

involving their friends in their disgrace; but as they now wished to conceal nothing that might lead to an expiation of their offence, they assured the Bench, their real names were William Millar and William Crew: that they had been valets to several gentlemen of respectability, and till this unfortunate moment had possessed characters altogether unimpeached.

A charge supported with such humanity by the prosecutor, and pleaded to with so much unfeigned penitence by the prisoners (the eldest of whom does not exceed nineteen) could not fail of making the most interesting impression on the Bench and auditors.—Not one of whom but, commiserating their unhappy situation, hoped they would experience that clemency to which their contrition made so powerful a claim.

The following melancholy event happened on Friday se'nnight at Blymhill, in the county of Stafford, and highly portrays the female character:—A little boy, the son of William and Elizabeth Parker, being sent on an errand, fell into a marl-pit by the way-side, at a very small distance from his father's house. His mother being at home heard the plunge, and guessed the cause; ran to the spot, and though the pit was very deep, no other assistance being at hand, regardless of the danger, she leaped in, but unfortunately perished, with the child, in the glorious attempt. On Monday last, the 16th, the coroner's inquest sat on the bodies of the deceased, and found their deaths accidental. The husband and father of the deceased is a day-labourer.

23. Yesterday, in the Court of King's Bench, the Rev. Philip Withers, convicted of a libel on Mrs. Fitzherbert, was brought up to receive judgment.

Mr. Dallas, on the part of the defendant, made a very ingenious speech in his favour; he intreated the Court in their discretion to consider all the circumstances which tended to mitigate the punishment of the offence; he contended that the circumstances of this case were peculiar, and deserved to be abstracted from the general rules which are understood to govern the principles of libels, that the offence was great it would be idle to deny, but at the same time it seemed that it arose from erroneous opinions entertained by the defendant respecting what appeared to him to be the most eligible mode of demonstrating patriotism and public spirit.

It might also be considered, that as the defendant had no resentment against Mrs. Fitzherbert, it was natural to infer that he was actuated by false notions of love to

his country, and not with any malignity to the person who he had traduced. His offence therefore arose from an error in opinion, not from a malignity of heart. The learned gentleman also hoped it would be the opinion of the Court, that such part of the defendant's conduct subsequent to his conviction as might in itself amount to a specific offence, independent of the charge for which he is to receive judgment, would not now be taken into consideration, because it might hereafter be distinctly exhibited against him.

Other parts of the defendant's conduct, after the first publication were certainly indefensible, as they arose from what the defendant in the hour of misguided zeal and intemperate heat, and therefore might be considered as the infirmities of human nature. The learned Gentleman concluded his address to the Jury, by observing, that if the Court could be supposed to have feelings, it was to be concluded they would be on the side of mercy—not mercy at the expence of Justice; but such mercy as consists in that moderation of punishment which in all cases best answers the purposes of substantial Justice.

Mr. Law followed Mr. Dallas; he urged the distressed circumstances of the defendant, as recommendatory to the mercy of the Court.

Mr. Withers made a very long speech to the Court, in which he discovered some zeuteness, but such an adherence to the principle upon which his original calumny was founded, as impressed the Court with sentiments which could not possibly operate in his favour.

Mr. Erskine made a very eloquent reply to the defendant and his Counsel; he made several apposite remarks upon the malignity of the defendant's mind, demonstrated as it was, even now in his defence: he concluded with saying, that if it be true that the defendant is now employed, as he says he is, in compiling a dictionary, he would advise him to write individually all the words in the English language, but to leave the combination to others.

Mr. Justice Ashurst reprehended the defendant for his heinous offence, and the mischievous tendency which the libel manifested; it was the character of a coward to calumniate the fair sex, and the holy orders of religion to which the defendant had been called, made his guilt the greater and more atrocious; a better use ought to have been made of his knowledge of the scripture. The learned Judge also observed, that those who bring persons of this description to Justice, have a claim on the thanks of the public, and it was