

**AN ANSWER TO THE  
MISREPRESENTATIONS CONTAINED  
IN AN ARTICLE ON THE LIFE OF  
CLARENDON, IN NO. CXXIV. OF  
THE QUARTERLY REVIEW**

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An answer to the misrepresentations contained in an article on the life of clarendon, in No. CXXIV. Of the quarterly review by T. H. Lister

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**T. H. LISTER**

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BY  
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## A N S W E R.

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It is thought by some whose opinions I respect, that it is not essential for my vindication that I should reply to the article on my "Life of Clarendon" in the 124th number of the Quarterly Review; and that the hostile spirit which manifestly pervades it, its obvious unfairness, and the very trivial nature of many of its charges, will, in the opinion of candid readers, have rendered it harmless as an engine of attack.

Admitting this to some extent, other considerations nevertheless induce me to reply. I feel that, although in some respects the article may defeat its own purpose, yet that this self-betrayal falls far short of conveying a knowledge of its real character; and that, on the contrary, the Reviewer's confident tone, and plausible air of accuracy and research, will have rendered the majority of his readers quite unsuspecting of the misrepresentation and ignorance which I am prepared to expose. Silence too may be misinterpreted, and the indifference of conscious right may be construed into an admission that the attack is just. While I would condemn a petulant impatience of criti-

cism, I am clearly of opinion that misrepresentation *ought* to be refuted—that to submit in silence to *unfair* criticism, is to encourage the offence, and to invite its repetition against the writings of others—that there can be no sound reason why the anonymous critic should be the *only* writer exempted from the chances of refutation and rebuke—that such exemption, if it became a rule, would still more encourage an unscrupulousness, perhaps already too much favoured by the concealment of the writer's name—and that if it is to be wished that an useful and agreeable branch of periodical literature should not lose all claims to authority and respect, it is necessary that the artifices, the quackery, the hollow pretensions, of the pseudo-critic should be unsparingly exposed. I feel too, that though the intrinsic worth of the article adverted to may be quite insufficient to require notice, if it had appeared in another shape, the question becomes very different when it has acquired factitious importance by having found a shelter in the Quarterly Review. I have no wish to speak disparagingly of that Journal. Its politics have never been mine; but political differences are to me no grounds for rancour and detraction. It has included among its former contributors some of the most eminent writers of the present century; and it has some still living personally known to me, whose abilities I admire, and whose characters I esteem. It is mainly because I find the article in such company, and because it thus obtains undue authority, and a wide circulation, that I notice it at all.

For proof of the Reviewer's wish to wound and injure, I need only refer to the offensive personalities—



the assignment of unworthy motives,—the imputations directed not merely against the work reviewed, but against the personal character of its author—which are to be found in his elaborate attack. It will not be expected that I should notice *such* imputations further, than by saying, that they are *false*. All persons of honourable minds will estimate them as they deserve. I rely upon *their* verdict, and to no others will I appeal.

Dismissing the Reviewer's personalities, I shall attend only to his criticism. For evidence of a hostile wish to depreciate the work unfairly, I might refer to every page, but especially to the remarkable triviality of many of the charges. Thus even a misprint is noticed as though the mistake were mine. He even stigmatises as "bad taste," and as "the revival of an antiquated scandal," my allusion to a circumstance which, according to Lord Clarendon, "had an influence upon the whole course of his life afterwards." He condemns me for calling Charles II. "weak and licentious," because, says the Reviewer, "his *mind* was never weak" (as if I had not obviously applied that epithet to his *character*); and because, according to the Reviewer, "he was not *more* licentious than other men of his years and time"! I could adduce many similar instances of captious hypercriticism; but I should be ashamed of appearing to defend myself at length against accusations so insignificant. I notice them only as proofs of the unsparing diligence with which circumstances the most trivial, if susceptible of an unfavourable construction, are seized and magnified into faults.

I shall not attempt to exonerate myself from what

in the Reviewer's eyes is evidently a great offence, and is adduced, strangely enough, as an instance of a "*disingenuous* spirit" ! namely, my acknowledgment of obligations to "the historical writings of Godwin, Brodie, Guizot, Lingard, and Hallam." Neither shall I presume to undertake the superfluous task of defending Mr. Brodie, Dr. Lingard, and Mr. Hallam against the Reviewer's harmless sarcasms. But I cannot leave unnoticed his attempt to measure the extent of my obligations by the number of my references. Surely it is too obvious to require proof, that one may derive advantage from the perusal of an historical work, without referring to it as an authority for *facts*. For these, one refers naturally to the *original* sources of information, and not to the modern historian, unless when he has quoted such as are not accessible to all.

I am bound to take more serious notice of a much graver accusation, — that of *malignity* and *injustice* towards individuals mentioned in my work. The Reviewer specifies, as objects of this malignity, Charles I., his Queen, and Rupert, adding, "nor do we recollect an instance in which *any* of the royalist party are spoken of without venom." I shall first notice his general accusation; and I defy him to substantiate it. I defy him to show that I have spoken disparagingly of Falkland, Nicholas, Capel, Hopton, Dyves, Ormond, Montrose, or Newcastle; or that when I have used terms of censure towards Digby, Colepepper, Cottington, Littleton, Grenville, Berkeley, and Goring, I have not been supported by the authority of Lord Clarendon. I have named, I believe, *all* his most eminent contemporaries of the

the royalist party; and with respect to all these the Reviewer's charge is *false*.

I now come to his special instances. "For Charles I." the Reviewer says, I "never" have "a good word;" and then he declaims against my uniform abuse of "one"—as the Reviewer "conscientiously believes"—"of the *honestest men that ever lived*." I shall not descant on that trite theme, the character of Charles I. It is sufficient for my present purpose to show what was Clarendon's opinion of the Reviewer's *honestest of men*. In a confidential letter to Secretary Nicholas he thus expressed himself, on the subject of one of the most important of Charles's treacherous and unsuccessful manœuvres.—"I care not how little I say "in that business of Ireland, since those *strange powers and instructions* given to your favourite "Glamorgan, which appear to me *so inexcusable in justice, piety, and prudence*; and I fear there is "much in that transaction of Ireland, both before "and since, that you and I were never thought wise "enough to be advised with in. Oh! Mr. Secretary, "these *stratagems* have given me *more sad hours* "than all the misfortunes in war which have befallen "the King, and *look like the effects of God's anger towards us*"!—(*Clarendon State Papers*, ii. 337.) Here was no attempt to justify duplicity—to show that it was "necessitated" by the duplicity of the King's enemies; no defence of tergiversation, on the ground that "a man who is attacked on all sides, "must needs turn round to defend himself"!—(*Quarterly Review*, p. 512.) The exposition of such principles was reserved for the Reviewer, deliberately