

THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF
MICHIGAN

0
J922.5
C147

PROPERTY OF
RECEIVED
JUL 10 1942
NEW JERSEY STATE LIBRARY
TRENTON

0
J922.5
C147

FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

OT

For Library Use Only
DO NOT CALCULATE

30
0
J22.5
C147
11500

THE CALDWELL CONTROVERSY.

FROM THE NEWARK DAILY ADVERTISER.

The subjoined letter comes from a venerable Jerseyman who retains a fresh interest in his native State, though he has for many years occupied another sphere of usefulness. He gives, we believe, the true version of an historical incident which has recently excited some interest among us. It is, however, no more than justice to the venerable Dr. Miller that we should add that in the address referred to he gave the generally received opinion on the subject, which would seem to have been sanctioned by the execution of Morgan :

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEWARK D. ADVERTISER :

Your paper of December 2d brought me the proceedings of the citizens at Elizabethtown, respecting the "Inauguration of the Caldwell Monument." Having from my childhood felt such an interest in the Caldwell family, and especially in the history of that distinguished patriot and minister of Christ, I wished I had been there to share in the sympathies and business of the day. When I was a youth, more than 50 years ago, I had occasion frequently to pass over the place of graves where the blessed man was buried, and was induced to linger about his grave. And I now feel highly gratified to learn that the citizens of my native county have testified, though late, their grateful sense of the worth of that great and good man.

Yet there was one thing stated or alluded to in the addresses upon that occasion, that produced some disagreeable sensations ; and which, I think, ought not to pass without some inquiry and explanation. I allude, particularly, to the statement of Dr. Miller that Mr. Caldwell was murdered by a "bribed Sentinel." The reason why I mention this is, because I had received other information about that event, more than half a century ago, the correctness of which I had no reason to doubt ; for I had read every-thing respecting that transaction and contempo-

aneous events, that I could lay my hands on. And in the days of my boyhood and youth, while all the events of the war of Independence were yet of recent date, I heard the old soldiers and militia-men narrate them with such intense interest that they were deeply engraven on my memory.

My venerable Father who at that period served as a "Minute Man," on the lines, and who died at a great age, and a pensioner, when talking over these matters and about the excellent Mr. Caldwell, observed in substance as follows : "That Morgan was placed on the Causeway as a Sentinel, with orders to let no person pass, and in a military sense performed his duty. That Mr. Caldwell, presuming on the influence of his elevated standing, was very imprudent in his attempts to pass, without suitable measures for that purpose :—that Morgan was of course arrested, tried and kept in Morristown Jail, and without orders or warrant from the Commander taken from Jail, by the exasperated friends of Mr. Caldwell, and was hung—And finally it was understood that Gen. Washington was constrained to yield to the highly excited feelings of the community, in the execution of Morgan, without special public inquiry." This is the amount of the information received in my childhood and youth, from my father and the Old Service men, within a few years of that sorrowful event. And I never heard of or read anything to correct that information. I have always felt that Morgan, a poor friendless soldier, was really sacrificed to the exasperated feelings of the numerous and powerful friends of Mr. Caldwell.

A romance writer in your paper of the 15th July last, is the first, to my knowledge, that ever suggested the idea, that Morgan was bribed by a *British Agent*, to murder Mr. Caldwell, and he affects to give an account of the conversation and plans of the conspirators respecting

the murder. The account or statement was so improbable, that I read the romance with disgust and dismissed the subject.

But to my surprise this charge of the "bribed murder" of Mr. C. was advanced on the Monumental day, by Rev. Dr. Miller in the following sentence—viz: "These pious and patriotic services, which won the confidence and esteem of the country and the army, naturally awakened the watchful malignity of the enemy, and 64 years ago this day he fell by the hand of a murderous Sentinel, *bribed for the purpose*, who was afterwards hung for the merciless homicide, and thus were nine children made orphans in an hour." When I read these words I was brought to a stand. For I have for so many years had such a high opinion of Dr. Miller, that I can hardly find in my heart to doubt the correctness of his statement. And yet I feel it difficult to surrender all I have ever heard on that subject as untrue or at least that I have been entirely misinformed.

But still, Mr. Editor, I ask the liberty to inquire, on what did Dr. Miller ground the charge of the "bribed murder?" I ask for documents, if they can be had, or for testimony. Neither tradition nor guessing will answer. Your Historical Society is collecting materials for a history of New Jersey, and these transactions, will doubtless have a place in that history and they ought to be according to truth.

Mr. Caldwell was a great and good man and surrounded with numerous and powerful friends. Morgan was a poor stranger and a friendless soldier. This great disparity between the two, might easily blind the best men, and be the occasion of dealing in hard and partial measures with Morgan. And I cannot, therefore, be fully satisfied, without more light on the subject than these popular criminations afford. If injustice was done to Morgan let it even now be corrected. There can, I think, be no doubt that British and Tory "malignity" would conspire the death of such a man as Mr. C.

But the great question is, was Morgan bribed to murder Mr. C.—and by whom? Did Morgan shoot Mr. C. in the way of his duty as a Sentinel—according to the charge of his Orderly—"Let no man pass without permission!"—To what purpose was a Sentinel placed on that post? How came the British Agent to know that Morgan would be drawn for Sentinel on that post, or at that time? Did he also bribe the officer of the guard? and the Sergeant who

placed him there? Did Morgan on trial, or at any time confess the bribery—the conspiracy or the premeditated design? Did ANY testimony of this nature appear at that time? or when and where has it been since elicited? or by whom? If Morgan when placed on that post had a specific charge given him—and if he had not discharged his duty, whoever might have been the person encroaching upon him—how would Morgan have been treated for a disobedience of orders? Let truth and justice now appear in the vindication of the poor soldier, as well as for the honor of the excellent Mr. C.—But if the things stated respecting Morgan's treachery and design were at the time matters of testimony, let that testimony now appear. I would thank Dr. Miller or any other person who has the means in possession, to present the whole case to the public, that we may have well attested facts to rely upon in judging this sorrowful event. I want truth and justice to stand forth on the page of history. And if any person shall deem this paper worthy of notice I wish him to understand that the writer will make no reply, for the subject is too serious to admit of controversy.

ENQUIRER.

Dec. 25, 1845.

P. S.—In the year 1814, when the militia were placed on Sandy Hook, a Sentinel belonging, I think in Col. Dodd's Regiment, was stationed near the beach and charged to let no boat pass without permission. Not long after a fishing boat containing some of the Sea Fencibles, was passing. The Sentinel hailed them in a suitable manner, but the men disregarded him.—He fired and shot one of the men who died of the wound. The Sentinel was tried by a court martial and was found to have done only his duty, or at least was not punished. And the Sea Fencibles in the Block-house were so exasperated that they threatened retaliation upon some other soldier of that Regiment, but happily the subject passed by without any further bloodshed.

DR. MILLER'S LETTER.

PRINCETON, DEC. 30.

In your valuable paper of yesterday, I find a letter from a gentleman who signs himself *Enquirer*, calling in question the truth of a statement made by me in an address at the "Caldwell Celebration," in Elizabethtown, on the 24th of the last month.

The whole style of this gentleman is so respectful, and so honorable to his urbanity, that I do not feel at liberty to pass his communication in silence. A desire to know the truth in a case like this, is undoubtedly laudable; and the right to call for the proof of it, is, surely, not to be questioned. I therefore take pleasure in endeavoring to satisfy your respectable correspondent that I have not, either rashly or blindly, lent myself to the work of slandering the memory even of "a poor friendless soldier."

In giving an account of the Rev. James Caldwell, his ministry, and his violent death, I thought I could not take a more wise and safe guide than the Rev. Dr. Murray, the present pastor of the church which Mr. Caldwell served, who, in his "Notes Historical and Biographical, concerning Elizabethtown," &c. has given a large amount of minute and interesting information in reference to this portion of history. In this truly valuable volume, in the 78th page, I found the following passage:

"He was shot by a man called Morgan, who was tried and found guilty of murder. It is said that it was proved on his trial that he was bribed by British gold to commit the murderous deed. He was hung, giving signs of the most obdurate villany. The day of his execution was intensely cold, and his last words were, addressing with an oath the executioner, 'Do your duty and don't keep me here suffering in the cold.' The place of his execution is about half a mile North of the Westfield church, and is called Morgan's Hill to this day."

Now, when I consider Dr. Murray's high character for candor, integrity and intelligence; when I knew that, in completing the work in question, he had taken unwearied pains to collect the best information, and to compare, with the most scrupulous accuracy, the most authentic written records, with the best traditionary notices; and that there were still surviving members of his church, and his eldership, who had reached adult age at the date of the melancholy transaction, and who, being on the spot, had as favorable an opportunity for knowing the facts and testimony in the case as any person living, you will not wonder that I felt safe in relying on his statement, and in allowing it to govern me.

But another consideration, I confess, was not without its influence in adopting Dr. Murray's statement. My father was the intimate and affectionate friend of Mr. Caldwell. They were

brother ministers, members of the same synodical body, who, though they resided 150 miles apart, seldom failed of meeting once a year, for twenty years together. I was a lad, in the 13th year of my age, under my parental roof, when the murder of Mr. Caldwell occurred. The intelligence of this murder of course excited strong emotions of the most distressing kind in the mind of my father, and few will doubt that these emotions were in some degree communicated to all the members of the family of which I was a member. Now it is certain that the first intelligence of this tragic scene which reached my ears, sixty-four years ago, stated, with entire confidence, that the sentinel who committed the violence, was the malign tool of the enemy in doing what he did. So I always understood, from the first, and was taught to regard it as an ascertained fact. I always understood, indeed, that the proof of it was inferential, rather than direct and absolute; but that sober and impartial judges had no doubt of the matter. That the inculpated sentinel was finally hanged by an exasperated and lawless mob, made up of Mr. Caldwell's friends, and not in execution of a regular judicial sentence, I never heard suggested before, and am constrained most seriously to doubt.

But however the facts may have been, I hope Mr. Editor, that your respected correspondent will, on reading the foregoing statement, readily acquit me of the charge of having lightly or censurably stigmatized the character of a poor soldier, long since gone to a higher tribunal. I had not the least doubt of the justness of my statement; and even if it had been otherwise, I know not to what documents or testimony I could have resorted to rectify the judgment pronounced by some of the soberest and most intelligent minds in Elizabethtown and its neighborhood, at the time when they had the best opportunity of ascertaining the real facts.

I am sir, with very sincere respect, your friend and obedient servant,

SAMUEL MILLER.

FROM THE NEWARK DAILY ADVERTISER, OF JAN. 20.

We give place to the following letter from the Rev. Dr. Murray, with pleasure; somewhat modified, we must confess, by what seem to be intimations that some of the parties to the controversy, or more properly enquiry, are influenced by sinister considerations; which seems to us inconceivable. Certainly neither our venerable correspondent Enquirer, nor other aged persons who entertain an impression differing from the result of Dr. Murray's researches were either themselves, or the descendants of 'Tories' or 'London Traders:' and it so happens that they, for the most

part at least, substantially belong to the same ecclesiastical connection of which the patriot Caldwell was a distinguished ornament.

Nevertheless, their testimony is far from being conclusive against Dr. Murray's strong positions. The Historical Society has charged a capable committee (of which Dr. M. is a member) with the duty of investigating the case, and we look to their researches for a decisive settlement of it:

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEWARK D. ADVERTISER:

The letter of your correspondent 'Enquirer,' published in your paper of the 29th ult., and the reply of Dr. Miller to that letter, also published by you on the 2d inst., in reference to the murder of Rev. James Caldwell, seem to demand from me some notice. The truth of the statement made by Dr. Miller on that point, in his excellent oration on the dedication of the Caldwell Monument, is called in question, and Dr. Miller, in reply, states that a passage from my 'Notes on Elizabethtown' was his authority. And in corroboration of the passage he quotes from my Notes, he states the impression made upon his own mind as to the facts of the case at the time, (an impression made under circumstances favoring its correctness,) that Morgan who shot Caldwell, 'was a malign tool of the enemy in doing what he did.' So that the impressions of Enquirer derived from his father, who was a 'minute man' upon the lines; and of Dr. Miller, derived from his father, who was a devoted minister of the Gospel, are directly at variance.

Nor can this be a matter of wonder to any who reflect on the varying and contradictory reports which obtain in reference to any striking and alarming occurrence which greatly excites public attention. There was a diversity of opinion then, as there is now; and in the absence of judicial records, which have been sought in vain, all that any candid mind can ask is a candid and cautious weighing of the evidences which we possess, and a simple statement of the result.

Before addressing myself to the points raised by Enquirer, you will permit me, in all kindness to all men, to state a few things by way of preliminary.

Those who have made themselves at all acquainted with the state of things and of parties at the time of the death of Caldwell, will at once see the causes of the diversity of opinion as to his death, then and now. We make a wonderful mistake when we think that all the people of Newark or Elizabethtown were whigs. The Tories, of whom there were many in East Jersey, hated him with a bitter hatred. And when there was not a British soldier in East Jersey, such was his fear of attack from these, that he went very generally armed; and was often seen in the pulpit with a pair of pistols by his side. Of course when he fell, these his enemies would, and did, rejoice over his fall; and would seek to make his own rashness the cause of his death.

And among the friends of the country there were found those called, in the language of that day, 'London Traders.' These were persons, who, because of the large prices they received, were in the practice of supplying the enemy on Staten Island with provisions. For many a month there lay an armed vessel between Port Richmond and New Brighton, which was nightly supplied by these traders. Governor Livingston bitterly complained of them; and Caldwell put into requisition the whole force of his character to put an end to the traffic. With these traders, some of them his own parishioners, he became greatly unpopular.

So that when we are weighing testimony in reference to this man, there are several questions we should have answered. Who is this witness? What part did he, or his father, or his uncle, or his family, take in the war of the

Revolution? Was his father a Tory or a London Trader? If so, his testimony will have an adverse leaning—as it will also have a favorable, perhaps too favorable a leaning, if he were an ardent Whig. Nor is the question an irrelevant one, in what church did his fathers worship! Upon whose ministry did they attend?

Again, whilst 'Enquirer' speaks in the highest terms of Mr. Caldwell, he speaks with wonderful commiseration of Morgan, who 'was a poor stranger and friendless soldier.' How does 'Enquirer' know this? Who was Morgan? Must he be poor and friendless because found in the ranks? Some of the best blood of East Jersey was shed in the ranks. And 'Enquirer' would make the executioners of Morgan murderers, and the exasperated friends of Caldwell bloody tyrants, for the purpose of screening him from guilt in the matter. We hope, and believe, he is not one of these modern sympathisers whose tears all flow for the murderer, whilst the victims of his cruelty remain unpitied.

And his statement, if true, places a deep stain upon the hitherto stainless character of Washington. Can it be that General Washington was constrained to yield to the highly excited feelings of the community in the execution of Morgan without special public inquiry? Does this look like the man who made all his soldiers feel that if they suffered he suffered with them? Would Washington suffer 'a poor and friendless soldier' to be murdered for doing his duty? The statement bears its refutation on its face, and casts suspicion on the tradition with which it is connected.

The questions raised by Enquirer are these; was Morgan tried? Was Morgan bribed? In the absence of documentary testimony we give the evidence on which we answer these questions in the affirmative.

Morgan was regularly tried. When I first commenced the investigation of Caldwell's history, I found a tradition that he was tried and acquitted by a Court Martial; and that subsequently he was tried and found guilty by a jury, on whose verdict he was hung. The story of Enquirer I never heard from mortal lips. Nor have I discovered any evidence that he was ever tried but once. The trial by Court Martial I trace up to the vague impression upon many minds that 'if he were tried by a Court Martial he would have been acquitted.' The laws as then, and now existing, as I learn from a distinguished officer of the army, allow a military and a civil trial; and because tried by different codes, the man acquitted by a jury may be condemned by a Court Martial, or acquitted by a Court Martial may be condemned by a jury. So that on the supposition that Morgan was acquitted by a Court Martial, he yet might be found guilty of murder by a jury. There is a mere rumor of trial by Court Martial, but, as far as I can discover, not a particle of testimony.

