

VIII.

LADY GRANGE, IN EDINBURGH, 1730.
FORMING A SUPPLEMENTARY NOTICE TO THAT IN THE
"PROCEEDINGS," VOL. XI.

The following autograph letter has been presented to the Society by THOMAS SPOWART of Broomhead, Esq., F.S.A. Scot. It may be called a Letter of Separation and Aliment, addressed by Lady Grange to her husband, and is interesting from its intimate connexion with the subsequent "Episode in the Life of Mrs Rachel Erskine, Lady Grange," first inserted in the Proceedings, vol. x. page 722, and reprinted in a corrected form, vol. xi. page 593.

The separation of Lord Grange and his wife was previously well known ; but while this letter furnishes the date and terms of the proposed Separation, it also refers to Judicial proceedings before the Commissaries of Edinburgh. Some papers in this case might furnish some curious particulars ; but I could find no reference to the case in the Court Registers.

The present letter of mutual agreement has the date 27th July 1730, and stipulates the term of Separation to last for the limited period of five years. As she continued to reside in Edinburgh, in his immediate neighbourhood, she was considered to be a spy not only on her husband's course of life, but his political intrigues. This no doubt was the immediate cause that led to her abduction at night, January 22, 1732, so feelingly described in her own letter from St Kilda in January 1738, which is contained in the "Episode" already mentioned.

Another singular circumstance connected with this case has also recently transpired. In a valuable collection of Erskine of Grange papers, in the possession of James T. Gibson Craig, Esq., evidence was found to show that Lord Grange had contracted a second marriage in London, where he then resided, in or about December 1745, at which time we may conclude he had obtained information of his Wife's death in the course of that year. The lady is named Miss Lyndsay, and there is reason to believe she had lived with Lord Grange as his mistress for several years. He himself died at London, January 24, 1754. At all events this Episode is one that reflects so little credit on Lord Grange, or any of the persons immediately concerned, that it may be allowed to sleep.

ORIGINAL LETTER OF SEPARATION, &c., RACHELL CHIESLY
TO JAMES ERSKINE OF GRANGE.27TH JULY, 1730.

MY DEAR,—Since you are angry with me & will not live with me I promise that if you'll allow me a hundred pounds Str: yearly and pay it at two Terms in the year, in full of all I can ask or crave of you during the time I retire, and if you'll drop the Process of Separation you have raised against me befor the Commissars of Edinburgh then I will retire and live by my self for five years from the date hereof and shall not trouble you nor sett my Foot within your Doors in Town or Country and I also expect you'l [give] me such Household furniture Linnings & Plate as you think fitt for my service and use & I will instantly on your acceptance hereof retire from your House and fulfill what is above on Honour. Thes Letter I have writt and subscribed with my own hand at Edinburgh the twentyseven day of July one thousand seven hunder & thirty years.

I am, Your

*Unfortunate tho obediente Wife
Rachell Erskine.*

To
JAMES ERSKINE OF GRANGE.

(The letter so addressed is also endorsed as having been duly registered
—"Edinr. 28 July 1730.")