5. From every latent foe,
 From the assassin's blow,
 God save the King!
 O'er him thine arm extend,
 For Britain's sake defend
 Our father, prince, and friend,
 God save the King!

Never Sober*

LADY BESSBOROUGH

Poor Richardson is dead. Sheridan (if Richardson's death does not frighten him) will do the same, for he is never sober for a moment; and his affairs, worse than ever. *Pour comble*,¹ he has quarrelled with Mrs S. A sort of separation took place, but I believe it is partly made up again – at least I believe they live in the same house again, but not very good friends.² I am very sorry for it, for she was the only chance there was of stopping his drinking.

NOTES

By 1803, Sheridan's second wife Esther, like his first wife Elizabeth, was demanding separation; and although she too was shortly reconciled to him, he was in so distressed a condition that Lady Bessborough was alarmed, as can be seen in this letter to Lord Holland.

1. Worst of all.

2. 'By my life and soul,' Sheridan wrote to his wife on 30 June 1803, 'if you will talk of leaving me now you will destroy me. I am wholly unwell and neither sleep nor eat.'

* From Sichel, *Sheridan, from New and Original Material*, II, 270. Editor's title.