James Morgan murdered Mr. Caldwell at Elizabethtown Point, on the 24th of Nov., 1781. He was tried at Westfield, (some say in the house of Dr. Elmer, others at the tavern) by a jury—he was assigned able lawyers to advocate his cause—he was found guilty of murder—after his sentence he was confined for some days in the kitchen of the house of Dr. Elmer—from that kitchen he was taken, ridden upon his coffin to the gallows, where he was hung. For each of these positions I have satisfactory evidences, mostly the evidence of eye witnesses.

Here you will permit me to introduce the contemporaneous expositions of the facts in the case as given in the Journals of that day. Although you have but recently published the following narrative of the death of Caldwell from the New Jersey Gazette of Dec. 12, 1781, you will permit me again to introduce it, that all my statements may be seen in their connection.

FROM THE N. J. GAZETTE, OF DEC. 12, 1781.
TRENTON, DEC. 12.

On Saturday, the 24th day of November last, the Rev. James Caldwell, la'e a Minister of the Gospel at Elizabethtown, was most barbarously murdered by a soldier belonging to the State troops. The circumstances relating to this horrid fact are as follows: Mr. Caldwell having been informed that a young lady had arrived at Elizabethtown Point, in a flag of truce from New York, who had permission to come within our lines, and who is the daughter of a lady who has distinguished herself by her great humanity, tenderness and generosity, to the American prisoners in New York, and considering himself bound by his duty as a citizen to render every possible service to the family of so worthy a character, went down to the Point, with an intention of waiting on the lady up to the town: when he arrived there, the officer then commanding the post at Elizabethtown, being on board the flag sloop, asked him whether he would go on board. He then stepped on board of the sloop, and was informed that the young lady had already gone to the town. Being about to return, a person in the sloop asked him whether he would take a small parcel tied up in a handkerchief. Mr. Caldwell consented to take it, went on shore, put the bundle into a chair-box, and was driving off when a soldier stepped up to him and said, 'I must search your chair to see whether you have not seizable goods in that bundle.' Mr. Caldwell then seeing it would be imprudent to run any further risk, asked the soldier whether he would suffer him to return the bundle to the sloop. To this request the soldier readily agreeing, Mr. Caldwell took the bundle out of the chair-box, and was stepping on board the sloop to return it, when the murderer, who was on the quarter deck, and within about two yards of him, said D—— rot, stop. Mr. Caldwell instantly stopped, and immediately on his stopping, the soldier presented his musket and shot him. He fell down and instantly expired without a groan. His funeral was attended the Tuesday following by a large concourse of people, when a funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. M'Worter, from Ecclesiastes VIII. and 8th, There is no man that hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death; and there is no discharge in that war.

Whilst this narrative differs in some particulars from existing traditions, yet in all the main points it agrees with them; and when we consider that it was written and published on the 18th day after the sad event took place, it is far more likely to be correct than are any of the many traditions in reference to it. In company with his excellency Governor Stratton, and with the accomplished and obliging Secretary of State, I turned over and over the files of the N. Jersey Gazette to see if there were any subsequent correction of this statement, and none could be found.

From the same paper of the 13th of February, 1782, I take the following notice of the execution of Morgan. It will be seen that it is dated but eight days after the event:

CHATHAM, FEB. 6, 1782.

On Tuesday, the 29th ult. James Morgan was executed at Westfield, pursuant to his sentence, for the wilful murder of the Rev. James Caldwell. A sermon upon the occasion was preached by the Rev. Jonathan Elmer, from Jeremiah 44th, 4, O, do not this abominable thing which I hate.

The following is an extract from Rivingston's Royal Gazette of Wednesday, Nov. 28, 1781, only four days after the death of Mr. Caldwell. The Tory cast of the whole article will be observed by the most inattentive reader; and its direct and explicit testimony is only the stronger on that account:

FROM RIVINGSTON'S ROYAL GAZETTE OF
WEDNESDAY, NOV. 28, 1781.

Last Saturday, the Reverend Mr. Caldwell, Minister of the Dissenting Congregation at Elizabethtown, was shot dead, without any provocation, at the Point, by a native of Ireland, named Morgan, one of the rebel twelve months men. The Coroner's Inquest brought a verdict of wilful murder against him. Mr. Caldwell had ever been an active zealot in the cause of independence, and was much esteemed and confided in by Mr. Washington and the Republican leaders. It is said he lately presented a petition to the New Jersey Assembly, for recalling the refugees to the re-possession of their estate. Requiescat in pace.

Here then we close for the present. I have other documents on hand which will be forthcoming when needed. They may be needed, as there are those who for ancient political, and ecclesiastical reasons, would be glad to make Caldwell the culprit, and Morgan the hero.

It will be well to remember the facts which the testimony now adduced establishes.

1. There was no sufficient reason for Morgan's shooting Caldwell. Even if he could not give the countersign, or the pass word, he might be made prisoner. The transaction was in the middle of the afternoon, and when several others were present.

2. The Royal, and New Jersey Gazette, and the narrator of the event say he was murdered; the narrator that he was barbarously murdered.

3. The Coroner's Inquest brought in a verdict of wilful murder against Morgan.

4. He was tried by a jury, who found against him the verdict of wilful murder.

5. Nearly ten weeks elapsed between the murder and the execution; shewing that there was no sudden outbreak of feeling upon the occasion, as Enquirer alleges.

As to whether he was bribed to commit the murder or not, the prevailing impression and tradition among the old people of Elizabethtown is, that he was. The Rev. Thomas Morrell, whose competency as a witness none will call in question, told me that he was; and that he was heard to say weeks before he committed the act, that he would shoot the 'black-coated rascal.' I have any amount of traditional evidence on that subject. I have but just received the testimony of the venerable widow of the Rev. Stephen Grover, now of your city to this point, who was about 18 years old at the time, and who had a father and four brothers in the army. She says, 'Everybody said Morgan was bribed.'

I have a word in conclusion to say to you, Mr. Editor; I may say MY Editor, as I steadily read no political paper but yours. Editors, you are aware, are considered as knowing every thing by their readers, and their decisions are usually regarded as infallible. I wonder that you could have said in reference to the communication of Enquirer, 'he gives, we believe, the true version of the historical incident.' I hope, you will now believe the other way. If you cannot do that, I hope you will withdraw your endorsement and stand neutral.*

N. MURRAY,

ELIZABETHTOWN, January 19, 1846.

* We certainly never intended to endorse anything but the credibility of our correspondent, which of course we cannot withdraw.

ED.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEWARK DAILY ADVERTISER:

ELIZABETHTOWN, Jan. 27, 1846.

As the Committee of the New Jersey Historical Society has entered upon the duty assigned it, I wish to add but a few sentences to what I said in your paper of the 20th inst. as it regards the trial of Morgan for the murder of Cald-

well. The facts are the result of my own private investigations commenced anew before the Committee was appointed, and are published in self defence.

I have in my possession testimony to prove that on the murder, Morgan was given up to the city authorities by his commanding officer, Captain Scudder—that he was tried not as I suggested in my last at Dr. Elmer's, or at the Tavern, but in the Presbyterian church in Westfield; that Judge Symms presided at his trial, and was assisted by Judge Burnet; that Captain DeHart, of Morristown, was his lawyer; that Ephraim Scudder, Benjamin Meeker, David Ross, Aaron Woodruff, and a Mr. Ryno were on the Jury; that it was proved against him on trial by the testimony of Samuel Hicks, that he had said before committing the act that when he had an opportunity 'he would pop him over'—and that he was executed by Noah Marsh, who was high sheriff of the county of Essex that year. On the day Morgan was hung, he was first taken to the church, where a sermon was preached, as I have before stated, and after the sermon he was launched into eternity. So much to prove that Morgan was not lynched, as Enquirer suggests, and that Washington was not the father of Judge Lynch. The testimony to these statements will be at the disposal of the Committee of the Historical Society.

As to the *quo animo*, the verdict of the jury settled that point. He was found guilty of, and executed for murder. We must not at this late hour call the verdict of the jury into question, upon the ground of mere impressions. But whether he murdered Caldwell, THROUGH PRIVATE MALICE, AND BECAUSE OF A DIABOLICAL TEMPER, OR WAS BRIBED BY THE ENEMY, is a point more difficult to be settled.

Within a few days I have received to me an interesting letter from one of the most distinguished sons of New Jersey, whose honored father has deeply engraved his name on the annals of our State, from which the following is an extract:

'My father was in all the war, and was born and brought up in Newark. He was familiar with the scenes of the Revolution, and was never more gratified than when sitting with his family in long winter evenings, and going over the history of that period. I have often heard him speak of the case of Parson Caldwell, as he used to call him, and always in one way, that he was shot wantonly, and by a soldier believed to have been bribed to do it by the British or the Tories.'

All that I say upon my 'Notes on Elizabethtown,' is contained in this brief sentence, 'IT IS SAID that it was proved on his trial that he was bribed by British gold to do the murderous deed.'

Having thus verified my statements which Enquirer called in question, I now leave the matter for ever, except so far as I have to do with the Committee of the Historical Society.

I thank you, Mr. Editor, for the withdrawal of the NARRATIVE of Enquirer. But when you say that you only meant to endorse his 'credibility,' you will find it what my old Latin teacher used to call 'a very free translation' of what you said in introducing him on the 20th of December.

N. MURRAY.

FROM THE NEWARK DAILY ADVERTISER.

In giving place, as we do with pleasure, to the following narrative, we do not of course express any opinion concerning the point in controversy which is included in its interesting reminiscences of the stirring period in our history to which it relates. The writer is a native of the place which was the scene of the events he so well describes, the son of a gallant officer of the Revolution (Capt. Cyrus DeHart,) and is himself an honored and distinguished officer of the U. S. Army.

PASSAGES

IN THE HISTORY OF ELIZABETHTOWN.

The notice which preceded, and the services and declarations which had place at the inauguration of the Monument, on the 24th November last, to the memory of the Rev. James Caldwell, formerly Pastor of the Presbyterian (now the first) Church of Elizabethtown, very naturally attracted and commanded the attention of a numerous body of the people of the surrounding country. A patriotic interest was excited, mixed up, too, with a share of personal curiosity, so easily awakened, and the more pervading in the present instance, because the persons, and acts, and scenes, to which the celebration had reference, were immediately connected with the history of their own firesides.

How far these feelings of the great body of spectators were gratified by the ceremonies then enacted, it is not necessary to inquire; but it is certain that the accuracy of the historical detail given at the time has been doubted, and become a subject of public controversy, and also of more minute research. We have here presented in the question before us another exemplification of the truth, that with the mass of mankind the history of the facts of a nation's progress appeal less fervently to their sympathies, than the drama of mere individual conduct; and thus we have explained perhaps, why the present subject commands an interest for its elucidation which, as a mere incident of time, it could not claim.

In the narrative of the event, and attending circumstances of the death of Mr. Caldwell, and the motive of him by whose hand the unfortunate gentleman fell, both as then published, (at the dedication of the monument) and by subsequent declarations, the writer was presented with an account directly at variance with all others which he had ever received of the same transaction; and his surprise was not diminished, when upon inquiry he found, that the belief and impressions of many of the oldest and most respectable inhabitants of the town, contemporaries with the event, and acquainted with one at least of the parties, were precisely similar to his own. It was these repugnant statements therefore, which induced him to make a more particular examination into the

subject; to ascertain, if possible, to which credence ought to be given; and where the direct evidence of facts was wanting, to supply its place, from the consideration of what was known, by fair and reasonable presumption.

In presenting to the public the results of this investigation, it is his desire to state them briefly, or without much circumstantial detail—and this, not only because a contrary method would extend the narrative over too wide a space, but that he would prefer to leave such minutæ to the consideration of the Committee appointed by the New Jersey Historical Society to inquire into the same subject—and thus avoid trespassing upon what may be called their ground, further than what the proprieties of the present moment demand.

In making this narrative the writer has deemed it relevant to the whole subject to commence with events anterior to the year in which Mr. Caldwell was killed; inasmuch as there is a sad catastrophe to relate, and which blends itself with the direct subject to some extent, and has been made the theme of inscription for one face of the monument.

At no period of the Revolution, excepting that just preceding the battle of Trenton, was the military condition of the Colonies at a lower ebb than at the opening of the campaign in 1780. In New Jersey, more particularly, war had been felt to an excessive degree, and the people had been severely tried by dangers and hardships of every kind. The country was almost exhausted of supplies, and the enemy knowing this condition, were only awaiting a favorable moment to renew their hostilities and devastations. The utter inability of Congress to fulfil their engagements with the troops had produced the most dangerous disorders, and two Connecticut regiments, dissatisfied and destitute, broke out into open mutiny and declared their purpose of marching home. These facts were quickly made known to the Commanders of the British forces, at New York, and Staten Island, with intimations also, that there was a desire on the part of the inhabitants to return to their ancient allegiance, and that now was the time, by some military incursion into the State, to give confidence and protection to the disaffected.

It was therefore determined that a body of troops should operate for this purpose from Staten Island; and accordingly on the night of the 5th of June, 1780, they were crossed over the Sound dividing Staten Island from New Jersey; landed at Elizabethtown Point, and marshalled for the morrow's march under the command of Major General Sterling. Before the dawn broke on the following day, Tuesday June 6, the troops were in motion. As they approached the fork of the road, which, there diverging, lead to the old, and the new Point, they were hailed by an American sentinel, who receiving no answer and well judging from the heavy tramp which fell upon his ear, that it was a hostile force approaching, fired at once into the in-

distinct mass before him. The shot took effect—and thus by a pure accident was the conduct of the column changed; for the ball lodging in the thigh of the commanding officer, General Sterling, inflicted so severe a wound, that it was necessary to carry him back, and General Knyphausen assumed the command. The delay which followed this incident was such that the sun was just emerging above the horizon as the column entered the town. An eye witness of the passage of the troops through the village, describes it as one of the most beautiful sights he ever beheld. In the van marched a squadron of dragoons, of Simcoe's regiment, known as the "Queen's Rangers," with drawn swords and glittering helmets, mounted on very large and beautiful horses—then followed the infantry, composed of Hessians and English troops—the whole body amounting to nearly six thousand men, and every man, horseman, and foot, clad in new uniforms, complete in panoply, and gorgeous with burnished brass and polished steel. The object of the march was the town of Springfield, and therefore the column followed the old road, at that time the best and most frequented, which led by Galloping Hill through the village of Connecticut Farms. The present Morris turnpike then an indifferent county road, though in a direct line to Springfield, was a more difficult and uncertain way.

The enemy had penetrated but a very short distance into the country before they had ample proof of how fallacious were the expectations and hopes with which they had set out, of receiving any assistance from the inhabitants. Roused by the presence of the foe, the same patriotic spirit of resistance was awakened which had animated and sustained them under so many previous trials of suffering and danger; and the militia of the country followed in the rear, and hovered upon the flanks of the hostile column, taking advantage of the hedge, the ditch, the forest, and every position which offered concealment or protection, to pour a most annoying fire upon them.

The movement of the enemy had early in the day been signified to General Washington, who was encamped about Morristown, and he immediately took measures to oppose their progress. General Maxwell, who commanded the Jersey Brigade, with a body of the militia, advanced and took a position for the defence of Springfield, while General Washington himself moved forward and occupied the Short Hills, lying directly in the rear of that village.

These arrangements checked the enemy at Connecticut Farms, at which place a conflict of some vigor and spirit took place; and it was at this moment, that the wife of the Rev. Mr. Caldwell, while sitting with a child in her arms, was, through the open window of the apartment, shot dead! This most tragical act has been ascribed to the wanton brutality of a British soldier, though more generally supposed

to have been mere *chance medley*, resulting from the cross fire of the contending parties. And yet there is evidence of a very direct character which affixes the guilt of the murder of the poor lady, to a particular individual. A very respectable citizen, lately deceased, who was a witness of the scenes of that day, said, that a man by the name of McDonald, from the north of Ireland, and who had been in the employment of Mr. Caldwell, or his family, was the person who committed the atrocious deed. This man from some unknown cause, had conceived a violent enmity against his employer, and it was in this manner that he satisfied his revenge. The witness to whom reference is now made, further declared that he saw McDonald after the commission of the murder, and heard him avow it, saying at the same time that "now he was satisfied," upon which he joined, and went off with the enemy.

