it had been in Lord Stirling's possession was covered with a coating or crust of powder like brine, which, on being rubbed with the finger, came off, he gave it as his opinion that the whole of the appearances could at once be accounted for, either by the document having been saturated with salt water in crossing from America, or by long exposure to damp. Here then the difficulty is in some measure solved, and this latter opinion agrees with that given by various persons connected with the keeping of old papers, who state that long exposure to damp in cellars will produce the same effects. The paper then, by imbibing damp from the atmosphere, assumes different appearances, occasioned by the separation of the acids. There are, however, in this affidavit evident appearances of the application of *tests*.

The question very naturally occurs, to ask how such injury could have been effected? Whether by the application of tests privately, so as to change the colour of the inks, or whether designedly, to excite suspicion against their genuineness? However it may be, it only rendered it the more necessary that every facility should have been given to obtain more positive testimony respecting the injured documents. Why prevent Lord Stirling from doing so? No doubt these suspicious circumstances have given a colouring to the conduct of the Crown lawyers, and they have very skilfully availed themselves of them. But will any person think this a sufficient motive to have countenanced them in the previous refusal to allow the proof to be completed? If the document had been, as pretended, actually forged, no one can doubt that the efforts of the Crown lawyers in Paris for so many months to get up their case, would have been