

Then came the split of the Conservative party on the Corn Laws. Disraeli grasped his opportunity, made up to Bentinck, fanned Bentinck's furious animosity to Peel, and used him as his tool. The charge against Peel of dishonourable conduct to Canning, which, after Bentinck's death, Disraeli carefully fathered on him, can be pretty clearly shown to have been Disraeli's own concoction infused into the receptive mind of his friend. Disraeli had declared himself a Free Trader, had represented Free Trade as the tradition of the Tory party, and satirised the Protectionist squires. This did not prevent him from embracing protection for the purpose of his cabal, with the intention, no doubt, of afterwards getting rid of it, as he did and as the opportune death of Bentinck enabled him to do.

I naturally asked Lincoln why it was that Peel was so much stung by the coarse attack of Bentinck when he had cared so little for the keen invectives of Disraeli. In answer Lincoln told me that Peel had shown him the letter suing for place, the existence of which Disraeli had denied in the House of Commons. The letter is now to be read in Mr. Parker's "Peel," volume II, page 186. Its concluding sentence is, "I confess, to be unrecognized at this moment by you appears to me to be overwhelming, and I appeal to your own heart—to that justice and that magnanimity which I feel are your characteristics—to save me from an intolerable humiliation."

I then knew the real character of the man who was making his gambling table of my country."