With the British army on that day were two young gentlemen of Elizabethtown, serving in a military capacity under commissions from the crown. The first was the son of a distinguished member of the Episcopal Church, and the second a son of a prominent member of the Presbyterian congregation in the pastoral care of Mr. Caldwell. It so happened that the bloody corpse of Mrs. Caldwell was discovered by one of these persons. The soldiery had already applied the torch to various buildings, and the meeting house was wrapt in flames. Seeing that these ruthless men were about to fire the building which contained the dead body, he strenuously and successfully interfered to prevent the accomplishment of so barbarous an act, and procured authority from the commanding officer to have the corpse removed to another place. It was then that these gentlemen, assisted by others, bore the remains to a place of comparative security. Such was the account given by one of them on his return to Elizabethtown—believing however that the death of the lady had been purely accidental.

The enemy disappointed in accomplishing the greater objects of the enterprise, retreated with all speed to the place of debarkation on the preceding night. The American troops, principally militia, followed closely upon their rear, pressing them with a continual attack, and cutting off the stragglers on the way. On the arrival of the British troops at the Point, preparations were immediately made to cross over to Staten Island, and a considerable number effected the passage. In the meantime the militia poured in in large numbers, lining the banks of the river, and occupying the woods which then covered the space between the old and new ferries, from whence they kept up a destructive fire upon the foe. So vigorous was this attack, and so embarrassing to the movement of the troops was the position of the Americans, that the British Commander found it necessary to recall the troops, which had already crossed over, to enable him to protect his rear. This

being accomplished the intention of passing over to Staten Island was abandoned, and the entire force was distributed in camp, where they remained (in huts) for several weeks.

While the British were thus posted at the Point, they occupied themselves in throwing a bridge over the water which separated them from Staten Island; and for this purpose, vessels of a considerable size were collected from New York and other places, moored head and stern, side by side, and planked over, thus forming a strong and stable bridge, capable of bearing the heaviest burthens of horse and artillery. The means being now prepared for an easy exit, the same troops, on Friday, June 23d, made another sudden irruption into the country as far as Springfield, which town they destroyed by fire; and then retracing their footsteps with great celerity, they reached their camp at Elizabethtown Point the same day, and without halting for a moment, crossed over to Staten Island, and broke up the bridge. As upon the previous retreat, the enemy was followed by the militia, who entered the town of Elizabeth almost at the same moment with them. Many wagons, filled with wounded and dying men, preceded the main body of the army, and hurry and disorder were visible throughout the ranks. The parties traversed the ground lying in the rear of St. John's Church, and spreading out towards Water street, which was then an open orchard, few buildings obstructing the way other than upon the line of the principal streets, and there a continual fire and animated skirmishing was kept up by the opposing troops. The enemy had hardly left the shore when the American troops entered their camp, and here was exhibited ample proof of the comfort which they had enjoyed, and the certain intercourse which had been kept up between themselves and the traders of the country. Provisions and drinks of various kinds—even articles of luxury were scattered about—mixed up with things of trade or traffic. Some of the citizens of Elizabethtown have still a vivid recollection of the scene as it was presented to their youthful eyes, when in the hilarity and carelessness of boyhood, they entered the camp, and deeming everything before them to be lawful prize, helped themselves abundantly to whatever they most fancied. But alas! for them, the enjoyment was of momentary duration, a company of militia, commanded by Captain Jaques of Rahway, quickly divested them of their plunder, and that officer proclaimed that he took possession of each and everything in the name of the United States!

The writer would here refer to an incident which, according to Mr. Sedgwick in his *Life of William Livingston*, occurred on this retreat, and he does so because it has a direct relation to the present subject. It is said that late at night, of the day mentioned, several British soldiers forced their way into the mansion of Gov. Livingston, which stood near the road upon which

the retreat was conducted. The ladies of the family were entirely alone and defenceless—the men servants had fled to the woods to avoid capture, and the female servants had secreted themselves to escape insult. In this state of things the ladies retired, and fastened themselves in an upper chamber, where the soldiers followed and demanded admittance. Fearing that denial or resistance would but exasperate those men to greater violence, one of the ladies (Miss Livingston) unlocked the door and advanced boldly into the hall. As she came forward a soldier laid hold of her by the arm, when she immediately with great spirit seized him by the collar, and a flash of lightning at the instant revealing her person clad in white, the affrighted ruffian exclaimed “My God! Mrs. Caldwell whom we killed to-day.”

It requires but little reflection to perceive that this is a mere dramatic episode in the history of that day, for the amusement of the reader; while the intimation more covertly given by the author, is entirely defeated by the absurd exclamation put in the mouth of the soldier, and shows the utter improbability and inconsistency of the tale—as it had been just before stated, that the lady referred to was killed nearly three weeks preceding this pretended or fictitious scene.

It is not necessary to the development of his subject, to follow the progress of events which intervened between the time last referred to and the month of November in the year following; and the writer will therefore proceed at once to the description of the circumstances which led to the sad and sorrowful act which deprived the Rev. Mr. Caldwell of life.

It is proper to remark in this place, that the accounts given of this event are much at variance. Tradition has in this instance, as in most others, assumed a poetic license, and presented the subject with lights and shadows which reason may reject; while the portion of direct evidence which still exists to aid the enquirer, is to be received or adopted, considering the great lapse of time, with a discreet deliberation. In selecting the testimony, which has been presented, upon which to found his conclusions, the writer has endeavored to exercise an impartial judgment, and to decide by the preponderance of that portion which to him appeared the most consistent and probable—and he accordingly offers the following statement as the result of such comparison.

At the time of the occurrence about to be related, there was established at Elizabethtown a commissariat of prisoners, under the superintendance of Major Adams; and in furtherance of the purposes designed by the same, a vessel, with the privilege of a flag, made weekly trips between the head quarters of the British Army at New York, and the former place. This vessel offered too, convenient facilities of transmitting messages, or of passage to individuals, whenever the requisite permit had been ob-

tained, and its arrival or departure was always observed with some degree of interest.

On Saturday the 24th day of November 1781, this vessel was to arrive at the Point, and by it was expected from New York, Miss Beulah Murray, (afterwards Mrs. Martin Hoffman) on a visit to her sister, Mrs. Barnett; and for the purpose of receiving, and escorting this lady to the town, Mr. Caldwell went down to the place of landing. It is a matter of uncertainty now, whether the lady referred to, was met by him at the Point, or whether she had not arrived on a previous day, and the object of Mr. Caldwell's excursion to the ferry was merely to execute a commission in her behalf. This particular, however variously given, is altogether immaterial to the issue, but it is certain, that upon reaching the Point, and finding that the vessel had arrived, he went on board in pursuance of his business.

In leaving the vessel he carried with him a small bundle or package, and was proceeding towards his chaise, which had been left a short distance from the water, when he was challenged by *James Morgan*, a sentinel on duty at the time, and told to deliver the bundle which he had with him, as it could not be allowed to pass without examination. Upon being thus interrupted Mr. Caldwell replied that the package in question was the property of a lady, for whom it had been placed in his charge. The sentinel reiterated the order, and Mr. Caldwell, irritated by the opposition, turned away, and was leaving the sentinel, in order, as it is said, to return the bundle to the vessel, when the soldier levelled his musket and shot him dead on the spot!

A positive knowledge of the sentinel's orders would tend far to explain the motives of his conduct, but although such knowledge may not with certainty be arrived at, still, it is a safe conclusion, considering the circumstances of the times, the practices of the day, and the particular locality and accidents of the scene, that his instructions were, as the object of his position was, to prevent any equivocal, unlawful, or traitorous communication with the enemy. It is well to state at this place, in order to remove some misapprehension which exists as to the fact, that Morgan who shot Caldwell, was an *American* sentinel, and (not as some suppose with whom the writer has conversed) a *British* soldier.

It has been urged as an argument against Morgan, that the circumstances at the time did not call for, or authorise him to fire upon Mr. Caldwell, because the same end could have been attained by other means. However true, considered as a reality, this may be, it is certain, that a sentinel, although he may execute his duty at times with too great or unnecessary degree of severity, still may do so with a perfect sincerity of purpose; and that he can exercise no discretion as to whether his orders are to be carried out, or not, for if otherwise, it

would be perfectly useless to give him any.

But a full and satisfactory answer to the objection noted above is readily perceived in the following—that a sentinel from the high and important functions of his place is to be obeyed at all times by those who come within the limits of his post, and it is not to be presumed, that either cautions or commands given by him, are unauthorized, or the mere wanton exercise of power; and if the public, or strangers to the camp, are to assume, or be allowed the privilege of judging how far his orders should be obeyed, it is very certain that there can be no utility in having a guard of this description.

It has also been said that Morgan was not on duty, as a sentinel, at the time he fired upon Mr. Caldwell. Of this there seems to be no evidence, and it is moreover against the probability of the case, as it would have been an infraction of the rules of military discipline to permit a soldier to be lounging about, separate from the body of the guard to which he belonged. However some persons may have surmised that Morgan was not on duty at the time he killed Mr. Caldwell, it is now generally admitted by the friends of the latter, and the south side of the recently erected monument declares, that “*he was killed by a shot from a Sentinel.*”

The two principal facts however, relied on against the prisoner, as stated by some writers are—*First, malice or personal enmity to the deceased,—second that, “he was bribed by British gold to commit the murderous deed.”*

In examining these allegations it is necessary to consider these general moral and intellectual laws by which human conduct is governed, and by comparing certain acts by the observed or ascertained certainty of such laws, be thereby enabled to judge of the motives of the actor; or on the contrary from clearly developed motive, to reason down to probable conduct.

It may doubtless be assumed as true, that in the mind of the criminal, there is always present the expectation or hope of impunity for the crime. Deliberate vice is not regardless of personal safety. If so, can it be believed, as consistent with reason, or the selfish passions or interests of the human breast, that the moment in which the act was committed, should have been chosen, which of all others presented the least chance of escape to the criminal, nay, on the contrary, the very certainty of apprehension and consequent punishment! If it be true as has been asserted, that a witness at the time testified to hostile expressions made by the prisoner against the deceased, at a previous time, such testimony, considering the position and duties of the accused, was not sufficient to raise such a legal presumption against him as to justify conviction,—for it is a clear and fundamental principle of criminal law, that no presumption shall be entertained against a prisoner, to fix intention, where the contrary may be shown by a presumption equally reasonable. And such was the condition of Morgan:—placed as it ap-

pears, where he was obliged, according to his judgment, to fulfil his instructions, and thus commit the act for which he afterwards suffered; or, forego the execution of his orders and incur the penalty of disobedience of orders—a dilemma, of whichever horn he chose, equally put him in peril of a capital prosecution!!

The extract from the “*Royal Gazette*,” published at New York, Nov. 28, 1781, which has been quoted to aid this presumption, is but the repetition of Mr. Caldwell’s friends at the time—and shows nothing beyond the admitted fact, that a *homicide* had been committed. Besides, at that period it must be recollected that the Whigs particularly, attached but little credence to the sayings of the paper in question, the editor being deemed by them neither over-scrupulous or veracious; and as Governor Livingston said of him, “*When there is no news at hand, it is the privilege of Mr. Rivington to make news*”

The little credence which is due to mere newspaper paragraphs, or other irresponsible writings and the fallacy of such evidence, is very strikingly exemplified in the the following: On the 29th of November last, the “*New York Observer*,” a paper it is presumed as equally respectable and veracious as ever Rivington’s “*Royal Gazette*” was, published what purported to be a correct statement of the ceremonies at the inauguration of the “*Caldwell Monument*” on the 24th of the same month; and in describing the same, said that it bore on its west face the following inscription:

“*Hannah, the wife of Rev. James Caldwell, —was killed at Connecticut Farms, by a shot from a British Officer.*”

But what is still more remarkable, a pamphlet, just published by, or under the supervision of the committee of arrangements, containing the several addresses delivered at the inauguration of the monument, declares in the like manner, that the west side bears the identical inscription given above.

Considering that this statement is made upon the authority of persons who were immediately concerned in the celebration of the event alluded to, and describing circumstances and things which had, within a very brief period, passed under their own immediate observation, it might fairly be inferred, that all the details were perfectly accurate. And yet, neither the statement made by the *Observer*, or that contained in the pamphlet is in fact true; and any person who will take the trouble to inspect the marble, will have the most indubitable proof that it bears no such inscription!

In regard also to the charge of bribery, the same species of argument may be adduced against the probability of such inducement—for what is a bribe but the temptation of a high price in whatever form it be offered, and how can a like temptation be effective, when the means used to attain the reward are most certain to deprive the criminal of its enjoyment?

Certainly then it is not reasonable to believe, that in the present case, when so many opportunities were of daily recurrence for a secret and safer perpetration of the murder, that Morgan should have preferred a public occasion, in open day, in the presence of numerous bystanders, and with the certainty of apprehension, to commit so great a crime!!

But the evidence of such reasoning, conclusive as it is, is hardly necessary to disprove the charge; for there is yet a living witness of the trial, from the assembling of the Court, to the rendition of the verdict, who states that throughout the investigation, there was neither the allegation, nor the presentment of any proof whatever, that the prisoner had been bribed to commit the act for which he stood arraigned:—and that never until within the last three or four months, had he heard the whisper of such an accusation.

To return to the scene of the death—Why, says one party, did not the sentinel use other means to arrest the progress of Mr. Caldwell, and thereby save himself from the dreadful consequences which ensued?—to which the other, and with much greater reason, replies:—Why did Mr. Caldwell, with such pertinacious obstinacy condemn the order of the sentinel? Why did he not with a ready and cheerful compliance therewith, and which imposed no hardship, yield obedience, and thereby obviate the crime, if it were crime, on the one side, and the fearful and unnecessary sacrifice on the other?

But let us go back to an antecedent period, and consider some things connected with the history of the times, which may go far perhaps, towards the elucidation of the above—showing the propriety of the order given, and the necessity, or duty of enforcing an observance thereof.

The primal cause of the Revolution, was resistance to, or a denial of, the principle, or power, of taxation without representation. Consequent to this, and as one of the minor means of supporting this opposition—the Colonists or Patriots abjured the use of tea as early as 1773; and their resolution was maintained with more or less exactness by the people of the country throughout the war of Independence.

In December 1777, Gov. Livingston complains of the trade which was carried on between the enemy and some of the inhabitants of Elizabethtown, and again as late as February, 1784, he sorrowfully deploras the changes which had taken place in the society of the town which had been his favorite residence, and ascribes it principally to the traffic, which by its profits had invited a different class of persons to its neighborhood. To such a height had this unlawful traffic attained, that the Legislature of the State in June 1781 (only a few weeks preceding the death of Mr. Caldwell) passed an act to prevent the illicit traffic between the lines, by the Americans and British; and associations were entered into throughout

the State for the same ends. These are facts in the history of New Jersey, upon which it is not necessary at the present moment to dilate—but their applicability to the subject of this paper, will readily be understood, when it is stated, that the bundle or package carried by, or in the possession of Mr. Caldwell, at the time he was challenged by the Sentinel, contained, *Tea, Mustard and Pins*, all articles forbidden to the trade, as being promotive of the interests of the commerce and manufactures of Great Britain.

But lest this statement should cause any erroneous impression or belief, it is due to the memory of the person immediately concerned, to say, that he had no knowledge of the contents of the package which he bore, nor any agency in its procurement other than as being the accidental carrier from the Point to the town; and the writer has sufficient reason to believe, that those articles of luxury, difficult then to be obtained, were, from a charitable intent on the part of a benevolent lady sent for to minister to the wants of a sick, or distressed family.

