

Queen's Square Place Westminster  
22 June 1831

Dear Sir

Your kindness will excuse this intrusion: the motives will speak for themselves: and if it does no good, it will do no harm.

For something or other that has been lately published by Cobbett, Government (I understand) after having commenced a prosecution against him and let it sleep for some time, perseveres in bringing <sup>it</sup> to a conclusion. Several men, of whose public affections I am sure, and of whose judgment I think well, agree with me in the apprehension lest by such a proceeding the administration should be lowered in the estimation of the people. In my opinion this would be a probable result of any prosecution for anything that goes under the name of a political libel: for, of bad advice in print, if it be in general terms, the bad effect may be more effectually counteracted by good counter advice backed by reasons also in print, and bad advice recommending the inflicting injury, in such & such a shape, on an individual would in case of the commission of the injury, render the adviser an accomplice and as such punishable.

As to Cobbett - a more odious compound of selfishness, malignity, insincerity, and mendacity, never presented itself to my memory or ~~to~~ my imagination: and I know not that man for whose sufferings I should have left sympathy.

shown for this man's: nor do I know any man in whose estimation the intellectual part of his frame holds so low a place as in mine. Moreover, a friend writes to me "Gabbett has been abusing you very lately," Be it so: his abuse of me is no more a matter of interest to me than would be a dog's barking at me: never I believe did he make mention of me for any other purpose than that of lowering me in the estimation of the public. For a great many years past, never to my recollection have I read ten lines together of anything he has written, or heard except by accident a few lines more.

Were I for example to succeed in this my application in such sort that for this cause alone the prosecution were dropt, I would not wish that he should know as much: he would (I should expect) labour but so much the more to injure me: such is my opinion of his gratitude.

A small part of all this might probably have sufficed as well as the whole to convince you that this address has for its cause regard for the public and not for the individual: and with this confession I conclude myself

Edward Ellice Esq<sup>r</sup>

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→ This copy substituted to the original document, the said document appearing illegible to my eye not accustomed to it.

Yours sincerely  
Jeremy Bentham.