

of his bastard child; and it may be taken even from its mother, and placed beyond the reach of contamination from her vicious habits. But, as in thus separating parent and child, the only object is to protect the infant from the vices, the maltreatment, or the misconduct *of the parent, every affectionate and tender feeling which should subsist between them will be sustained and 431 cherished as far as practicable; and, for that purpose, they will be

he devised as follows, to wit: "I bequeath unto my son William Pratt one negro girl named Beck; and it is my will and desire, that my beloved wife Elizabeth Pratt should have the bringing up of my said son William Pratt, and that he should live with her until he shall be the age of twenty-one years, and that my said wife should have possession of my dwelling plantation until my aforesaid son William shall arrive at the age aforesaid. All the remainder of my personal estate, after paying my just and lawful debts, and the above legacies. I give and bequeath to be equally divided among my children. And I do hereby nominate and appoint my beloved wife Elizabeth Pratt executrix of this my last will and testament." That afterwards John Pratt, the petitioner's father, died seized and possessed of other lands than were devised by the said will, which have descended to the petitioner his heir-at-law. That after the death of the testator, the said Elizabeth proved the will and took upon herself the execution thereof, and also the guardianship of the petitioner. That she hath been extremely remiss as executrix and guardian, whereby the estate of the testator hath been much wasted and embezzled; and the petitioner neglected and in want of the common necessities of life; nor hath she paid the least attention to his education. That such hath been her conduct since the death of the testator, which the petitioner hopes there may be no necessity particularly to expose, that she has lost all the respect of her neighbors and acquaintances, and by them is esteemed a woman of an infamous character. That she has endeavored secretly to convey away sundry negro slaves and other personal estate of the testator with a view to defraud the petitioner and others, the children of the testator, and to deprive her surety for the due execution of the will of the means to counter secure himself, he having on petition obtained an order from the County Court to possess himself of the estate of the testator in her hands. From all which the petitioner was truly apprehensive of his suffering greatly with respect to the profits of his real estate for which there was no security; and that his education would be totally neglected. Whereupon he prayed, that, as the said Elizabeth had disqualified herself to be his guardian, he might be removed from her custody, and have another guardian assigned for him, or have such other relief as might seem meet and agreeable to justice. To this petition there was subjoined an affidavit of the next friend of the truth of its allegations, made before a justice of the peace.

EDEN, C., 6th February, 1773.—Ordered, that the same Elizabeth Pratt appear in the High Court of Chancery on Monday, the twenty-second day of this instant, February, to shew cause, if she hath any, why the said William Pratt, with his estate, should not be removed from the custody and guardianship of the same Elizabeth, and some other guardian be assigned for him. And that the said Christopher C. Routh also appear at the same time and place, and bring with him the aforesaid William Pratt; and then and there produce testimony to prove and establish the several allegations of the said petition; and that a copy of the same petition and this order be served on