Mr. Caldwell having thus fallen, his body was laid on the straw covered bottom of a wagon, and slowly conveyed towards his late home. As it approached the town, and the intelligence spread abroad, a large crowd followed after in a state of the greatest excitement. The carriage did not take the direct way, but proceeded up Water street turning by the tavern into Broad street, and thence to the intersection of the latter with Jersey street. During the progress many had the opportunity of viewing the corpse, to see, not where "Brutus stabbed," but "what a rent the envious Casca made," and thus the curiosity of the multitude being somewhat satisfied, it was conveyed down Jersey street to the residence of Mrs. Noel; the mansion, since for many years the abode of the late General Jonathan Dayton, and now in the occupancy of Miss Spalding as a boarding school for young ladies.

On the following Tuesday (it is believed to have been) when the friends of the deceased were gathered in large numbers to attend the funeral, the cofined remains were exposed upon the large stone at the doorway, and there again, the evidence of the violent death suffered was seen in the deep wound inflicted—

"Which, like a dumb mouth, did ope its ruby lips
To beg the voice and utterance of a tongue,"

to speak most eloquently to the passions or resentments of the assembled throng—passions and resentments deeply awakened, and which at a subsequent period, were, it is feared, too strong for the suasion of reason, or the pleadings of mercy!

The soldier Morgan was delivered over to the civil authority, and for a time confined at Springfield, and subsequently at Burlington, until the month of January following, when he

was brought to Westfield for trial. The Court held its sessions in the Presbyterian Meeting House at the last named place, when Judge Symmes presided, assisted by two Associate Judges, one of whom was Judge Burnet—the name of the other is not known to the writer. The late Col. William DeHart, of Morristown, was of counsel for the prisoner, and David Ross, Aaron Woodruff, David Meeker and Ephraim Scudder, composed part of the jury. The defence of the prisoner was, that the act for which he was called to answer, was committed in pursuance of his orders, and in the execution of his duty as a sentinel. But this plea was unavailing, and after a brief investigation (for the trial occupied but a part of one day) a verdict of guilty of murder was returned, and he was accordingly adjudged to suffer death.

From the best information which the writer has been able to obtain, it appears that the Court sat about the 21st of January, 1782, and that the time appointed for the execution of the sentence was Tuesday the 29th of the same month.

An eye-witness of this last sad scene, says that the gallows was erected a short distance to the north of the Meeting House, and the spot has since been designated as "Morgan's Hill." The prisoner during his confinement at Westfield was guarded by a detachment of militia, as there was no jail, and the civil authority had no means of safe-keeping. At the place of execution, the same guard attended. The day was intensely cold—a strong north-west wind swept over the country, with a driving snow, from which the prisoner suffered severely. Up to the last moment he denied the crime for which he was to suffer—for turning to the guard which surrounded him, he said, "Soldiers, don't do your duty, for I am about to die for having done mine"—and then turning to the Sheriff, (Noah Marsh) he thanked him for the kindness which had been shown him, and added, (some say with a profane expression,) "Now do your duty quickly, or I shall freeze to death—and then I shall be in a better place."

The character of this unfortunate man, as far as any reliable evidence has presented it, seems to have been much in its general traits like those of the class to which he belonged, found frequently in the ranks of an army, without being distinguished on the one hand by any particular excellence of moral conduct, or on the other noted for any particular depravity or dissoluteness of life. With an active, or rather a shrewd mind, he possessed a firm and resolute temper, and with his comrades was esteemed a good soldier.

He was, it is believed, a native of Ireland, (though some say he was born in this State) for some time resided at Elizabethtown, and had been bred in the faith of the Roman Catholic Church. Early instruction had not been denied him, and from the remarks of the Rev. Mr.

Woodruff, who frequently visited him in prison, it would appear that his understanding had been cultivated by a habit of reading.

The same person who saw and described the execution, as above given, say likewise, that after the judgment of the Court and the completion of the sentence, many of the inhabitants of the country around about, who had been present, thought that the man had been unjustly condemned, and it was a common mode of expression at the time, to say, that "if Caldwell had done to Morgan what Morgan did to Caldwell, he (Caldwell) would never have been hung for it."

The writer would now, as this paper has already far transcended its anticipated limits, bring his observations to a close, were it not in some degree a propriety to consider other matter connected with the subject.

It has been said, that the diversity of opinion, as to the historical accuracy of the first statements, has grown out of certain ancient political and ecclesiastical reasons. How such causes could influence opinions, it is difficult for the writer to conceive—nor how any objection could be made to a different view of the motives of Morgan, as affecting either the acknowledged merit, or just fame of Mr. Caldwell, is he equally unable to understand. But if by the observation it is intended to intimate, that certain ecclesiastical preferences, on the one side involved a preference for certain forms of civil government, and that *e converso*, on the other, the result was opposite to the first,—it is denied.

In every country, in times of political convulsion and civil commotion—individuals, of the same classes, distinguished for intelligence and virtue, are from the force of circumstances found ranged in opposing ranks; and the history of our Revolution proves no exception to the observation. On the contrary it offers the undoubted proof that, men of distinguished character, of moral and intellectual excellence, having peculiar views of the obligations of allegiance, or doubts as to the expediency of a change at the time, hesitated, or refused to side with the bolder and more zealous of their countrymen; and all this without any reference to modes of faith; and yet, however we may deplore, as we now think, the errors of such persons, it is no evidence of the criminality of their opinions, much less of a want of candor in their descendants. Of the inhabitants of Elizabethtown of that period, and it is to them only that these remarks are intended to apply, it is known there were some, from the constitution of society at the time, in the employment of the British government, and members of what was then more generally styled the 'Church of England'; and these men, in obedience to what they deemed duty, manfully at least, took arms in the open field,—while it is equally certain, that not one of the petty villains, the lurking assassins, or the midnight incendiaries, who so alarmed, distressed, and disgraced this neighborhood, came from

the community of that church. The principle embodied in the inuendo is rejected because it is alike repugnant to the well-being of civil government and to established truths:—The marble in our church yards tells us another history—and a better history, and a truer history:—and were the sentiment adopted, social life would be disquieted by mere fanatical or sectarian prejudices, and the accidental tenets of religious faith be made the standard of all political fidelity!

The discussions on this subject have already produced some good, in the revelation of new facts, and the consequent rectification of previous statements; and vindicated the good name of New Jersey from the imputation at least, of having winked at, or encouraged, the execution of Lynch law. A further investigation may, perhaps, be productive of other benefits. But whatever may be the final results of the enquiry in progress, it is certain that they cannot impugn the character or services of Mr. Caldwell: they are fixed, and in the contemplation of them we all acknowledge a grateful remembrance; and there is no person, who more than the writer, admires qualities which were found in him, and so becoming to men, in perilous times. It is therefore not unnecessary or unmeaning, if consistent with truth, to offer facts or arguments which may tend, even at this late day, to efface the stigma which has covered for so many years the memory of an humble and friendless man, and thus separate it from the "dear abode" of a dishonored grave! The crime of the one can in no way minister to the exaltation of the name of the other.

And here the writer would close;—willing to commit the further examination of the whole subject to the abler hands of the Committee appointed by the Historical Society;—and hoping, that if the facts and reasoning presented herewith, be deemed insufficient to convince any, they may also be found insufficient to offend any.

W. C. DEHART.

ELIZABETHTOWN, N. J. Feb. 4, 1846.

DR. MURRAY'S REPLY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEWARK DAILY ADVERTISER:

I send you, Sir, for publication the following narrative of the murder of Mrs. CALDWELL, the wife of the Rev. James Caldwell. It is taken from the New Jersey Gazette of the 25th of June, 1780; and for it I am indebted to our excellent Secretary of State, Dr. McChesney. It was written but four days after the sad tragedy occurred; it bears the evidence of authenticity and correctness on its face; and is more likely to be correct in every particular than any traditional narrative that can be prepared in reference to it. It is fully endorsed by a lady yet living who lay on the bed of Mrs. C. when shot, and whose face and hair were burned by the powder.

It seems from your paper of the 6th instant that another Richmond has sprung into the field of historic investigation. As he says nothing new upon the subject, and merely recasts the testimonies prepared to his hand, without, probably, ever going beyond the sight of "St. John's Church" to seek for more, my first impression on reading it was not to notice it. Sober second thoughts, however, have induced me to submit the following remarks in reference to it.

1. The history this Richmond gives of the murder of Mrs. Caldwell is not the correct one. She was deliberately shot, and not, as the returning Tories stated, after firing the Church of God, and destroying the dwellings of their fellow citizens, "purely accidental." The subjoined narrative is our proof, which is corroborated by "many of the oldest and most respectable inhabitants of the town."

2. The narrative given of the manner of the death of Caldwell is at variance with the contemporaneous exposition of the fact as given by me in a former letter. The writer must have a very singular view of historic testimony and of the balance in which it should be weighed, when he sets up the *impressions* that have been filtering through the memories of "the oldest and most respectable inhabitants" for nearly three quarters of a century against the printed co-temporaneous, uncontradicted exposition.—Although endorsed as a "distinguished officer of the U. S. Army," we venture to say this is one of the boldest facts he has ever undertaken. But co-temporaneous exposition, the value and weight of which any clerk in a lawyer's office must know, is not thus to be set aside by the impressions of persons who were then in their teens, and who now may be very fine and very respectable gentlemen and ladies of eighty. We must not permit even "a distinguished officer of the U. S. Army" to do this. His reluctance to believe the Royal Gazette, because only repeating the sentiments of the friends of Mr. Caldwell at the time; and his abhorrence of attaching any credence to newspaper paragraphs, or other irresponsible writings, is quite amusing when compared with his full faith in the story of the Tories returning from the destruction of Connecticut Farms, and the impressions of the aged and respectable people of the town! Surely a writer who treats historic evidence in this style ought to be forthwith made a member of our youthful Historical Society.

3. Morgan, after all, possesses a fair average character! Captain Scudder says "He was a disgrace to his species." Mr. Downer, under whose command he kept guard on the road to Westfield, says he was "a very bad man."—Mrs. Scudder says, "It was commonly reported that he ought to have been hung long before for drowning one of his own children in a spring." The venerable John Stiles says "He was as bad a man as could well be." Yet our new historian says he was possessed of pretty

fair character, "in general traits like those of the class to which he belonged." Well, as he is "a distinguished officer of the U. S. Army" he is a fit judge. Now if Morgan possessed the average character of the soldiers in the ranks what a distinguished honor it must be to command such a set! What a fine portraiture the officer draws of his soldiery!

4. Well but the trial lasted but part of a day; and that is evidence enough that he had not justice done him. How wonderfully the practice of the law must have improved since then. Why one of the our young attorneys in trying his first case would have wit and words enough to spend a whole day in securing a jury! Col. DeHart, his lawyer, could not have been much of a lawyer after all! It is quite clear that he deserves no monument! And then Judge Symmes and Judge Burnet—what judges to spend only part of a day in trying such a case! And the jury, too, composed of good men and true, how awfully at fault for not staying out more than half a day to give at least the show of deliberation! There was a conspiracy between the judges, and the jury and Morgan's lawyer to take the life of the prisoner at any rate! They were Whigs all! But all would be well if there were only a few Tories on the jury, or one on the bench, to sympathize with the poor soldier.

5. And then to show how little dependance is to be placed on any kind of testimony, this wonderful writer of "Passages in the History of Elizabethtown" actually discovers that a mistake is made in transferring the inscriptions of the Caldwell Monument to print. If this is so (as it may be, for I have not investigated the matter yet) he has made one discovery. And for the correction I thank him; and to show my gratitude I would suggest that he be forthwith added to the "Old Mortality Committee" of the New Jersey Historical Society.

6. For the version which he gives to the various matters and things he touches, he quotes not a document in the way of proof! He gives not a name, save those provided to his hand.—"The oldest and most respectable citizens," like "the oldest inhabitant," are doubtful characters. We do not know them. We must take the whole or the authority of the name we find at the bottom! With all due respect we say, that he makes an enormous estimate either of the power of his name to persuade, or of our credulity. With his good opinion of himself of course we would not interfere; it is, on the whole, an amiable trait; but I will thank him to form a lower estimate of the amount of my credulity.

7. But there is another of the "Passages in the History of Elizabethtown" that must needs be corrected. And that is a sentence in my first letter to "Enquirer." The sentence with the "e converso" in it, I know not that I understand. If he means to *deny* that forms of ec-

clesiastical and civil government have any affinity for one another, then I *assert*.

And then he seems to deny the most simple of all ideas that men's impressions and views receive any bias or coloring from their position, prejudices, or associations! I said, and I say again, that in weighing the testimony of witnesses upon the points in dispute we must take into account the ancient political and ecclesiastical prejudices of the persons witnessing, whether they be Presbyterians or Prelatists. The man who denies this principle must not set himself, uncalled, as a corrector of our history. And we ask, would the communication of the 4th inst. have ever seen the light were it not for ancient political sympathies, and ecclesiastical prejudices?

And after all why this ado, at this day, about Caldwell and Morgan? The history of the patriot minister has been for years before the public; why was not something done to correct it before the raising of the monument to his memory? The story about Morgan went through the papers of our land—it went up in a petition to Congress—it was read in the Senate of the United States—it was printed by its order—it was endorsed by the lamented Southard—why was nothing said before? And why said now by those unconnected by any ties with the Church of Caldwell—or with the celebration of the 24th of Nov.? This writer was neither invited to the ceremony, not present at it, nor was he asked to contribute to it in any way.—He has not been named or hinted at in the discussion. Why this volunteer service? Why come out to the aid of a Committee appointed to investigate the matter, unasked? Many solutions might be given to these questions;—a distinguished friend, from whose letter I have already quoted on a former occasion, offers this as the solution: "There is something that galls in certain quarters terribly, that a Presbyterian minister should have a monument to his memory for revolutionary services, and especially under the nose of the descendants of the old tory families."

I have a word, as usual, for you, Mr. Editor, in conclusion. I thank you kindly for entirely withdrawing, in your public capacity, from the controversy. Although it is very gratifying to young writers or old, to be introduced by a flourish of trumpets to the public, I scarcely see the necessity of even that. A man must be very little known to fame, if in order to secure a reading for his profound researches it is necessary to tell, at the distance of five miles, where he was born, or who was his father. These things, of themselves, neither give sense, nor entitle to belief. They have nothing to do with a true man. If a man is a *true* man it is of little importance where he was born, or who was his father. He *only* has the stamp of nobility upon him. And if we bow to every bluff-looking gentleman, with embroidered ribbon on his hat, and shining buttons on his coat, we will be some-

times in danger of mistaking the coachman for his master.

N. MURRAY.

ELIZABETHTOWN, Feb. 10, 1846.

From the New Jersey Gazette, Wednesday, June 21, 1780. Vol. 3. No. 130.

PHILADELPHIA, June 12th.

Extract of a letter from an intelligent gentleman in the neighborhood of Morristown, June 9th, 1780.

"Although extremely fatigued, I catch a moment to inform you that I have just returned from Elizabethtown where I have been reconnoitering the enemy's situation and strength.

To give you any tolerable idea of their savages and cruelty is beyond my descriptive abilities. They came out in force on Tuesday night and Wednesday morning, and landed in Elizabeth before day. Most observers differ in the account of their numbers; from my own observations I suppose them about 5000, with 17 pieces of artillery, and every preparative for a lengthy march.

They advanced to Connecticut Farms, about five miles distance, very early in the morning of Wednesday; and although they observed great discipline and decorum in Elizabethtown, yet at the Farms every step was marked with wanton cruelty and causeless devastation. They set fire to, and entirely destroyed, the Presbyterian Church and fourteen dwelling houses and barns, so that there are, I think, but two dwelling remaining in that fertile settlement.

