

It was reported that Peel wanted to challenge Disraeli and the report has found its way into the memoir of Disraeli by Froude. That Peel should have wanted to challenge Disraeli was impossible. Peel held in his hands proofs of Disraeli's character and motives, and could have crushed him if he had chosen.

It was to Lord George Bentinck, not Disraeli, that Peel wanted to send a challenge for an aspersion cast in debate on Peel's connection with his friends, a subject on which Peel was excessively sensitive. My informant was the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Lincoln as he then was, whom Peel wanted to carry the challenge. When the house was up, Peel called Lincoln to him and asked him to wait while the customary letter was written to the Queen. He then took Lincoln's arm and walked with him towards his own house in Whitehall Gardens, telling him by the way that he wanted him to carry a challenge to Lord George Bentinck. Lincoln remonstrated; Peel insisted. They walked up and down till the work-people began to pass on their way to work. Peel then consented to go in and rest, Lincoln promising to return. Returning, Lincoln found Peel still bent on sending the challenge. At last Peel gave way to the argument that if anything serious happened it would greatly afflict the Queen.

Lincoln represented Peel as saying to him that if he would not carry the challenge Hardinge would. In this the Duke's memory failed him. Hardinge was in India. But Hardinge had acted for Peel in a previous affair, and to this no doubt Peel referred.

Disraeli, at his entrance into public life, tried more line than one, radicalism among the rest. But seeing the Tory star in the ascendant he finally attached himself to that party, and in his "Letters of Runnymede" fawned upon Peel and furiously abused the Whigs. When he was elected for Shrewsbury, he announced the event to Peel in a letter implying political attachment. When Peel came into power Disraeli wrote the letter asking for place. Peel had to decline, but he did it with perfect courtesy, and when Disraeli made his first and unsuccessful speech, Peel encouraged him by marked cheers. Disraeli's first attacks on Peel were probably intended to force his way to place; for he afterwards made up again to Peel, protested against being struck off the roll of Peel's party, and asked Graham, Peel's colleague, for a place for his brother, which Graham, on account of the attacks, refused.