But, alas, sir, this is only one part of the horrid scene. In this neighborhood lived the Rev. Mr. James Caldwell, whose zeal and activity in the cause of his country had rendered him an object worthy of the enemy's keenest resentment. His vigilance and attention had always evaded every attempt to injure him, and therefore it was now determined to wound him in an unguarded part; following the absurd principles of too many of our incautious countrymen, he left his wife and family at home, trusting to the politeness and humanity of the enemy toward an amiable woman, and a number of helpless and innocent children, that he did not think it prudent to trust them with his own safety.—He had been warned of their inmost hatred to him, and therefore dissuaded from leaving his family in their power; but, alas, his confidence in their benevolence towards the helpless, has been his destruction. Soon after their possessing themselves of the neighborhood, a soldier came to the house, and putting his gun to the window of the room where this worthy woman was sitting with her children and a maid with an infant in her arms, along side of her, he shot her through the lungs dead on the spot. Soon after an officer with two Hessians came in and ordered a hole dug and her body thrown in, and the house to be set on fire. At the earnest request of an officer of the new levies, and with some difficulty, the body was suffered to be car-

ried to a small house in the neighborhood, and Mr. Caldwell's dwelling house immediately set on fire, and everything belonging to him consumed together. The only comfort arising to this afflicted family is, that the wretch who served as the executioner of this murdered lady, who from her excellent character deserved a better fate, did his business so effectually, that she lost her life without distress or pain.

Thus it is, that even the tender mercies of the wicked are cruelty. This melancholy affair, with their cruel burnings, has raised the resentment of the whole community to the highest pitch. They are ready almost to swear an everlasting enmity to the very name of a Briton. So far is this cruelty and devastation from terrifying to submission, that it rouses the most timid to feats of desperate heroism.

A most worthy man, who has for more than four years past, devoted himself to the service of his country, is thus left with nine small children, destitute of even a shift of clothes to comfort them.

P. S. I forgot to mention a circumstance relative to Mrs. Caldwell's death, that is very striking. Some of the soldiers attacked a young lady about three miles from Mr. Caldwell's house, and one of them presenting a fixed bayonet to her breast, swore he would kill her, for that she was the wife of Mr. Caldwell. He was with difficulty prevented from putting his threats into execution, by a young officer who knew the lady, and swore to him, that she was not the wife of Mr. Caldwell or any other person. This was previous to her murder. And on their retreat from Connecticut Farms, a soldier bragged at Elizabethtown that he had shot this unhappy lady.

FOR THE NEWARK DAILY ADVERTISER.

Self-Vindication of the writer of Passages in the History of Elizabethtown.

Absence from home during the last week will be sufficient explanation to the reader why the writer has not given a more immediate attention to an article published in the "NEWARK DAILY ADVERTISER" of the 11th inst., and written by the Rev. Dr. NICHOLAS MURRAY, Pastor of the First Presbyterian Congregation of Elizabethtown.

The "PASSAGES IN THE HISTORY OF ELIZABETHTOWN," which the writer published on the 6th of the present month were intended as a mere historical detail, without any personal allusion whatever; and with the belief and the expressed hope, that it would not "offend any." In that paper was presented the substance of the evidence, either direct or traditionary, which he had collected, and with the reasoning derived therefrom which had led him to certain conclusions. The writer did not then, nor does he now, expect all men to think alike. We see daily in our Courts of Justice a diversity of

opinion which prevents the agreement of juries, when deliberating upon the same exclusive testimony—and this too without producing any violence of language, or abuse of one of the parties by another—how much less surprising therefore should it be considered when the reverend person above named, and the writer, arrive at opposite results, by the means of conflicting evidence.

The writer did not pretend that he had either collected or embodied all the evidence, or even the very best evidence which may possibly exist, for the illustration of the subject of his discourse: he merely presented the best that he could obtain. If such evidence then was defective in quantity or character, let it be annulled by better, and he will freely acknowledge it. If the reasoning which induced his opinions be deemed fallacious, let it be substituted by that which is more reasonable; and he hopes that when such testimony, and such argument shall be proffered, he may not be deficient either in perception or candor to appreciate and embrace it.

But such considerations of the subject have been altogether passed by, and the result is, an answer to that communication of a very angry or passionate character, alike too gross in its personalities for the proprieties of social life, and too inappropriate in its style to be ever mistaken as the writing of a man of letters.

It is a matter of regret to the writer that he is thus drawn into a very unexpected and undesired controversy; and he sees all the embarrassments and delicacies of his position, growing out of the profession and holy office of his assailant, when he casts about him for becoming terms in which to express himself: and in the contemplation of such means, he confesses a powerful restraint which is laid upon him by social and personal relations with others who are the friends of Dr. Murray, and fearing therefore that in the vindication of himself he may unconsciously wound them. Yet there is a limit to all such obligations; although he hopes that in whatever manner he may conduct his observations he will exhibit a due respect for himself, and thus not incur the danger (through the inadvertence of any reader,) of suffering the very great injustice of being mistaken for the other party.

And the writer, too, must add the expression of his regret, that the editor of the "*Newark Daily Advertiser*" should have incurred a rebuke on his account, for having in a prefatory notice to the "*Passages in the History of Elizabethtown*" referred to the parentage and profession of the writer.

In these times of "Human Progress" it is well known that there are many who profess to entertain a most philosophical contempt for parentage, and ever manifest a masterly indifference to being considered the descendant of any father in particular, or to having been born in any certain place. Of this immoral and licen-

tious doctrine the reverend disputant avows himself an advocate; but as this new light has not yet overspread the land, there are also a great many "very respectable" persons who entertain no such creed, and it is therefore but fair, inasmuch as the writer has had the benefit of the editor's remarks, to give the other side all the advantages of a like exposition. The propriety of this will be apparent, from the necessary connection which will be shown to exist, in the sequel of this argument, and the remarks on this part of the present subject will be very brief.

It is sufficient then to say that the Rev. Dr. Murray was born in Ireland—that having immigrated to this country he was, after the usual probationary term of study, admitted to the order of the Christian Ministry; and about the year 1833 was duly installed as Pastor of the First Presbyterian Congregation of Elizabethtown. Of his particular offices and relations with his people it is not necessary, nor would it be becoming in the writer to speak—he wishes merely to notice such things only as affect the community at large; and therefore says, that it is certain that since the introduction of this Pastor there has been a growing sub-current of petty and contemptible sectarian animosity. Every religious persuasion, in their turn—the Episcopal, the Methodist, the Roman Catholic, have been submitted to the lash of his clerical sarcasm, or to his ecclesiastical anathema; and this most evidently not to the promotion of "a true religion," but to the mere disquieting of the social state of this ancient, and otherwise peaceful Borough. And within a brief period too, this uneasy person has mixed up with his precepts of piety, the duty or requirements of patriotism, and accordingly, when under such teaching there arises a question of historical rectitude, the abiding spirit impels him to impugn the motives, the intelligence, the political fidelity, and the religious faith of every man who dares to entertain, or express an opinion contrary to his own.

"Can grey hairs make folly venerable."

But let us turn to the immediate subject of this paper, and give a passing notice to the last exhibition made by "this most illustrate and learned gentleman."

It will appear at the outset, and throughout the communication, that the author thought much more of his jest than of his argument, and accordingly he begins his onslaught by sneeringly calling the writer "another Richmond in the field of historic investigation." Now did not the reverend writer perceive that by the force of rhetorical relation, and the opposition in which he places himself, that he must, of necessity, be considered as the "Usurper Richard"—and this Richard, to quote his own paper, in the words of "Mr. Downer," "was a very bad man," or as "the venerable John Stiles says," "was as bad a man as well could be," and according to the language of

Mrs. Scudder, "he ought to have been hung long before" the day of Bosworth Field, for murdering two innocent children in the Tower!

"The history [says he] this Richmond gives of the murder of Mrs. Caldwell is not the correct one—she was deliberately shot." If Mr. Murray had read understandingly the relation which he pretends to criticise, he might have seen that the writer after stating the current opinion of many at the time that Mrs. Caldwell was accidentally killed, immediately added—"and yet there is evidence of a very direct character which affixes the guilt of the murder of the poor lady to a particular individual," and therefore the statement of the Rev. Doctor, it must be acknowledged, instead of disproving any conclusion of the writer, corroborates the evidence referred to, and accordingly he now thinks it a very just inference that Mrs. Caldwell "was deliberately shot"—to which it may be added, that another consequence of such proof, quite as clear as any other, is, that the witicism, closing up the rear of his paragraph, that the "writer ought to be forthwith made a member of our youthful Historical Society," is entirely labor lost.

But the unavoidable inference to be drawn from the remark, is one which the author of it knew could not be true—and the writer would here present his acknowledgments to Doctor Murray for having at the quarterly meeting of the Historical Society in October last, voluntarily and unsolicited, nominated him for the honor of membership; and that the name of the same nominee afterwards passed before Mr. Murray as one of the canvassing committee, and upon the presentation of it to the body of the Society, on the question of admittance, he, with every other member, voted in the affirmative. The writer has accordingly been duly notified by the Secretary of the Society, that he is a member thereof. Really, one may be inclined to believe (and the writer thinks that such an impression will become quite strong before this discussion is ended,) that the Rev. Doctor's love of a joke makes him very often disregard or forget his facts.

Again, as another specimen of his ingenuousness and logic. "Morgan after all possesses a fair average character!" "Well, as he [the writer] is 'a distinguished officer of the U. S. Army,' [so the same author spoke of the writer in a communication published in the Newark Daily Advertiser of January 20, 1846, as authority for a legal principle, which however, from the manner in which he stated it, he seems to have misapprehended in some degree,] he is a fit judge. Now if Morgan possessed the average character of the soldiers in the ranks, what a distinguished honor it must be to command such a set!—What a fine portraiture the officer draws of his soldiery!" It is very clear here that Dr. Murray endeavors to substitute his own views of Morgan's character for

those of the writer—but the latter certainly never said that Morgan was a depraved villain, he had no evidence of such; and, therefore, what connection is there between the premises and conclusion of this logician? It is to be hoped that the Doctor may discover that his wit, like fire, is not always the safest agent to employ.

And this grave minister, in the plentitude of his humor, pretends to think that the writer has "merely recast the testimonies prepared to his hand, without ever, probably, going beyond the sight of St. John's Church." But this little "probably" is not a sufficient qualification for the venturesome assertion; and the reader may "probably" think by and by that the asserter of such opinion was clearly mistaken.

As late as the 9th of January last, when passing the residence of Dr. Murray, the writer was called to, and invited by him into his study. In the course of the conversation which then ensued, Dr. Murray remarked upon the very great variance of opinion that existed as to the circumstances attending the death of Mr. Caldwell, and the subsequent particulars of the life of Morgan, and added, that although he had taken considerable trouble in the investigation of the matter, yet up to that day had not been able to discover any satisfactory evidence of this trial; and that indeed some people believed that he had been put to death by mob violence. The writer replied to this, that the evidence of the trial could be procured, that his uncle, the late Colonel William De Hart, had acted as the prisoner's counsel; and that the trial had taken place at Westfield. Having given to Dr. Murray the names of several persons to whom he might address himself for further information, he took his leave.

In the course of three or four days after this, the writer, in company with other gentlemen, repaired to Westfield, where upon enquiry they procured most ample testimony as to the trial, execution, and divers particulars connected therewith, which have been detailed in the "Passages in the History of Elizabethtown."

Pursuant to the suggestions made to Dr. Murray, at the time alluded to above, he called upon some to whom reference had been given; and subsequent to the writer's visit to Westfield, he also repaired thither, and saw some of the same persons, and gathered pretty much the same testimony which was given to the public in the NEWARK DAILY ADVERTISER of the 28th ultimo. He has also had conversation with one of the gentlemen with whom the writer visited Westfield, on that very subject, and yet he affects to think that the writer never went "beyond the sight of St. John's Church," to seek for any evidence!

And so again, this writer jumps into joke-dom, and deduces a long train of witty inferences, because in the "PASSAGES IN THE HISTORY OF ELIZABETHTOWN," it was said that the trial of Morgan only lasted but a part of one day.

Now as the writer merely stated an historical fact, in the simplest form, without the accompaniment of a single remark that could by the utmost stretch of reason impugn the Court or the jury, he cannot perceive what application is to be made of the remarks in question.

But this witty divine is not yet satisfied. He says, that as to the discovery of the difference between the inscription on the marble, and the description of it in print, he thanks the writer for it, but adds also, "if this is so, (as it may be, for I have not *investigated* the matter yet,) and to show him my gratitude, I would suggest that he be forthwith added to the "Old Mortality Committee" of the New Jersey Historical Society."

It seems thus that the Rev. scholar had a very confused notion of either the character or occupation of the person, as so beautifully depicted by the pen of Walter Scott. Nor was the writer before aware of the institution of such Committee—now become so manifestly essential, to watch, at least, over the mural histories of the grave-yard of Dr. Murray's congregation, if such are in days to come to be received as

"Figuring the nature of the time deceased."

Such are the logic, the rhetoric, and the puerilities which dance thro' the mazes of the reverend writer's argument; and his wit!—by the self complacency with which he ever returns to it, to fill up the hiatus of his deficiency, he must certainly regard it as

—"Like that pretty worm of Nilus
His biting is immortal, those that do die of it, do seldom or never recover."

He is undoubtedly, a most amusing exponent of the *non sequitur*; and if one may judge from the communication under review, and which he calls his "*sober second thoughts*," in opposition to his "*first impression*" not to notice the writer—it is certain, that he possesses in a high degree that peculiar faculty of his countrymen which enables them to convey their ideas by means contrary to their intention!

But let us turn to the contemplation of graver matter, and which is offered as an index to point to the *accuracy* of the vexed historian.

In the communication of the 11th instant, Dr. Murray, in an angry and sneering manner takes the writer to task for presuming to discuss an open question of history; and with a presumption, which the writer is reluctant to use the proper term to characterise, asks—"Why [does the writer] come out to investigate the matter unasked?" "This writer was neither invited to the ceremony, nor present at it, nor was he asked to contribute to it in any way." But to what violent conclusions does he jump!—and it is therefore necessary to come again to his aid. The writer therefore simply states, that he was "invited to the ceremony," that the invitation is now, at this moment of writing, before him, and bears the date of "November 10, 1845,"

and is signed "N. MURRAY," who was "Chairman of the Com. of Arrangements"—and that the said invitation was delivered to the writer by Colonel Warren Scott of New Brunswick!!

But notwithstanding this, the writer does not, as Dr. Murray seems to do, consider the invitation as a sort of "letters patent" which confers the privilege of speaking or writing upon a particular subject—and considering the facts, that the writer is a native of this country, whose progenitors have occupied this soil for a great portion of two centuries; whose father, and father's brothers fought on many a bloody field of the Revolution to uphold the liberties of the land—and on the other hand, that this reverend Pastor is an alien, boasting only of a brief residence of some ten or twelve years in this village, who would limit thus the freedom of speech and of the press—this denunciation on the part of the latter, can only be viewed as a most remarkable instance of self-confident delusion!

It is well known that for several years past Dr. Murray has been at some pains to collect information touching the history of this neighborhood. This was a laudable labor, entitling him to our thanks. But in the pursuit of these views, and in the expression of his opinions, he should have considered the privileges of others to glean in the same field, and exercise their own judgment. And it is in the exercise of that privilege that the writer now points to some of the results of the Doctor's labor, as published under the title of "*Notes, Historical and Biographical concerning Elizabethtown*," which may illustrate the accuracy of the author. Now, at page 75, it is said that Mrs. Caldwell was shot on the 25th of June. At page 96, it is declared that Mrs. Caldwell was murdered on the 6th of June—and at page 105 it is with equal confidence asserted that she was shot on the 7th of June! Here are three various accounts of the same act, all comprised within the limits of thirty pages—and the reader is consequently, by the author left to select any one he may most fancy, or by the same authority he may with equal reason reject the whole! There are other matters in the little volume referred to, obnoxious to fair criticism—but the writer wishes to notice such parts only as relate to the present discussion.

When the declarations made, at the inauguration of the Monument, that Morgan had been "bribed to do the murderous deed," had elicited the attention of the public, and a writer in the Newark Daily Advertiser of the 29th of Dec. last, called for the evidence upon which such an accusation was based, the Rev. Dr. Miller of Princeton replied on the following day, through the columns of the same journal, that the Rev. Dr. Murray was the authority upon which he had relied in making the statement. Accordingly on the 27th of January, Mr. Murray explained in these terms—"All that I say upon

this point in my 'Notes on Elizabethtown' is contained in this brief sentence: '*It is said that it was proved on his trial that he was bribed by British gold to do the murderous deed.*'"

In the volume of "Historical Collections of the State of New Jersey" published in 1844, there is a Biographical Sketch of the Rev. James Caldwell, originally published in the New York Observer, and understood to be from the pen of the Rev. Nicholas Murray. At page 169, there is this passage—"He [the Rev. Mr. Caldwell] was shot by a man called Morgan, who was tried and found guilty of murder. *It was proved on his trial that he was bribed to the murderous deed.*"

In the above paragraph, there is the most unqualified and positive declaration of the bribery—strongly in contrast with the language quoted from Mr. Murray's communication, published on the 28th of Jan. And it seems strange too, that as early as 1844, the same author should assert the fact of a trial, which as late as January 1846, he acknowledged to have never received any satisfactory evidence of!

It is presumed that these are evidences enough to prove that even Dr. Murray, is not infallible; and however subtle his intellect, or powerful his influence, he can hardly expect to satisfy men that he can conciliate differences which are irreconcilable, or solve mysteries which are inexplicable!

And now in conclusion. "A man [says the Rev. Doctor] must be very little known to fame, if in order to secure a reading for his profound researches, it is necessary to tell, at the distance of five miles, where he was born, or who was his father." This is undoubtedly true; and therefore the Editor will not perhaps, think it necessary hereafter to make such a prefix to the "profound researches" of the Doctor himself, whose fame is in a fair way to be wafted far beyond such narrow bounds. But to the following declaration that "If a man is a *true man* it is of little importance where he was born or who was his father," the writer is very happy in signifying his dissent. To him such a belief appears but the negation of a beautiful sentiment—a sentiment impressed upon the hearts of mankind by the hand of nature, to lead, to instruct, to govern; and as a great moral principle, suited to our wants and our destiny. In every stage and condition of life, where corruption has not yet defaced every feeling, may its operation be seen, and its instinct be felt; adorning human character and beautifying human life; animating the parent to exertion, and inspiring the child with a virtuous pride, and is to be traced in the workings of the moral universe, and read in the sacred wisdom of the past—

"The glory of children are their fathers."

Throughout the length of this discussion, it has been a necessity on the part of the writer

to differ with the several points advanced by Dr. Murray—and yet in the closing witticism, however coarsely dressed, there is something which he is willing to acknowledge—that the trappings or dress of a soldier are no sure indication of either his worth or his character; and so Dr. Murray will perhaps himself allow, as he has given the public a very sufficient proof of its truth—that the garb of religion is not in every case conclusive evidence, of either the christian temper, or the good breeding of him who wears it.

W. C. DEHART.

ELIZABETHTOWN, February 17, 1846.

Dr. Murray's Reply to Capt. DeHart.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEWARK DAILY ADVERTISER :

I have just risen from the perusal of the most cool and gentlemanly production of the "distinguished officer of the United States Army" in your paper of to-day. It is probably the most distinguished production of its accomplished author; and, equally with the renowned descent of which he boasts, entitles him to the character of a scholar and a man of breeding. I am persuaded it will be only necessary hereafter, in order to secure readers for his productions, to introduce him as the '*Self-Vindicator*,' instead of telling who was his father, and where he was born. The title will certainly do him equal credit.

This famous Richmond expresses in the present letter what he would have willingly done in the first and now that he is delivered of so much eulogy I hope he will feel better. He seeks in this letter to raise new issues; but with all deference to this distinguished character I cannot permit it. And after setting one or two points, perhaps more, with this attic wit, I shall hold him to his "Passages in the History of Elizabethtown."

1. I would thank him to try his "prentice hand" a little longer on the life of James Morgan, that worthy soldier, before he tries it on mine. Morgan is in the line of his calling, and is dead. If this, political writer pursues his new vocation until I am dead, he then may be a little better prepared to take to me the relation of biographer. And then he will probably have much more to tell about me, as I intend, by the grace of God, to live for years to come as I have for the last thirteen, in Elizabethtown, and a little more so.

2. But I introduced him to the Historical Society both by nomination and otherwise! Certainly I did. And if he has paid the fee of admission he is a member with full power. Has he paid it? I am only sorry he was not a member of such a Society long ago—he might then know a little more about "Passages in the History of Elizabethtown" and other places than he does. I rejoice that I am guilty of the act he

charges on me, as I now see the great need there was of perpetrating it.

3. As to the scene in my study. I wrote a note to this distinguished officer to enquire as to which of the DeHarts was Morgan's lawyer, if he knew. Before sending it, he passed my door, and I invited him in. He was not certain of it. I enquired as to the legal point about military and civil process against the same individual for the same crime. I made my statement on this point in my letter to "Enquirer," on the authority of this "distinguished officer." This is the amount of the information he gave me. And I called on the person he named for further enquiry. Nor was she certain. His and her conjecture proved true, however.

4. As to the invitation to the ceremony. His name I am persuaded never entered into the minds of one of the Committee of Arrangements—certainly never into mine. Perhaps for the reason, he was so near—" 'tis distance lends enchantment to the view." I was directed to address a note to Col. Scott, as President of the Cincinnati, to invite the presence of the members of that body; and if Richmond has the note he says he has (which I do not question, as he is a distinguished officer) *it is not in my handwriting* unless he borrowed my note to Col. Scott. If James Morgan were a member of that Society he would have received the same invitation. Some individuals belonging to it were really invited by me, and probably have my note. But they were distinguished, without being officers in the army.

5. But this distinguished historian waxes warm on the subject of parentage. I would almost as soon be Oliver Cromwell, as George the Second. I would rather be Benjamin Franklin or Roger Sherman than all that ever bore in Elizabethtown this author's name. Does he not know that it is sometimes even better to be born in Ireland than that every body should know who our father was? Is not vulgarity, like wit, sometimes hereditary?

6. His biography of me, like his "Passages in the History of Elizabethtown" is some of it true, and some of it not quite so true. It is in this respect very much like a biography that any body might draw up in a fit of calmness, of this son of Cyrus. I refer for my character to my constituents. I can only say that I have labored for nearly thirteen years for the mental and moral welfare of the community; and the people here being judges, I will put these years, as to moral efforts, against the years of all this famous historian's generations. It would be a great addition to the old Borough, if many who have been born in it were born in Ireland, and had remained there.

7. I have only farther to say, in these preliminaries, that it is very likely this "distinguished officer" has now discovered where lies the lock of his strength. It is not in historical investigations—nor yet, probably, in the army—it is in writing such wonderfully smart letters as that

which adorns your columns to-day. It is certainly a wonderful improvement on its predecessor!

Now for the "Passages in the History of Elizabethtown." There lies the issue. The errors in my 'Notes,' of which there are many, I am correcting as fast as I can.

This famous historian does not tell us why this ado *now*, and not before the monument was raised? He does not tell us why he seeks to stigmatize the character of the Judges and Jury that tried Morgan, to gain a low point? He does not tell us why he sets up old stories collected here and there against co-temporaneous, uncontradicted exposition. In giving the narrative of the death of Mrs. Caldwell, I wonder if he ever took the trouble to look into the History of his country? Did he ever read the following statements in reference to it?

"Whilst sitting in the midst of her children, having a sucking infant in her arms, a soldier came to the window and shot his musket at her. She received the ball in her bosom and instantly expired. Ashamed of an act so universally execrated, the British contended that the lady was the victim of a random shot from the militia."—[Gordon's His. N. Jersey, p. 306.

"Nothing excited more general resentment and compassion than the murder of the amiable and virtuous wife of a Presbyterian Clergyman, attended with too many circumstances of grief on the one side, and of barbarism on the other to pass over in silence.

"This lady was sitting in her own house with her little domestic circle around her, and her infant in her arms unapprehensive of danger and shrouded by the consciousness of her innocence and virtue, when a British barbarian pointed his musket into the window of her room and instantly shot her through the lungs. * * Mr. Caldwell afterwards published the proofs of this cruel affair attested on oath before Magistrates by sundry persons who were in the house with Mrs. Caldwell, and saw her fall back and expire immediately on the report of the gun."—[Warren's His. American Revol. vol. 2, p. 203-4.

"In the neighborhood lived the Rev. James Caldwell of Elizabethtown. The active part he had taken in the support of the American cause, and his successful influence in spiriting up the Jersey people to oppose the British forces, rendered him an object of their keenest resentment, and made it insecure for him to reside in his own town. * * Soon after the royal forces arrived in the neighborhood of the Farms, a soldier came to the house, and putting his gun to the window of the room where Mrs. C. was sitting, fired, and shot her instantly dead."—[Dr. Wm. Gordon's His. Amer. Rev. vol. 3, p. 58.

"When the royal forces were on their way into the country a soldier came to his house in his absence, and shot his wife Mrs. Caldwell instantly dead, by levelling his piece at her through the window of the room in which she was sitting with her children."—[Ramsey's Am. Rev. vol. 2, p. 235.

"Mrs. Caldwell had been induced to remain in her house under the persuasion that her presence might serve to protect it from pillage, and that her person could not be possibly endangered, as in the hope of preserving the Farms, Col. Dayton who at that time commanded the militia determined not to halt in the settlement but to take post on a narrow pass on the road leading to Springfield. Whilst she was sitting in the midst of her children, having a sucking infant in her arms, a soldier came to the window and discharged his musket at her. She received the ball in her bosom, and instantly expired.

"Ashamed of an act so universally execrated it was con-

FOR THE NEWARK DAILY ADVERTISER.

Capt. DeHart's Reply to Rev. Dr.
Murray,

*Pastor of the First Presbyterian Congregation
of Elizabethtown.*

The writer does not intend to ask the attention of the public, for the further consideration of the points in controversy, which have arisen between the Rev. Dr. Murray and himself. The article in the Daily Advertiser of this day, is a sufficient compensation for any labor which he has bestowed in the conduct of the discussion, by the evidence which it offers of an undoubted improvement in the Rev. Doctor's manners, and the promise of amendment of his history. These are indeed the only matters in which the community may be supposed to have any immediate interest.

There are some signs of composure now of the present state of 'King Richard,' which it is hoped will be sufficient to ensure his proprieties; and perhaps the 'First lesson' to which this truculent person has lately been subjected, will be with him on certain questions, 'the beginning of wisdom,' for it is beyond peradventure, that this neighborhood has become quite tired of his presumption and impertinences!

As the Rev. Scholar has not either proved or disproved any thing which was advanced or denied at an earlier state of the controversy, the writer is willing to leave him to his reflections. And this Rev. Professor of 'polite letters' thinks too, that the writer is so blind as to need 'a dog, a string and a stick' to guide him. Well as he has volunteered to act as the cur, who is to guide the blind public in the TRUE way of historic investigation, he may rest assured that by 'the line and the stick' which I hold, I shall certainly make him mind his business.

It certainly requires 'no Daniel' to tell the world in what country this divine first drew breath—it is clear that his 'native land' has not yet departed from him; and a sentence in 'his last' illustrates very clearly what was meant by his peculiar faculty, by which he is 'enabled to convey his ideas by means contrary to his intention.' For he says—'It would be a great ADDITION to the old Borough if many who have been born in it were born in Ireland, and had remained there.' Now really, it is quite useless to dispute, even with a learned 'Doctor of Divinity,' who can thus gravely maintain that taking from a population adds to it! And so wishing that this high bred theologian may resume his books with his morals the writer would wish him a quiet pilgrimage.

W. C. DEHART.

ELIZABETHTOWN, Feb. 19, 1846.

tended by the British, that this lady was the victim of a random shot, and even that the fatal ball had proceeded from the militia; in proof of which last assertion they insisted that the ball had entered on that side of the house which looked towards the retreating Americans. But it was notorious that the militia had made no stand at the Farms, and a pathetic representation of the fact made to the public by the afflicted husband, received universal credence, and excited universal indignation.—[Marshall's Life of Washington, vol. 4, p. 206.

And with these statements BOTTA coincides. Vol. 2, p. 255.

If he read these extracts, then he gives a dishonest history; if he did not examine them, he gives one ignorantly.—And if amid these lights of history he makes up such a narrative as that which he has given, he is a blind man, and should be forthwith furnished with a line, a dog, and a stick to guide him.

If with these evidences of history before him he goes on blundering to the narrative of Mrs. Caldwell; what dependence can be placed upon what he says as to the murder of Caldwell where the evidence is less positive and convincing.

What I have said in this matter I have said from the beginning in self-defence; and in vindication of those who fought and bled and died to secure for us our broad inheritance of freedom. And I have done it without anything, save my labor, for the trouble; yes, and although born in Ireland! And all this, whilst 'a distinguished officer in the United States Army,' who is fed in idleness, or next to it, by his country,—who is a native of the soil—and the son of a brave officer, who performed great exploits in the Revolution and since, is stigmatizing the character of the soldiery that fought our battles,—excusing the Tories that burned our churches and houses, and robbed our fellow citizens, and who is seeking by indirect means as contemptible as they are small, to diminish the fair fame of one who was an ornament to the Church and State. With such a man my controversy must cease. Here endeth the second lesson.

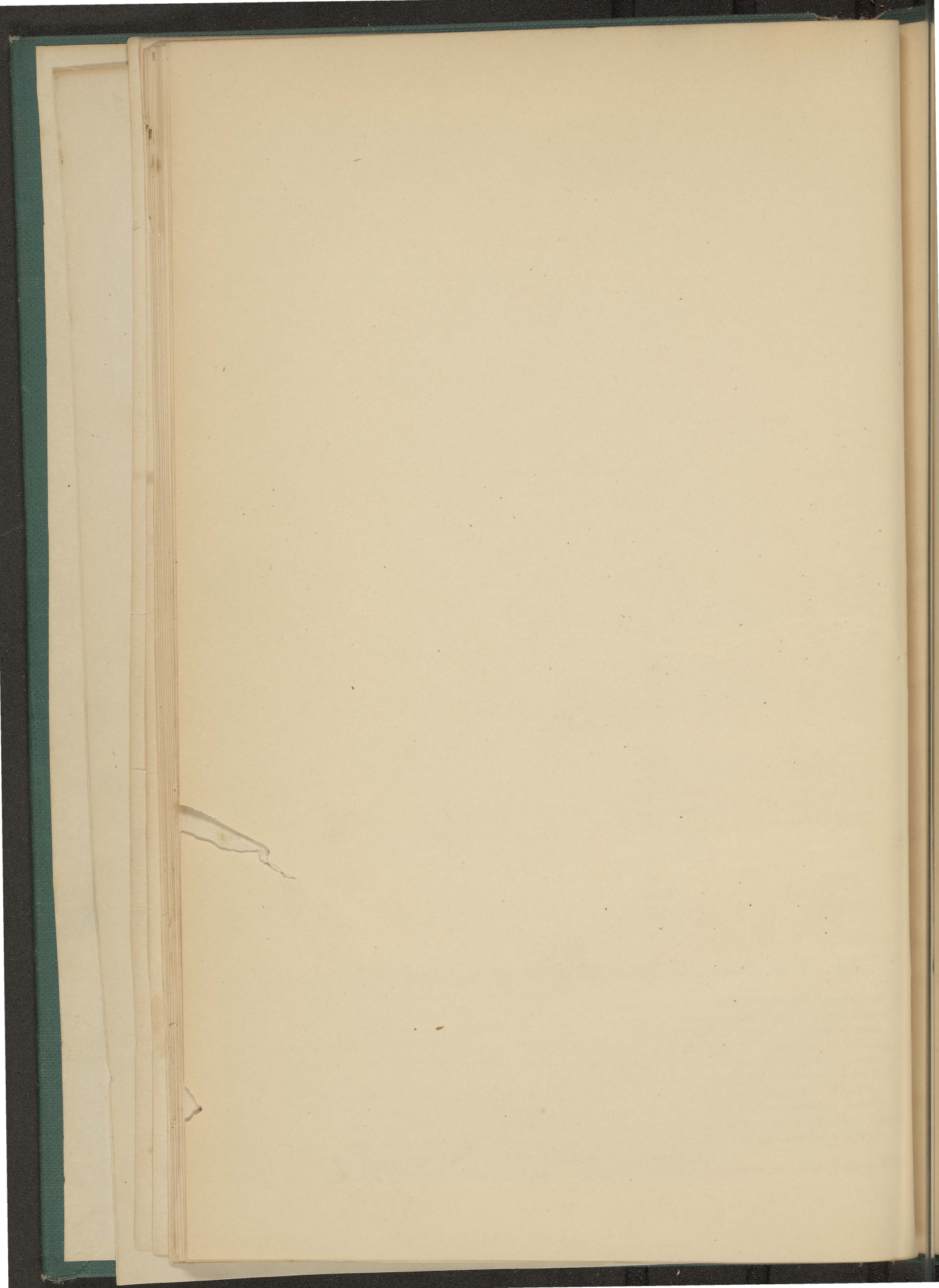
N. MURRAY.

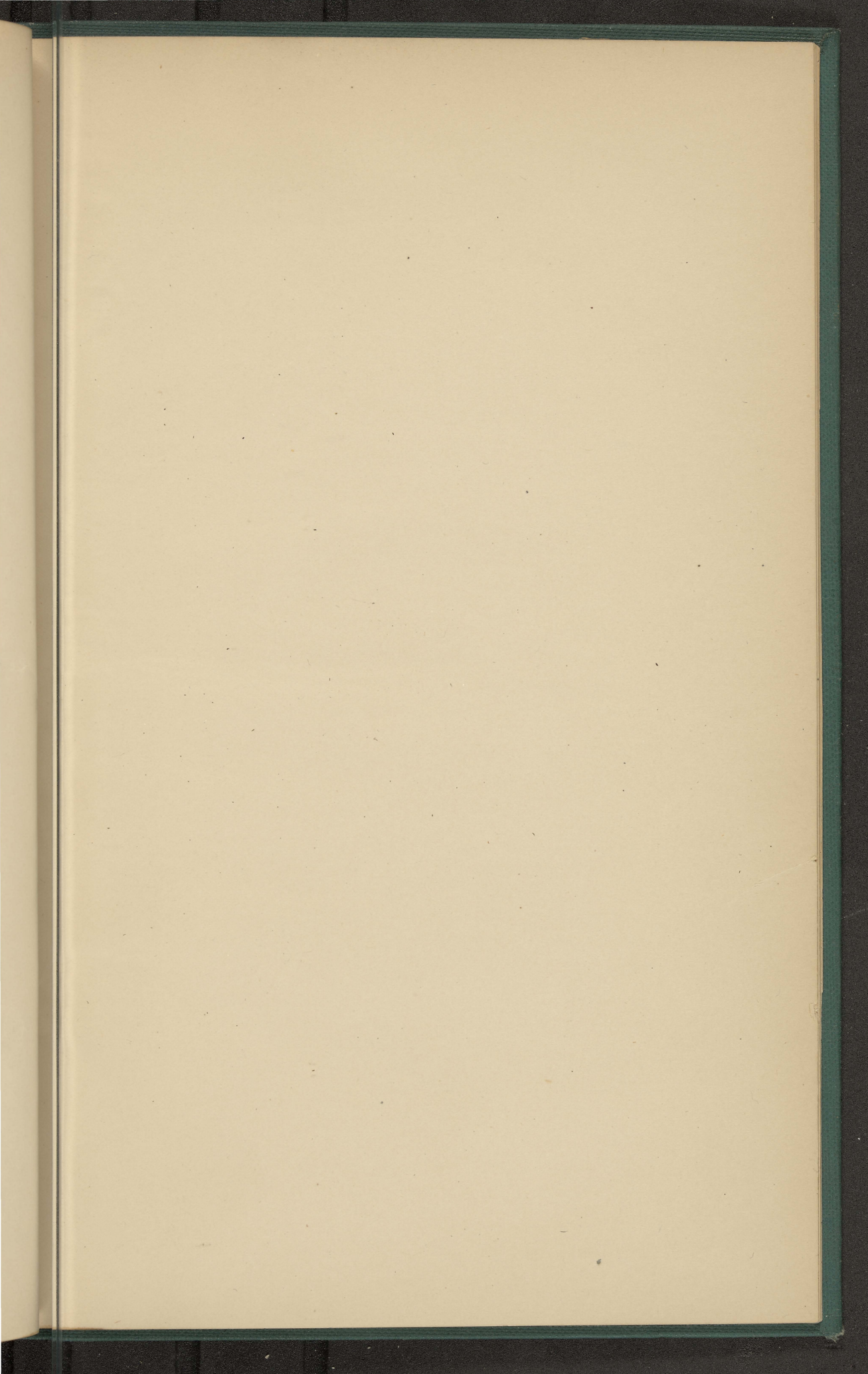
ELIZABETHTOWN, Feb. 18, 1846.

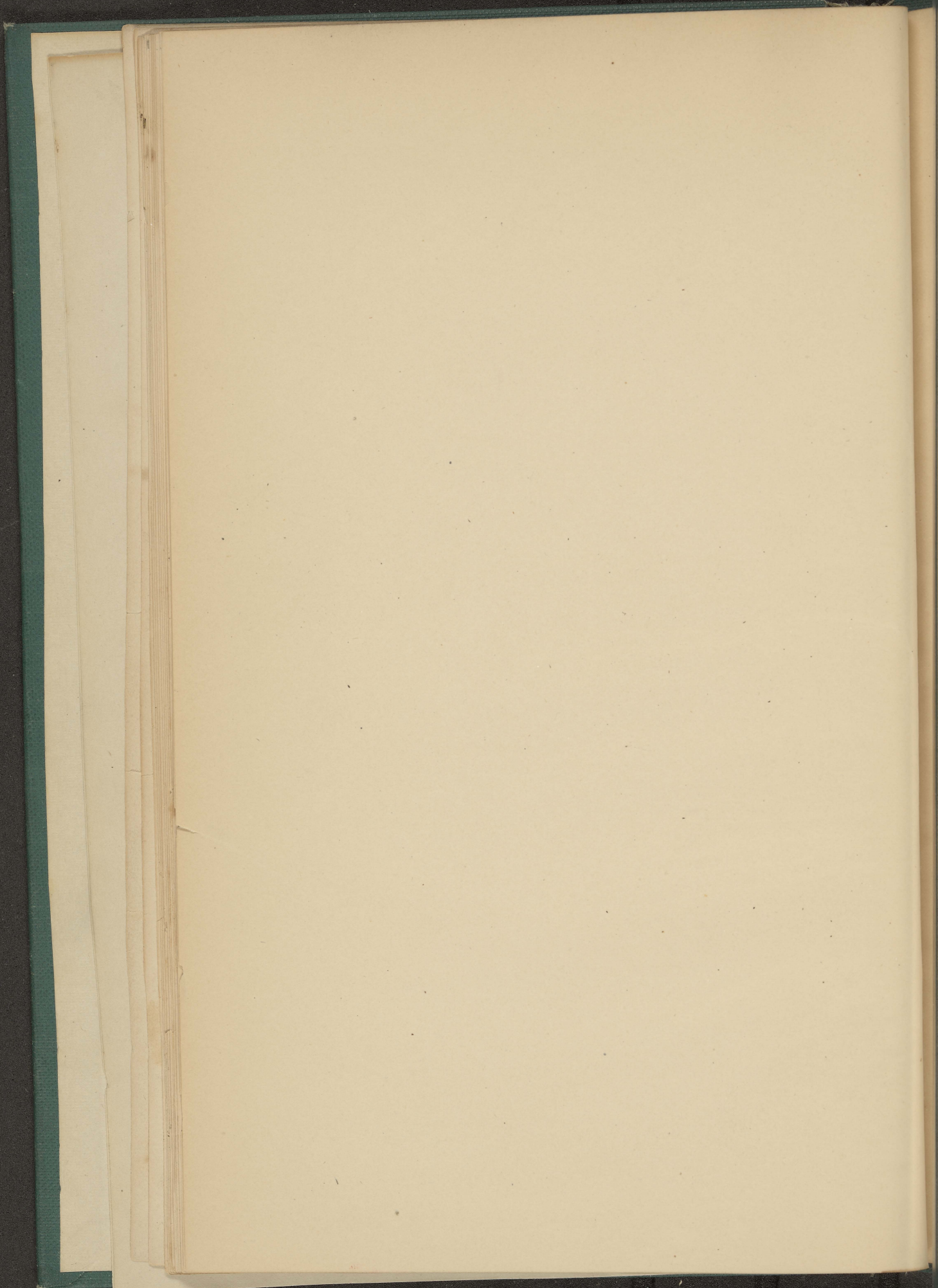
vol. 2, p.

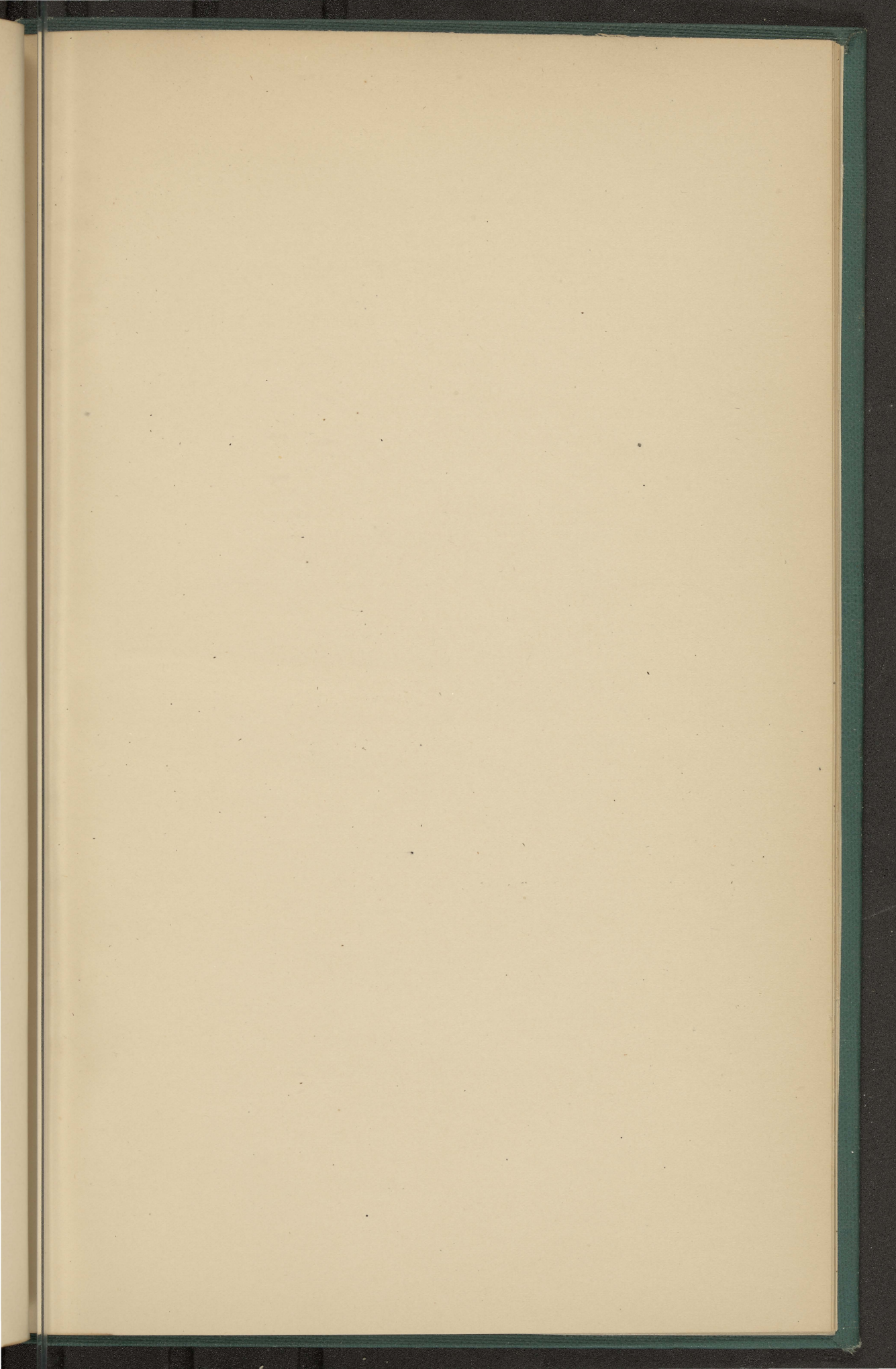
her house
ve to pro-
be possi-
be Farms.
litia deter-
t on a nar-
Whilist she
a sucking
w and dis-
ball in her

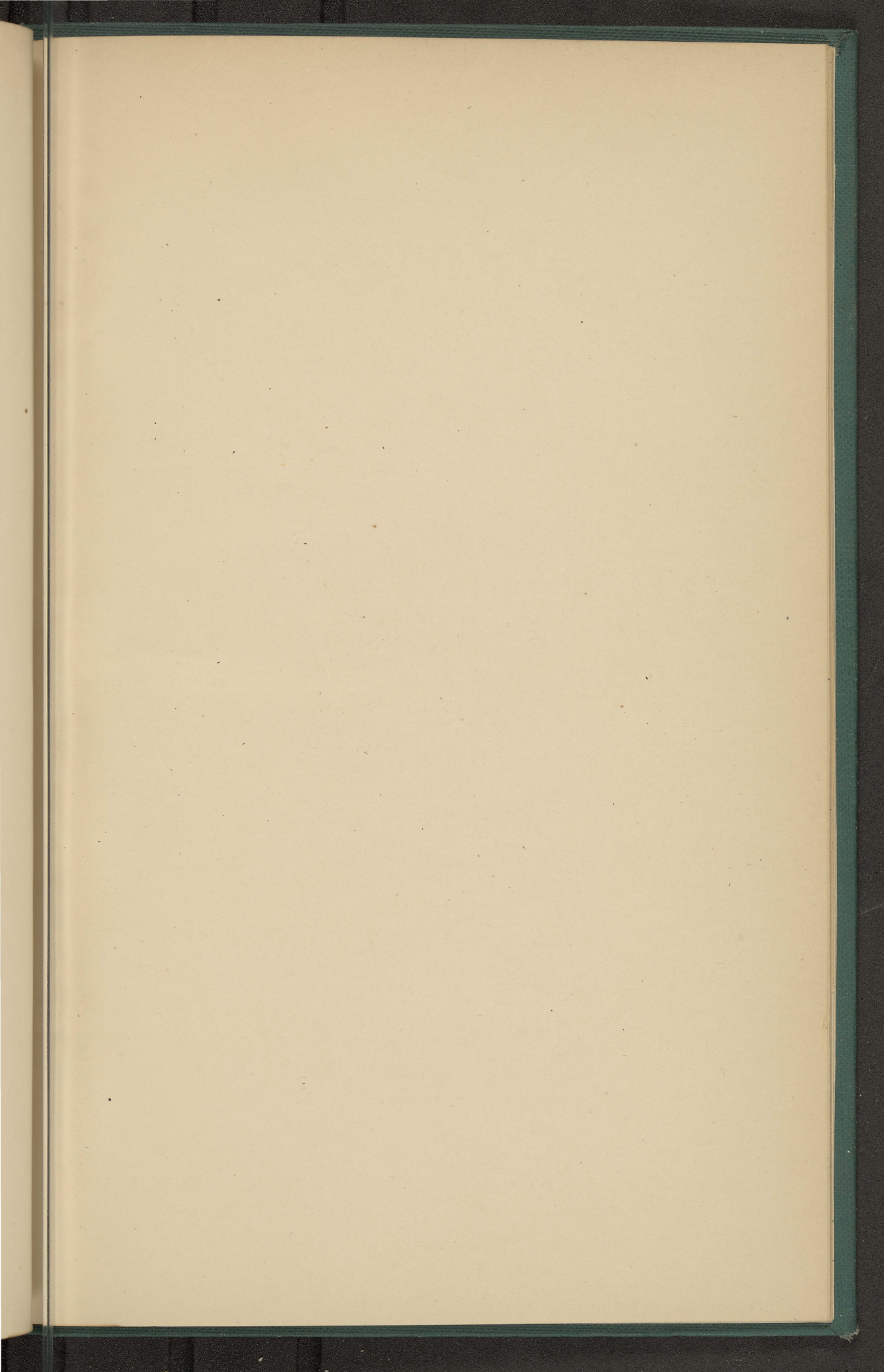
it was con-

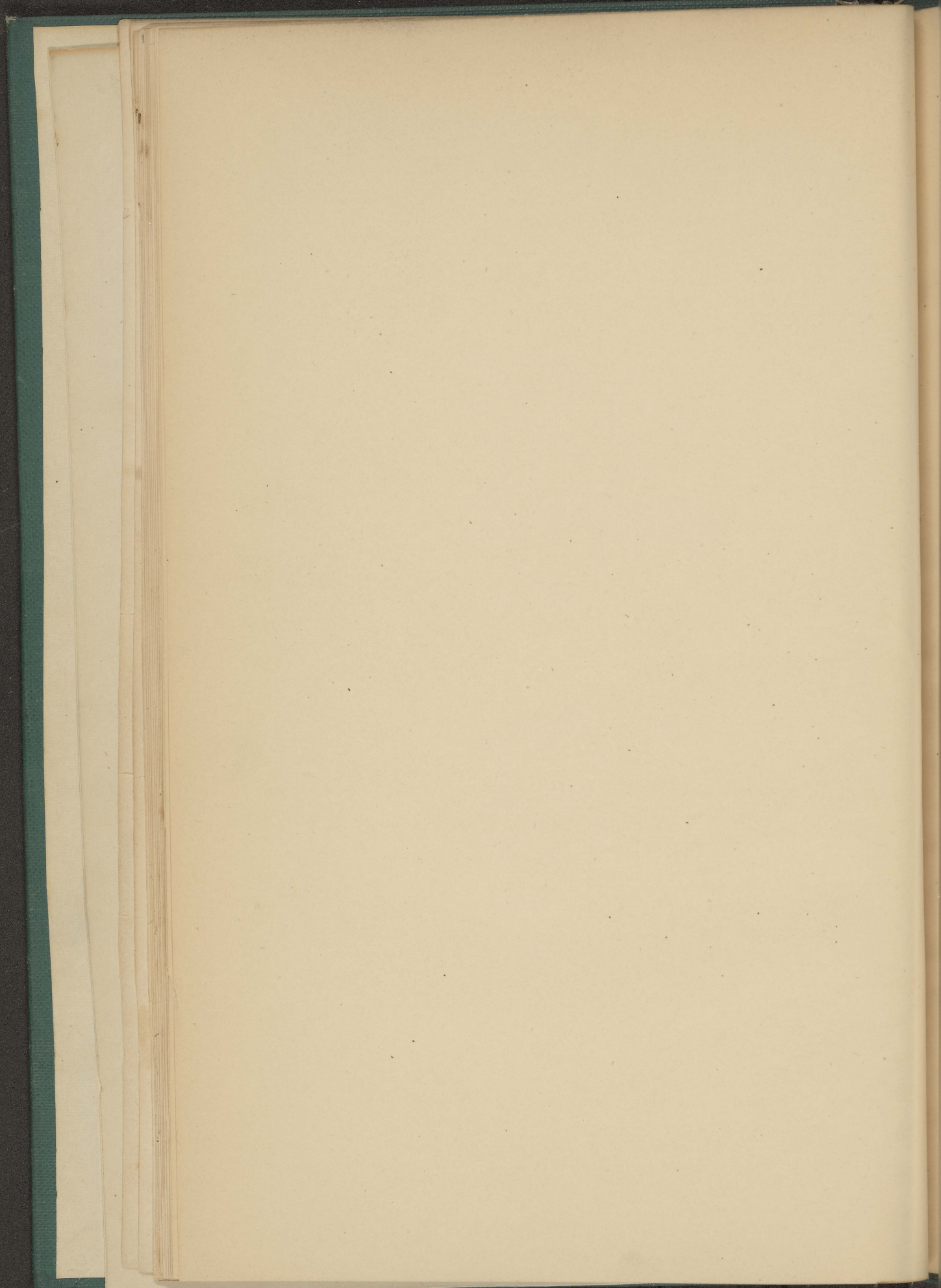


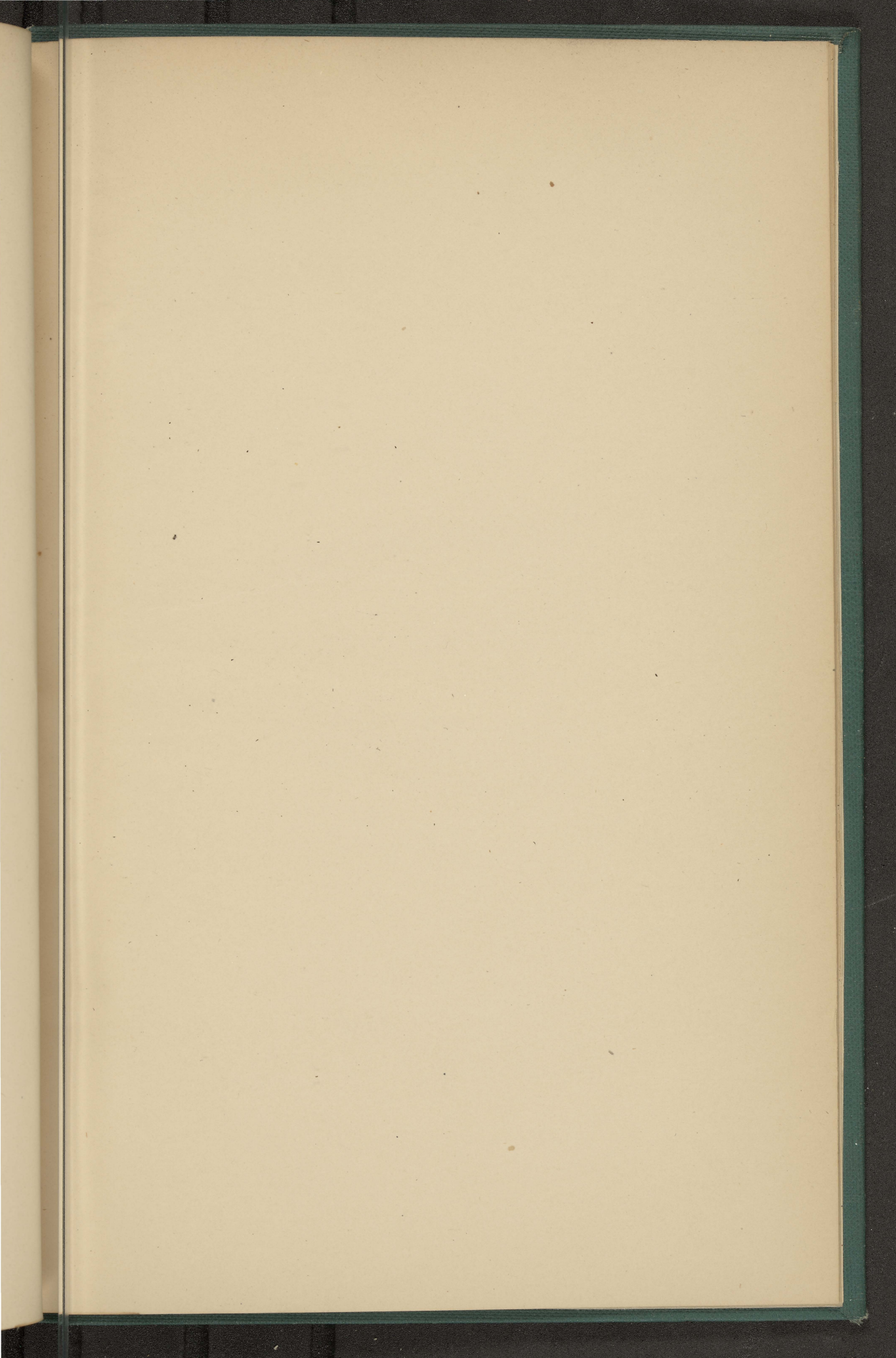


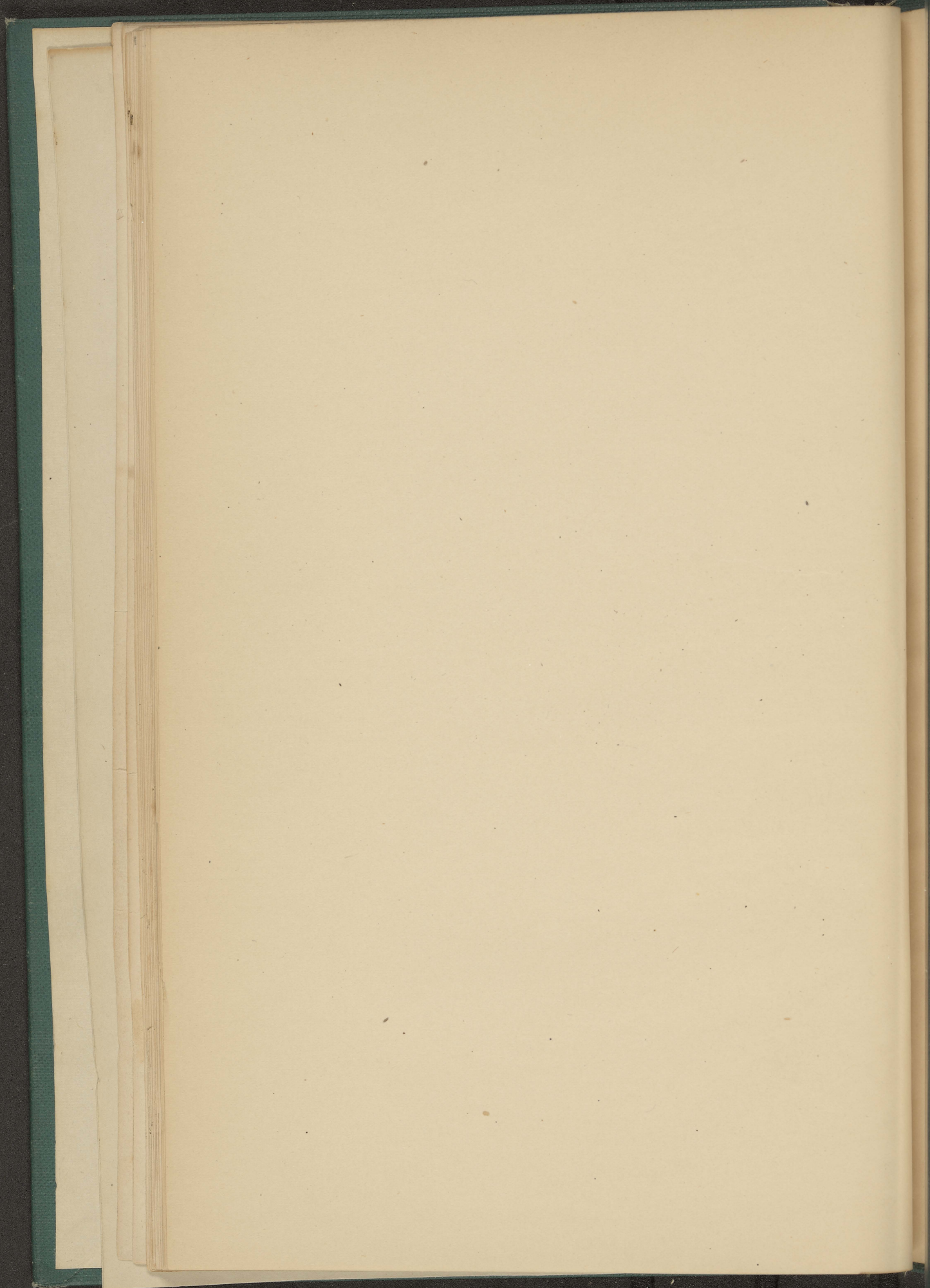


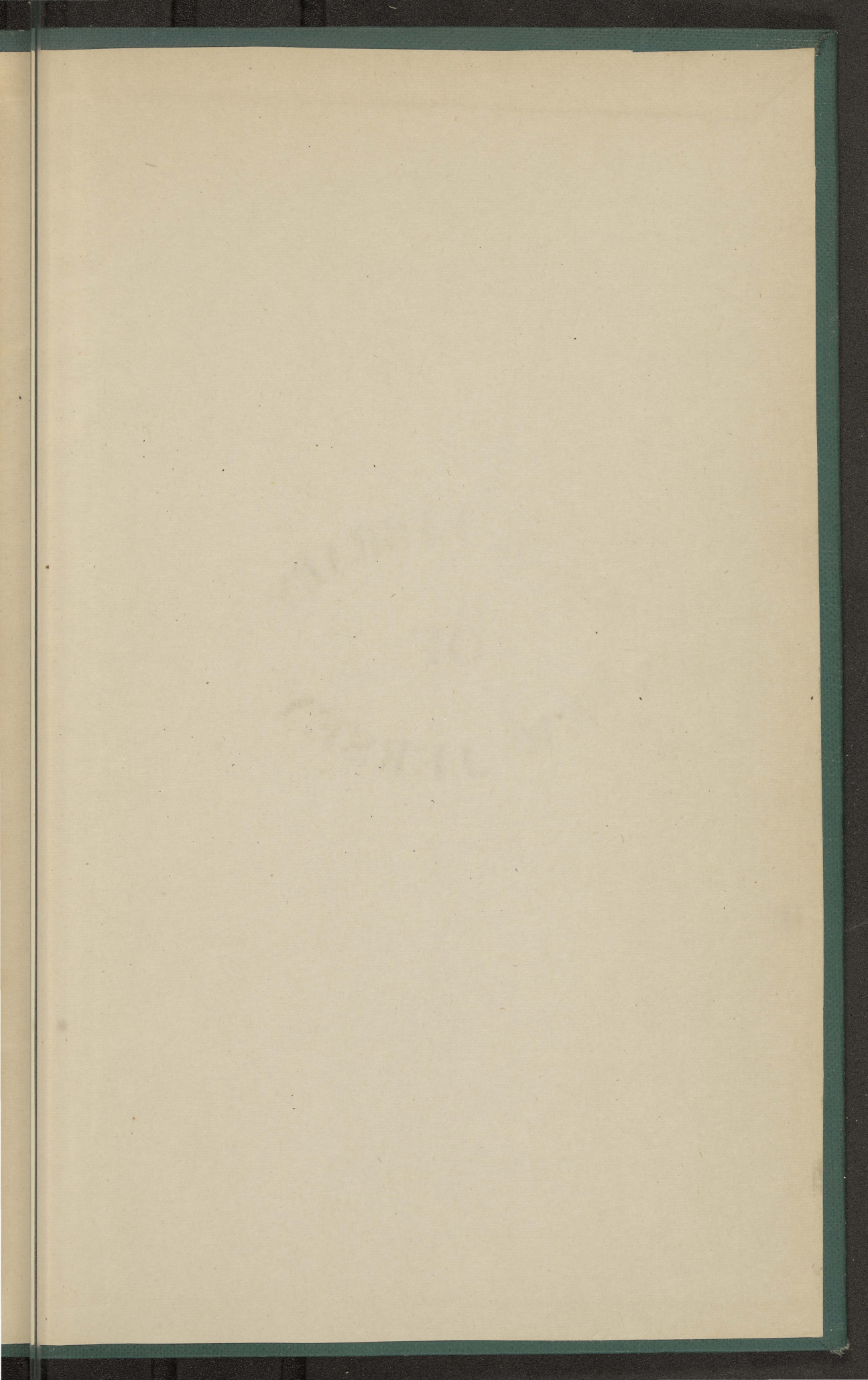












THE LIBRARY
OF
NEW JERSEY

